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MID-ATLANTIC INFORMATION OFFICE: Philadelphia, Pa.

Technical information: (215) 597-3282 BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

County Employment and Wages in Virginia – First Quarter 2020

Average weekly wages increased in 11 of 12 largest counties

Employment rose in 8 of the 12 largest counties in Virginia from March 2019 to March 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more in 2019.) Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that Chesapeake City had the largest over-the-year increase in employment at 1.7 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in covered employment among the largest counties in Virginia, March 2020

County	Percent change, March 2020
Chesapeake City	1.70%
Chesterfield	1.40%
Loudoun	1.40%
Arlington	1.10%
Fairfax	1.10%
Newport News City	0.60%
Prince William	0.30%
Henrico	0.20%
Virginia Beach City	-0.30%
Richmond City	-0.70%
Norfolk City	-1.50%
Alexandria City	-1.80%

U.S. employment increased 0.4 percent over the year with 202 of the 357 largest U.S. counties reporting increases. St. Johns, FL, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 3.7 percent over the year. Ector, TX, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.5 percent.

Among the 12 largest counties in Virginia, employment was highest in Fairfax County (619,000) in March 2020. Within Fairfax County's private industry, professional and technical services accounted for the largest employment. Together, the 12 largest Virginia counties accounted for 56.3 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 357 largest counties made up 73.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 121 counties in Virginia with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in 115 of the 121 smaller counties were below the national average in the first quarter of 2020. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Eleven of the 12 large Virginia counties reported average weekly wage gains from the first quarter of 2019 to the first quarter of 2020. (See chart 2.) Eight counties had rates of wage gains that were above the national rate of 3.3 percent. Prince William County has the largest gain (+5.4 percent), followed by Chesterfield County (+4.9 percent), and Richmond City (+4.5 percent). Over-the-year wage gains among Virginia's other 8 large counties ranged from 4.4 percent to 0.7 percent. (See [chart 2.](#))

Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in covered average weekly wages among the largest counties in Virginia, first quarter 2020

County	Percent change, first quarter 2020
Prince William.....	5.40%
Chesterfield	4.90%
Richmond City	4.50%
Chesapeake City	4.40%
Fairfax	4.40%
Henrico	4.40%
Virginia Beach City	4.20%
Norfolk City.....	3.40%
Arlington	2.50%
Loudoun	2.30%
Alexandria City	0.70%
Newport News City.....	-0.80%

Among the 357 largest counties in the United States, 335 had over-the-year wage increases. McLean, IL, had the largest percentage wage increase (+13.3 percent). Twenty large counties had wage declines during the period. Peoria, IL, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-12.8 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Weekly wages in the 5 of the 12 largest counties in Virginia were above the national average of \$1,222 in the first quarter of 2020. Average weekly wages in three of these counties ranked among the top 50 nationwide: Arlington (\$2,018, 9th), Fairfax (\$1,914, 13th), and Alexandria City (\$1,507, 35th).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 92 reported average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the first quarter of 2020. New York, NY, had the highest average weekly wage at \$3,270. Average weekly wages were below the national average in 265 counties. At \$666 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

Average weekly wages in Virginia's smaller counties

Among the 121 smaller counties in Virginia—those with employment below 75,000—six counties reported an average weekly wage above the national average of \$1,222. Goochland County (\$2,701) reported the highest among the small counties, and the highest average weekly wage in the state. Mathews County (\$554) reported the lowest average weekly wage in the state.

When all 133 counties in Virginia were considered, 16 reported average weekly wages of less than \$650, 40 registered wages from \$650 to \$749, 26 had wages from \$750 to \$849, 18 had wages from \$850 to \$849, and 33 had average weekly wages of \$950 or higher. (See [chart 3.](#))

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 2018 edition of this publication was published in September 2019. Tables and additional content from the 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2018/home.htm. The 2019 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2020.

The County Employment and Wages release for second quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, November 18, 2020. The County Employment and Wages full data update for second quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, December 2, 2020.

