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County Employment and Wages in West Virginia – Third Quarter 2018

Employment decreased 1.9 percent in West Virginia's only large county, Kanawha, from September 2017 to September 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2017 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that Kanawha County was among the 43 large U.S. counties in which employment declined over the year. Nationally, employment increased 1.6 percent, as 295 of the 349 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Kanawha County ranked 348th in the nation for employment change. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, Midland, TX, recorded the largest percentage increase in employment with a gain of 11.9 percent over the year. New Hanover, NC, registered the largest over-the-year employment decline among the largest U.S. counties, down 2.0 percent.

Employment in Kanawha County stood at 98,000 in September 2018, accounting for 13.9 percent of West Virginia's total employment. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 73.0 percent of total U.S. employment.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 54 counties in West Virginia with employment levels below 75,000. Wage levels in 52 of these smaller counties were below the national average of \$1,055 in the third quarter of 2018. Marshall and Jackson Counties had weekly wages of \$1,589 and \$1,522, respectively. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

The average weekly wage in Kanawha County increased 3.9 percent from the third quarter of 2017 to the third quarter of 2018. Kanawha County placed in the top quarter of the national ranking for wage change (73rd). Kanawha's increase in average weekly wages was larger than the 3.3-percent national average increase.

Nationally, 336 of the 349 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Chatham, GA, had the largest wage increase, up 8.5 percent from the third quarter of 2017. King, WA, was second with a wage increase of 7.9 percent, followed by Santa Clara, CA, and Stanislaus, CA, at 7.8 percent each.

Of the 349 largest counties, 11 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Elkhart, IN, had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-4.2 percent), followed by Union, NJ; Providence, RI; Forsyth, NC; and Peoria, IL.

Kanawha County reported average weekly wages of \$917, below the national average of \$1,055 for the third quarter 2018, and ranked 210th among the 349 largest U.S. counties.

Nationally, 94 large counties registered average weekly wages equal to or above the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2018. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$2,460. San Mateo, CA, was second (\$2,363), followed by San Francisco, CA (\$2,097).

Seventy-three percent of the largest U.S. counties (255) reported weekly wages below the national average. Cameron County, TX, reported the lowest wage (\$632), followed by the counties of Horry, SC (\$635) and Hidalgo, TX (\$662). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than a third of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, CA.

Average weekly wages in West Virginia's smaller counties

Fifty-two of the 54 counties in West Virginia with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,055. Among these smaller counties, Marshall had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,589, while Clay had the lowest at \$525. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 55 counties in West Virginia were considered, only Marshall and Jackson had average weekly wages above the national average. Two reported average weekly wages under \$600, 12 reported wages from \$600 to \$699, 16 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 16 reported wages of \$800 to \$899, and 9 reported wages of \$900 or higher. (See [chart 1](#).)

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 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 2017 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2018 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from the 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2017/home.htm. The 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2019.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 22, 2019.

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 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.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the top 10 U.S. large counties ranked by average weekly wage and the largest county in West Virginia, third quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	146,824.1	1.6	-	\$1,055	-	3.3	-
Santa Clara, Calif.	1,102.4	2.2	78	2,460	1	7.8	3
San Mateo, Calif.	406.1	2.1	85	2,363	2	7.2	9
San Francisco, Calif.	745.3	3.1	43	2,097	3	7.6	5
New York, N.Y.	2,454.5	0.4	249	1,997	4	4.0	65
Washington, D.C.	770.7	0.7	206	1,807	5	2.8	186
King, Wash.	1,404.0	2.8	55	1,752	6	7.9	2
Suffolk, Mass.	682.5	1.7	115	1,706	7	0.9	323
Arlington, Va.	177.9	0.9	184	1,691	8	2.9	169
Fairfax, Va.	613.7	1.4	139	1,588	9	3.2	141
Middlesex, Mass.	923.5	1.4	139	1,563	10	4.3	49
Kanawha, W.Va.	98.0	-1.9	348	917	210	3.9	73

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 West Virginia, Third quarter 2018

