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County Employment and Wages in Virginia – First Quarter 2016

Employment increase in Loudoun County ranked third in the nation

Eleven of the 12 largest counties in Virginia registered employment increases from March 2015 to March 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2015 annual average employment.) Loudoun County had the fastest rate of employment growth at 6.2 percent, followed by Prince William County at 4.4 percent and Chesterfield County at 4.3 percent. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that Loudoun County's employment growth rate ranked third among the nation's 344 largest counties. Newport News City recorded the only employment decline among the state's largest counties.

Nationally, employment grew 2.0 percent during this 12-month period, as 318 of the 344 large counties nationwide gained jobs. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase in employment, up 7.9 percent over the year. Midland, Texas, had the largest employment decrease with a loss of 9.0 percent.

Among the 12 largest counties in Virginia, employment was highest in Fairfax (588,080) in March 2016. No other county in the commonwealth had employment above 200,000. Together, Virginia's large counties accounted for 56.3 percent of total employment within the commonwealth. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.6 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Henrico County declined 4.5 percent from the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016, the fastest decrease among Virginia's 12 largest counties. Richmond City had the second largest average weekly wage decrease, down 3.0 percent. Arlington County had the highest average weekly wage among the largest counties in the commonwealth at \$1,734, followed by Fairfax County (\$1,622) and Alexandria City (\$1,400). (See [table 1](#).) Nationally, the average weekly wage declined 0.5 percent over the year to \$1,043 in the first quarter of 2016.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 121 counties in Virginia with employment below 75,000. Six of these 121 counties had average weekly wages above the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

From the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016, 10 of the 12 large counties in Virginia recorded wage decreases. The two large counties in Virginia with wage gains, Prince William (1.2 percent) and Chesapeake City (0.1 percent), ranked 79th and 155th, respectively, among the nation's 334 large U.S. counties.

Nationally, 167 counties had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage wage decrease among the largest counties, declining 13.3 percent.

Among the nation's largest counties, 164 recorded increases in average weekly wages over the year. Clayton, Ga., had the largest over-the-year increase in average weekly wages, at 15.5 percent. King, Wash., had the second largest increase (5.1 percent), followed by San Mateo, Calif. (4.8 percent); Ventura, Calif. (4.4 percent); and Merrimack, N.H. (4.3 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Arlington County had the ninth highest average weekly wage among the 344 large U.S. counties. Fairfax County and Alexandria City also ranked in the top 50 nationwide, at 11th and 19th, respectively. Additionally, Loudoun County and Richmond City recorded average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,043.

In Virginia Beach City and Chesapeake City, average weekly wages placed in the bottom fifth of the national ranking at 309th and 310th, respectively.

Average weekly wages in Virginia's smaller counties

Six of the 121 counties in Virginia with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages higher than the national average of \$1,043. Among these smaller counties, Goochland County (\$1,984), Surry (\$1,678) and King George (\$1,341) had the highest average weekly wages. Patrick County reported the lowest average weekly wage at \$491. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 133 counties in Virginia were considered, 122 had wages below the national average of \$1,043. As noted, Patrick County reported an average weekly wage below \$500. Twenty-eight counties reported wages from \$501 to \$600, 41 had wages from \$601 to \$700, 28 had wages from \$701 to \$800, and 35 had wages above \$800.

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2015 edition of this publication is now available and contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2015 are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2015/home.htm.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.7 million employer reports cover 140.1 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 12 largest counties in Virginia, first quarter 2016