QCEW Data and Response Impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic

Beginning with this release of first quarter 2020 data, the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program will publish response rate tables for establishments, employment, and total quarterly wages. Tables for the first quarter of 2020 are available at www.bls.gov/covid19/county-employment-and-wages-covid-19-impact-first-quarter-2020.htm. For more information about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on QCEW data, please visit www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-county-employment-and-wages-data.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 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 individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 12 largest counties in Virginia, first quarter 2020

Area	Establishments, first quarter 2020 (thousands)	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
		March 2020 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2019-20 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	First quarter 2020	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2019-20 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	10,447.2	147,088.9	0.4	--	\$1,222	--	3.3	--
Virginia.....	282.9	3,921.0	0.6	--	1,233	13	4.0	11
Alexandria City	6.2	88.1	-1.8	338	1,507	35	0.7	319
Arlington	9.2	185.0	1.1	79	2,018	9	2.5	224
Chesapeake City	6.3	104.0	1.7	45	895	312	4.4	62
Chesterfield	9.4	136.5	1.4	60	972	246	4.9	34
Fairfax	36.9	619.0	1.1	79	1,914	13	4.4	62
Henrico	11.9	192.0	0.2	182	1,184	104	4.4	62
Loudoun	12.9	174.3	1.4	60	1,361	52	2.3	241
Newport News City.....	4.0	104.2	0.6	133	1,062	174	-0.8	347
Norfolk City	6.1	140.0	-1.5	329	1,117	140	3.4	150
Prince William.....	9.7	132.3	0.3	166	981	234	5.4	26
Richmond City	8.0	157.5	-0.7	272	1,359	54	4.5	56
Virginia Beach City	12.4	175.3	-0.3	240	869	323	4.2	76

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 2020

Area	Employment March 2020	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	147,088,945	\$1,222
Virginia	3,920,952	1233
Accomack	12,752	793
Albemarle	58,550	1,069
Alleghany	3,666	689
Amelia	2,596	710
Amherst	7,934	747
Appomattox	3,280	598
Arlington	185,010	2,018
Augusta	28,093	886
Bath	2,121	836
Bedford	18,645	749
Bland	1,873	901
Botetourt	11,023	848
Brunswick	3,414	682
Buchanan	6,287	950
Buckingham	3,332	722
Campbell	17,317	1,000
Caroline	5,659	745
Carroll	6,177	597
Charles City	1,691	885
Charlotte	2,722	671
Chesterfield	136,497	972
Clarke	3,792	862
Craig	761	677
Culpeper	16,131	840
Cumberland	1,231	639
Dickenson	3,440	777
Dinwiddie	8,537	969
Essex	3,610	674
Fairfax County	618,951	1,914
Fauquier	21,981	1,020
Floyd	3,541	575
Fluvanna	4,251	818
Franklin	15,361	654
Frederick	33,906	980
Giles	4,476	810
Gloucester	9,474	689
Goochland	17,818	2,701
Grayson	3,133	566
Greene	3,740	680
Greensville	4,391	890
Halifax	11,614	740
Hanover	53,637	859
Henrico	191,985	1,184
Henry	15,586	662
Highland	447	599
Isle of Wight	10,695	1,262
James City	28,718	848
King and Queen	1,093	746
King George	12,465	1,462
King William	3,958	869
Lancaster	4,419	707
Lee	4,209	663
Loudoun	174,308	1,361
Louisa	9,790	961
Lunenburg	2,387	681

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Virginia, 1st quarter 2020 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2020	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Madison	3,102	713
Mathews	1,582	554
Mecklenburg	11,445	692
Middlesex	3,168	664
Montgomery	42,607	927
Nelson	4,007	703
New Kent	5,099	767
Northampton	3,997	602
Northumberland	2,441	872
Nottoway	5,753	725
Orange	9,678	769
Page	5,231	665
Patrick	4,283	565
Pittsylvania	12,091	700
Powhatan	7,381	769
Prince Edward	9,006	721
Prince George	14,817	1,042
Prince William	132,298	981
Pulaski	14,013	794
Rappahannock	1,441	735
Richmond County	2,907	767
Roanoke County	39,290	844
Rockbridge	6,385	631
Rockingham	33,817	889
Russell	6,721	783
Scott	4,929	637
Shenandoah	13,981	793
Smyth	11,598	693
Southampton	3,610	718
Spotsylvania	35,964	827
Stafford	45,894	1,084
Surry	2,293	1,693
Sussex	3,640	790
Tazewell	14,362	673
Warren	12,745	796
Washington	19,192	705
Westmoreland	3,297	643
Wise	11,467	661
Wythe	11,225	699
York	20,283	750
Alexandria City	88,135	1,507
Bristol City	9,468	712
Buena Vista City	2,061	688
Charlottesville City	39,655	1,094
Chesapeake City	104,043	895
Colonial Heights City	10,557	624
Covington City	3,849	978
Danville City	24,933	762
Emporia City	3,216	618
Fairfax City	19,078	1,150
Falls Church City	11,959	1,343
Franklin City	4,275	619
Fredericksburg City	23,967	907
Galax City	5,553	606
Hampton City	52,506	937
Harrisonburg City	31,306	818