Area	Employment September 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	146,824,093	\$1,055
West Virginia	706,024	894
Barbour	3,527	735
Berkeley	35,771	809
Boone	4,813	845
Braxton	3,761	650
Brooke	7,783	759
Cabell	51,933	840
Calhoun	1,206	824
Clay	1,337	525
Doddridge	1,725	1,037
Fayette	11,002	720
Gilmer	1,893	765
Grant	3,278	773
Greenbrier	13,240	709
Hampshire	3,793	605
Hancock	9,597	748
Hardy	5,824	657
Harrison	37,913	974
Jackson	14,657	1,522
Jefferson	15,808	870
Kanawha	98,030	917
Lewis	6,574	953
Lincoln	2,335	636
Logan	9,815	830
McDowell	4,307	839
Marion	17,905	823
Marshall	15,054	1,589
Mason	5,439	847
Mercer	19,041	732
Mineral	7,945	773
Mingo	5,533	872
Monongalia	56,999	998
Monroe	1,908	760
Morgan	2,879	617
Nicholas	7,474	713
Ohio	28,481	829
Pendleton	1,478	562
Pleasants	2,748	932
Pocahontas	2,955	604
Preston	7,384	762
Putnam	21,107	1,045
Raleigh	31,686	795
Randolph	11,304	686
Ritchie	3,212	838
Roane	2,891	705
Summers	2,085	621
Taylor	3,223	831
Tucker	2,535	675
Tyler	2,151	831
Upshur	7,501	757
Wayne	8,388	803
Webster	1,642	647
Wetzel	4,541	644
Wirt	580	675
Wood	35,449	794

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in West Virginia, Third quarter 2018 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
Wyoming	4,238	841

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, third quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	146,824.1	1.6	\$1,055	--	3.3	--
Alabama	1,966.0	1.2	885	38	3.1	25
Alaska	334.0	-0.4	1,065	13	3.7	12
Arizona	2,838.6	2.8	974	23	2.9	31
Arkansas	1,222.1	0.7	811	49	2.9	31
California	17,457.5	1.8	1,260	5	3.8	9
Colorado	2,684.0	2.1	1,104	9	3.5	18
Connecticut	1,681.5	0.3	1,209	6	2.5	41
Delaware	447.8	0.6	1,046	15	2.4	42
District of Columbia	770.7	0.7	1,807	1	2.8	36
Florida	8,690.7	4.6	924	29	3.1	25
Georgia	4,448.8	2.3	993	20	3.3	21
Hawaii	654.7	0.0	975	22	2.4	42
Idaho	743.5	3.0	805	50	3.2	23
Illinois	6,029.2	0.8	1,087	10	3.0	28
Indiana	3,072.3	0.9	883	39	2.4	42
Iowa	1,555.0	0.6	887	37	3.7	12
Kansas	1,390.4	1.0	867	42	3.5	18
Kentucky	1,898.7	0.5	855	43	2.2	47
Louisiana	1,915.4	0.5	901	33	3.7	12
Maine	626.5	0.6	851	45	3.7	12
Maryland	2,683.9	0.7	1,130	8	2.4	42
Massachusetts	3,598.1	0.7	1,305	2	3.2	23
Michigan	4,366.5	0.8	991	21	2.8	36
Minnesota	2,904.3	0.8	1,074	12	4.2	5
Mississippi	1,133.7	0.2	754	51	3.4	20
Missouri	2,812.0	0.4	907	31	3.3	21
Montana	473.3	1.0	815	48	2.8	36
Nebraska	980.3	0.6	873	41	2.8	36
Nevada	1,382.9	3.4	936	28	2.4	42
New Hampshire	662.3	0.5	1,040	16	1.7	49
New Jersey	4,072.6	0.8	1,181	7	2.1	48
New Mexico	826.2	1.2	855	43	3.9	7
New York	9,467.5	1.4	1,272	4	4.2	5
North Carolina	4,398.0	1.1	938	26	3.8	9
North Dakota	424.3	1.1	995	19	4.4	3
Ohio	5,424.4	0.7	947	25	2.9	31
Oklahoma	1,616.8	1.2	874	40	3.6	16
Oregon	1,939.8	1.5	1,005	18	3.8	9
Pennsylvania	5,894.8	1.0	1,031	17	3.0	28
Rhode Island	489.4	1.0	963	24	-1.3	51
South Carolina	2,088.2	2.8	834	46	0.8	50
South Dakota	431.5	1.3	827	47	3.0	28
Tennessee	3,005.6	1.7	938	26	3.9	7
Texas	12,327.0	2.6	1,064	14	3.1	25
Utah	1,494.4	3.4	911	30	3.6	16
Vermont	310.9	0.0	892	36	2.6	40
Virginia	3,889.6	1.1	1,082	11	2.9	31
Washington	3,425.6	2.4	1,280	3	6.2	2
West Virginia	706.0	1.7	894	35	8.1	1
Wisconsin	2,888.9	0.7	901	33	2.9	31
Wyoming	278.2	0.6	905	32	4.3	4
Puerto Rico	862.5	0.2	534	(3)	5.3	(3)
Virgin Islands	33.4	-8.0	888	(3)	18.6	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