| Area | Employment | | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | March 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, March 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level ⁽³⁾ | Percent change, first quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ |
| United States ⁽⁴⁾ | 140,070.8 | 2.0 | -- | \$1,043 | -- | -0.5 | -- |
| Virginia..... | 3,748.1 | 2.6 | -- | 1,057 | 13 | -1.2 | 34 |
| Alexandria City, Va. | 93.8 | 0.6 | 295 | 1,400 | 19 | -0.1 | 177 |
| Arlington, Va. | 170.9 | 3.1 | 78 | 1,734 | 9 | -0.2 | 187 |
| Chesapeake City, Va. | 97.3 | 1.9 | 176 | 763 | 310 | 0.1 | 155 |
| Chesterfield, Va. | 132.3 | 4.3 | 18 | 840 | 246 | -2.3 | 284 |
| Fairfax, Va. | 588.1 | 2.2 | 150 | 1,622 | 11 | -1.8 | 260 |
| Henrico, Va. | 187.6 | 2.6 | 116 | 1,028 | 101 | -4.5 | 325 |
| Loudoun, Va. | 155.9 | 6.2 | 3 | 1,193 | 51 | -1.1 | 224 |
| Newport News City, Va. | 95.5 | -1.9 | 336 | 1,016 | 111 | -2.4 | 287 |
| Norfolk City, Va. | 140.2 | 1.1 | 260 | 987 | 131 | -2.0 | 270 |
| Prince William, Va. | 123.7 | 4.4 | 16 | 838 | 250 | 1.2 | 79 |
| Richmond City, Va. | 152.6 | 3.2 | 69 | 1,173 | 54 | -3.0 | 301 |
| Virginia Beach City, Va. | 173.0 | 3.0 | 86 | 765 | 309 | -1.3 | 239 |

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Virginia, 1st quarter 2016

| Area | Employment March 2016 | Average weekly wage (1) | | Area | Employment March 2016 | Average weekly wage (1) |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| United States (2)..... | 140,070,814 | \$1,043 | | Orange | 9,729 | 669 |
| Virginia..... | 3,748,064 | 1057 | | Page | 5,138 | 592 |
| Accomack..... | 12,628 | 666 | | Patrick | 5,448 | 491 |
| Albemarle..... | 52,892 | 991 | | Pittsylvania | 12,336 | 594 |
| Alleghany..... | 3,815 | 640 | | Powhatan | 6,775 | 712 |
| Amelia..... | 2,410 | 642 | | Prince Edward | 8,861 | 639 |
| Amherst..... | 8,490 | 649 | | Prince George | 14,997 | 954 |
| Appomattox..... | 3,143 | 526 | | Prince William | 123,719 | 838 |
| Arlington..... | 170,851 | 1,734 | | Pulaski | 13,740 | 664 |
| Augusta..... | 26,875 | 753 | | Rappahannock | 1,480 | 1,014 |
| Bath..... | 2,208 | 724 | | Richmond County | 2,849 | 682 |
| Bedford..... | 18,592 | 682 | | Roanoke County | 37,429 | 744 |
| Bland..... | 1,929 | 823 | | Rockbridge | 5,666 | 577 |
| Botetourt..... | 10,718 | 718 | | Rockingham | 30,877 | 796 |
| Brunswick..... | 4,020 | 613 | | Russell | 6,817 | 724 |
| Buchanan..... | 6,508 | 756 | | Scott | 4,662 | 571 |
| Buckingham..... | 3,320 | 666 | | Shenandoah | 13,701 | 660 |
| Campbell..... | 16,703 | 871 | | Smyth | 12,797 | 611 |
| Caroline..... | 5,619 | 700 | | Southampton | 3,703 | 631 |
| Carroll..... | 6,494 | 560 | | Spotsylvania | 34,202 | 684 |
| Charles City..... | 1,501 | 763 | | Stafford | 42,307 | 918 |
| Charlotte..... | 2,970 | 645 | | Surry | 2,165 | 1,678 |
| Chesterfield..... | 132,258 | 840 | | Sussex | 3,726 | 700 |
| Clarke..... | 3,779 | 786 | | Tazewell | 14,717 | 586 |
| Craig..... | 675 | 640 | | Warren | 11,955 | 692 |
| Culpeper..... | 15,322 | 763 | | Washington | 20,642 | 660 |
| Cumberland..... | 1,389 | 555 | | Westmoreland | 3,297 | 555 |
| Dickenson..... | 3,315 | 698 | | Wise | 11,555 | 637 |
| Dinwiddie..... | 8,268 | 752 | | Wythe | 11,522 | 600 |
| Essex..... | 4,021 | 588 | | York | 21,038 | 679 |
| Fairfax County..... | 588,080 | 1,622 | | Alexandria City | 93,845 | 1,400 |
| Fauquier..... | 21,792 | 852 | | Bedford City | 0 | 0 |
| Floyd..... | 3,066 | 536 | | Bristol City | 9,795 | 696 |
| Fluvanna..... | 4,232 | 699 | | Buena Vista City | 2,532 | 588 |
| Franklin..... | 14,792 | 575 | | Charlottesville City | 38,967 | 932 |
| Frederick..... | 29,765 | 812 | | Chesapeake City | 97,328 | 763 |
| Giles..... | 4,601 | 713 | | Colonial Heights City | 10,771 | 587 |
| Gloucester..... | 9,251 | 598 | | Covington City | 4,036 | 888 |
| Goochland..... | 14,798 | 1,984 | | Danville City | 26,661 | 650 |
| Grayson..... | 2,607 | 559 | | Emporia City | 3,231 | 533 |
| Greene..... | 3,632 | 627 | | Fairfax City | 19,235 | 1,060 |
| Greensville..... | 4,521 | 709 | | Falls Church City | 11,450 | 1,185 |
| Halifax..... | 12,222 | 659 | | Franklin City | 4,434 | 556 |
| Hanover..... | 49,563 | 771 | | Fredericksburg City | 23,865 | 763 |
| Henrico..... | 187,586 | 1,028 | | Galax City | 6,334 | 538 |
| Henry..... | 15,707 | 597 | | Hampton City | 54,457 | 841 |
| Highland..... | 498 | 559 | | Harrisonburg City | 31,163 | 662 |
| Isle of Wight..... | 10,767 | 950 | | Hopewell City | 7,562 | 1,000 |
| James City..... | 28,251 | 712 | | Lexington City | 4,854 | 753 |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Virginia, 1st quarter 2016 - Continued