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Virginia, 1st quarter 2020 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2020	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Hopewell City	7,946	1,078
Lexington City.....	4,539	845
Lynchburg City.....	51,518	879
Manassas City.....	23,256	1,364
Manassas Park City	3,904	920
Martinsville City	9,275	674
Newport News City.....	104,150	1,062
Norfolk City.....	140,039	1,117
Norton City	3,391	762
Petersburg City.....	13,143	772
Poquoson City	1,776	650
Portsmouth City.....	44,483	1,036
Radford City	5,761	887
Richmond City	157,533	1,359
Roanoke City.....	65,099	944
Salem City	19,373	988
Staunton City.....	11,133	735
Suffolk City	33,025	1,044
Virginia Beach City.....	175,276	869
Waynesboro City	9,504	744
Williamsburg City.....	12,204	833
Winchester City	25,209	973

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 2020

State	Establishments, first quarter 2020 (thousands)	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
		March 2020 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2019-20	First quarter 2020	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2019-20	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	10,447.2	147,088.9	0.4	\$1,222	--	3.3	--
Alabama	132.6	1,983.8	0.3	974	36	3.2	23
Alaska	22.6	312.8	-0.1	1,130	19	2.1	44
Arizona	170.4	2,957.2	1.9	1,098	22	4.4	1
Arkansas	93.6	1,220.5	0.2	922	45	3.0	29
California	1,631.1	17,570.5	0.8	1,459	5	4.2	3
Colorado	214.5	2,725.2	1.2	1,284	9	4.3	2
Connecticut	124.1	1,639.4	-0.7	1,510	4	1.5	48
Delaware	34.6	443.7	-0.3	1,251	11	1.7	45
District of Columbia	42.3	778.1	0.6	1,994	1	3.8	14
Florida	740.5	8,975.1	0.8	1,051	25	3.6	18
Georgia	301.5	4,522.2	0.9	1,159	17	3.4	19
Hawaii	45.4	655.5	-1.0	1,033	27	3.0	29
Idaho	66.8	755.2	3.1	864	50	4.2	3
Illinois	381.5	5,872.9	-0.7	1,302	8	2.3	41
Indiana	171.1	3,028.5	-1.0	994	33	3.2	23
Iowa	104.8	1,523.4	-0.2	978	35	3.7	16
Kansas	89.8	1,383.3	0.2	969	37	3.2	23
Kentucky	124.0	1,884.9	0.1	943	43	2.5	38
Louisiana	137.4	1,897.0	-1.3	969	37	1.7	45
Maine	53.9	601.0	0.1	955	40	4.0	11
Maryland	175.7	2,661.5	-0.4	1,277	10	4.1	8
Massachusetts	263.3	3,565.1	-0.2	1,605	3	3.0	29
Michigan	267.0	4,281.4	-0.6	1,103	20	2.3	41
Minnesota	183.9	2,838.2	-0.1	1,235	12	2.7	35
Mississippi	73.9	1,128.1	-0.2	801	51	2.8	34
Missouri	214.8	2,795.7	0.3	1,016	31	3.0	29
Montana	50.6	465.2	1.5	869	49	3.1	27
Nebraska	72.3	972.4	0.8	956	39	4.1	8
Nevada	86.1	1,410.8	1.3	1,033	27	4.2	3
New Hampshire	54.3	657.0	0.2	1,194	15	3.3	20
New Jersey	285.8	4,052.7	0.4	1,455	6	3.9	13
New Mexico	64.0	835.6	0.9	923	44	3.7	16
New York	657.2	9,415.7	-0.3	1,693	2	3.3	20
North Carolina	296.0	4,501.1	0.9	1,094	23	4.1	8
North Dakota	32.2	414.3	0.0	1,046	26	2.4	39
Ohio	304.4	5,349.6	-0.3	1,063	24	2.9	33
Oklahoma	112.8	1,598.0	-1.3	949	42	-0.5	51
Oregon	162.4	1,938.9	0.7	1,103	20	4.2	3
Pennsylvania	363.5	5,851.3	0.0	1,177	16	2.7	35
Rhode Island	39.5	473.9	-0.2	1,132	18	2.7	35
South Carolina	142.7	2,112.8	0.1	922	45	2.2	43
South Dakota	34.7	420.6	0.4	901	48	4.2	3
Tennessee	171.2	3,033.5	1.0	1,027	29	3.1	27
Texas	725.7	12,626.2	1.2	1,232	14	2.4	39
Utah	109.8	1,526.8	1.8	1,026	30	3.2	23
Vermont	26.1	303.9	-1.8	980	34	3.3	20
Virginia	282.9	3,921.0	0.6	1,233	13	4.0	11
Washington	255.6	3,427.3	1.7	1,414	7	3.8	14
West Virginia	51.2	674.9	-1.8	904	47	0.9	49
Wisconsin	178.2	2,836.5	-0.2	1,008	32	1.7	45
Wyoming	27.2	268.5	-0.5	955	40	0.6	50
Puerto Rico	47.5	886.4	1.0	551	(3)	0.0	(3)
Virgin Islands	3.3	40.1	5.7	1,046	(3)	6.3	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