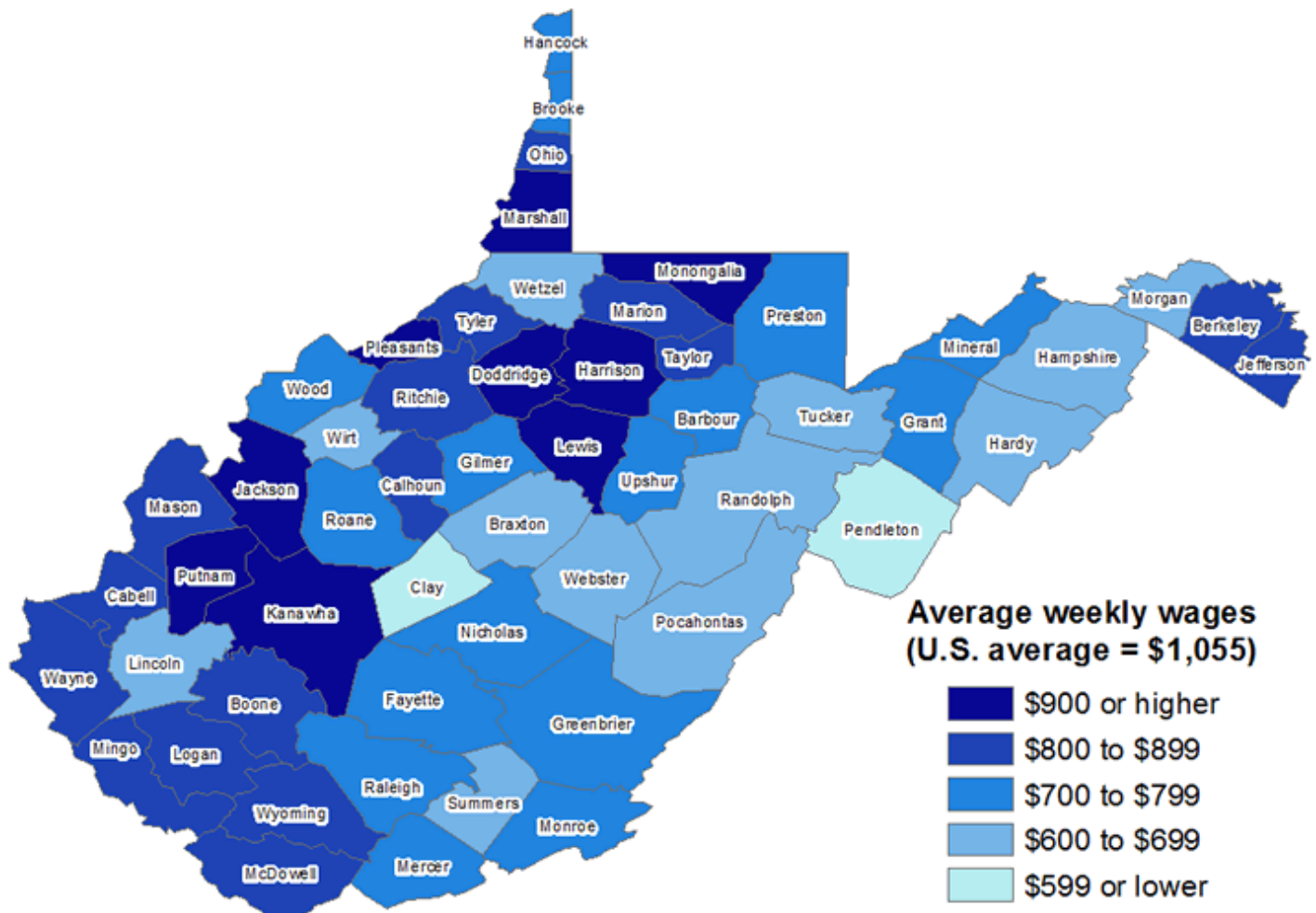
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 West Virginia, third quarter 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.