| Area | Employment March 2016 | Average weekly wage (1) | | Area | Employment March 2016 | Average weekly wage (1) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| King and Queen | 946 | 716 | | Lynchburg City | 51,215 | 775 |
| King George | 11,317 | 1,341 | | Manassas City | 22,107 | 1,116 |
| King William..... | 3,821 | 798 | | Manassas Park City | 3,164 | 795 |
| Lancaster..... | 4,372 | 652 | | Martinsville City | 9,069 | 618 |
| Lee | 4,486 | 601 | | Newport News City | 95,469 | 1,016 |
| Loudoun | 155,881 | 1,193 | | Norfolk City | 140,167 | 987 |
| Louisa | 9,505 | 854 | | Norton City | 3,668 | 673 |
| Lunenburg | 2,587 | 579 | | Petersburg City | 13,187 | 701 |
| Madison | 3,035 | 644 | | Poquoson City | 1,683 | 565 |
| Mathews | 1,513 | 506 | | Portsmouth City | 44,257 | 913 |
| Mecklenburg..... | 11,658 | 605 | | Radford City | 5,827 | 797 |
| Middlesex | 3,138 | 592 | | Richmond City | 152,609 | 1,173 |
| Montgomery | 42,135 | 760 | | Roanoke City | 67,321 | 816 |
| Nelson | 4,103 | 551 | | Salem City | 20,309 | 909 |
| New Kent..... | 4,149 | 647 | | Staunton City | 11,107 | 632 |
| Northampton..... | 4,720 | 571 | | Suffolk City | 28,715 | 865 |
| Northumberland..... | 2,320 | 659 | | Virginia Beach City | 173,047 | 765 |
| Nottoway | 5,734 | 636 | | Waynesboro City | 9,655 | 697 |
| Orange | 9,729 | 669 | | Williamsburg City | 12,778 | 730 |