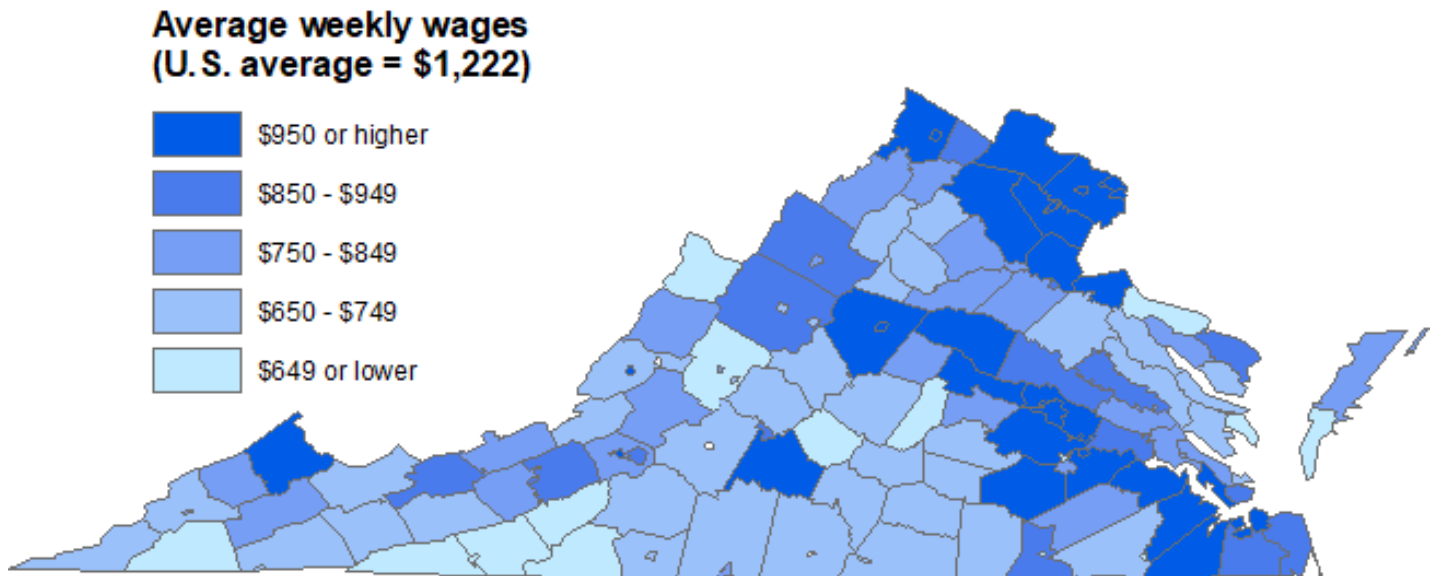
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 3. Average weekly wages by county in Virginia, first quarter 2020



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.