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2016

| State | Employment | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | March 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, March 2015-16 | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level | Percent change, first quarter 2015-16 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States ⁽²⁾ | 140,070.8 | 2.0 | \$1,043 | -- | -0.5 | -- |
| Alabama | 1,902.6 | 1.6 | 842 | 37 | -0.2 | 22 |
| Alaska | 317.6 | -1.4 | 1,028 | 15 | -2.0 | 43 |
| Arizona | 2,679.8 | 2.8 | 918 | 23 | -0.8 | 30 |
| Arkansas | 1,191.1 | 2.1 | 793 | 45 | 0.5 | 13 |
| California | 16,455.5 | 2.6 | 1,206 | 6 | 0.0 | 20 |
| Colorado | 2,514.6 | 2.4 | 1,057 | 13 | -1.3 | 36 |
| Connecticut | 1,650.6 | 0.6 | 1,362 | 3 | -1.4 | 38 |
| Delaware | 429.7 | 1.5 | 1,072 | 10 | -3.0 | 48 |
| District of Columbia | 749.6 | 2.0 | 1,766 | 1 | 0.4 | 14 |
| Florida | 8,301.8 | 3.5 | 887 | 27 | 0.2 | 18 |
| Georgia | 4,215.1 | 3.0 | 1,008 | 17 | 1.9 | 2 |
| Hawaii | 645.1 | 1.4 | 896 | 26 | 1.7 | 3 |
| Idaho | 670.4 | 3.5 | 725 | 50 | -1.5 | 39 |
| Illinois | 5,800.6 | 1.2 | 1,126 | 7 | -0.5 | 28 |
| Indiana | 2,949.5 | 1.9 | 853 | 33 | -0.5 | 28 |
| Iowa | 1,518.2 | 0.9 | 844 | 36 | -0.4 | 27 |
| Kansas | 1,362.3 | 0.4 | 833 | 38 | -2.0 | 43 |
| Kentucky | 1,843.9 | 1.9 | 823 | 41 | 0.1 | 19 |
| Louisiana | 1,910.5 | -0.8 | 860 | 32 | -2.6 | 47 |
| Maine | 580.5 | 1.8 | 804 | 44 | 1.1 | 8 |
| Maryland | 2,591.7 | 1.9 | 1,103 | 9 | -0.8 | 30 |
| Massachusetts | 3,414.8 | 2.1 | 1,327 | 4 | -1.0 | 33 |
| Michigan | 4,163.7 | 2.1 | 976 | 20 | 0.7 | 11 |
| Minnesota | 2,750.1 | 1.5 | 1,065 | 12 | -1.2 | 34 |
| Mississippi | 1,121.0 | 1.7 | 713 | 51 | 0.4 | 14 |
| Missouri | 2,729.5 | 1.9 | 879 | 29 | -0.3 | 25 |
| Montana | 447.8 | 1.8 | 751 | 49 | 0.3 | 16 |
| Nebraska | 956.6 | 1.4 | 817 | 42 | 0.0 | 20 |
| Nevada | 1,264.1 | 3.0 | 875 | 30 | 1.2 | 5 |
| New Hampshire | 635.1 | 1.9 | 998 | 18 | 1.6 | 4 |
| New Jersey | 3,909.7 | 2.4 | 1,268 | 5 | -1.7 | 41 |
| New Mexico | 800.4 | 0.0 | 792 | 46 | -1.6 | 40 |
| New York | 9,042.2 | 2.0 | 1,456 | 2 | -0.3 | 25 |
| North Carolina | 4,220.3 | 3.0 | 928 | 22 | -0.2 | 22 |
| North Dakota | 409.4 | -6.2 | 908 | 25 | -7.6 | 51 |
| Ohio | 5,236.2 | 1.8 | 913 | 24 | -0.8 | 30 |
| Oklahoma | 1,578.6 | -0.9 | 833 | 38 | -4.1 | 49 |
| Oregon | 1,808.2 | 3.2 | 929 | 21 | 1.2 | 5 |
| Pennsylvania | 5,662.2 | 1.1 | 1,012 | 16 | -1.9 | 42 |
| Rhode Island | 464.6 | 1.9 | 985 | 19 | -2.2 | 46 |
| South Carolina | 1,974.6 | 2.7 | 806 | 43 | 0.8 | 10 |
| South Dakota | 410.5 | 0.9 | 771 | 48 | 1.2 | 5 |
| Tennessee | 2,859.2 | 3.3 | 887 | 27 | 0.3 | 16 |
| Texas | 11,638.7 | 0.7 | 1,066 | 11 | -2.1 | 45 |
| Utah | 1,369.2 | 3.8 | 849 | 35 | 0.6 | 12 |
| Vermont | 304.6 | 0.1 | 832 | 40 | 1.0 | 9 |
| Virginia | 3,748.1 | 2.6 | 1,057 | 13 | -1.2 | 34 |
| Washington | 3,147.7 | 3.1 | 1,121 | 8 | 3.0 | 1 |
| West Virginia | 683.9 | -1.2 | 782 | 47 | -1.3 | 36 |
| Wisconsin | 2,771.4 | 1.3 | 875 | 30 | -0.2 | 22 |
| Wyoming | 267.9 | -3.7 | 850 | 34 | -4.7 | 50 |
| Puerto Rico | 895.2 | -1.2 | 520 | (3) | -0.4 | (3) |
| Virgin Islands | 38.6 | 0.4 | 769 | (3) | 2.9 | (3) |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

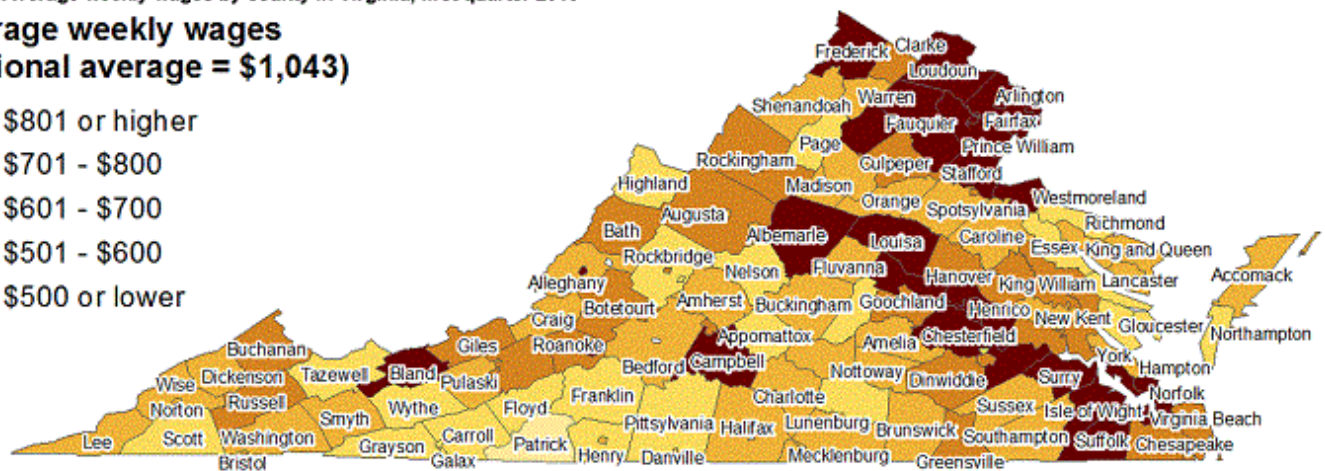
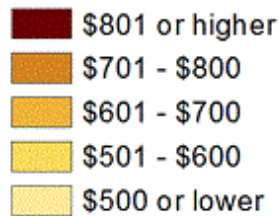
(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Virginia, first quarter 2016

**Average weekly wages
(National average = \$1,043)**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.