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## **County Employment and Wages in West Virginia – Third Quarter 2019**

Employment decreased 1.5 percent in West Virginia's only large county, Kanawha, from September 2018 to September 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2018 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that Kanawha County was among the 61 out of 355 large U.S. counties in which employment declined over the year. Kanawha County ranked 347<sup>th</sup> in the nation for employment change. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment increased 1.1 percent over the year with 283 of the 355 largest U.S. counties reporting increases. New Hanover, NC, recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.8 percent over the year. Bay, FL, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.9 percent.

Employment in Kanawha County totaled 96,300 in September 2019, accounting for 13.9 percent of West Virginia's total employment. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.4 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. One county—Marshall—had a wage level above the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

### **Large county wage changes**

The average weekly wage in Kanawha County increased 3.5 percent from the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019. Kanawha County placed in the top half of the national ranking for wage change (168<sup>th</sup>). Nationwide, the average weekly wage increased 3.6 percent from a year ago to \$1,093 in the third quarter of 2019.

Nationally, 350 of the 355 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Boulder, CO, had the largest percent wage increase (+18.4 percent). The remaining five large counties registered wage declines during the period. Linn, IA, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-2.6 percent).

### **Large county average weekly wages**

Kanawha County reported average weekly wages of \$950, below the national average of \$1,093 for the third quarter 2019, and ranked 208<sup>th</sup> among the 355 largest U.S. counties.

Nationally, 98 large counties reported average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2019. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$2,447. Average weekly wages were below the national average in 257 counties. At \$659 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

### **Average weekly wages in West Virginia's smaller counties**

Fifty-three of the 54 counties in West Virginia with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,093. Among these smaller counties, Marshall had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,379, followed by Doddridge (\$1,050), Monongalia (\$1,036), and Jackson (\$1,033). Clay County reported the lowest average wage in the state at \$561 per week, followed by Pendleton County at \$578 per week.

When all 55 counties in West Virginia were considered, 2 reported average weekly wages of less than \$600, 11 reported wages from \$600 to \$699, 14 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 18 reported wages of \$800 to \$899, and 10 reported wages of \$900 or more. (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](http://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, which was published in September 2019, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2019 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from the 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at [www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2018/home.htm](http://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.

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**The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. The County Employment and Wages full data update for fourth quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 3, 2020.**

### **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/](http://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 2019**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2018-19 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, third quarter 2018-19 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	148,556.5	1.1	-	\$1,093	-	3.6	-
Santa Clara, CA .....	1,121.9	1.8	84	2,447	1	-0.3	352
San Mateo, CA .....	419.1	3.1	21	2,366	2	-0.1	351
San Francisco, CA .....	765.2	3.5	10	2,273	3	7.6	7
New York, NY .....	2,515.1	1.2	142	2,055	4	2.9	238
Washington, DC .....	776.3	0.6	217	1,851	5	2.5	267
King, WA.....	1,445.3	3.1	21	1,814	6	3.6	157
Suffolk, MA .....	700.7	2.4	51	1,784	7	4.3	85
Arlington, VA.....	182.9	2.5	45	1,744	8	3	227
Fairfax, VA.....	622.2	1.5	110	1,651	9	4	114
Middlesex, MA.....	939.3	1.6	102	1,625	10	4.4	78
Kanawha, WV.....	96.3	-1.5	347	950	208	3.5	168

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 2019**

Area	Employment September 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2) .....	148,556,525	\$1,093
West Virginia .....	694,441	897
Barbour .....	3,668	805
Berkeley .....	36,520	832
Boone .....	4,672	837
Braxton .....	3,779	690
Brooke .....	7,695	798
Cabell .....	52,422	864
Calhoun .....	1,177	871
Clay .....	1,326	561
Doddridge .....	1,636	1,050
Fayette .....	10,813	756
Gilmer .....	1,869	791
Grant .....	3,349	793
Greenbrier .....	13,244	708
Hampshire .....	3,780	632
Hancock .....	9,547	748
Hardy .....	5,777	678
Harrison .....	36,567	991
Jackson .....	9,095	1,033
Jefferson .....	15,651	908
Kanawha .....	96,308	950
Lewis .....	6,222	917
Lincoln .....	2,389	628
Logan .....	10,190	871
McDowell .....	4,282	884
Marion .....	17,688	828
Marshall .....	12,689	1,379
Mason .....	5,465	869
Mercer .....	18,814	756
Mineral .....	7,840	828
Mingo .....	5,224	857
Monongalia .....	57,540	1,036
Monroe .....	1,945	781
Morgan .....	2,803	640
Nicholas .....	7,250	703
Ohio .....	28,290	829
Pendleton .....	1,520	578
Pleasants .....	2,846	935
Pocahontas .....	3,006	612
Preston .....	7,298	788
Putnam .....	20,266	1,023
Raleigh .....	32,154	842
Randolph .....	11,321	717
Ritchie .....	3,193	831
Roane .....	2,972	705
Summers .....	2,164	615
Taylor .....	3,221	846
Tucker .....	2,578	675
Tyler .....	2,084	882
Upshur .....	7,444	754
Wayne .....	8,398	842
Webster .....	1,688	654
Wetzel .....	4,439	679
Wirt .....	601	665
Wood .....	35,649	822

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 2019 - Continued**

Area	Employment September 2019	Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>
Wyoming .....	4,093	741

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 2019**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2018-19	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2018-19	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	148,556.5	1.1	\$1,093	--	3.6	--
Alabama	1,989.5	1.1	919	36	3.8	18
Alaska	338.0	1.2	1,105	14	3.7	21
Arizona	2,913.4	2.6	1,018	22	4.5	4
Arkansas	1,222.8	0.0	841	49	3.8	18
California	17,713.1	1.4	1,309	5	3.8	18
Colorado	2,749.0	2.4	1,170	8	6.1	1
Connecticut	1,676.6	-0.3	1,236	6	2.3	50
Delaware	453.2	1.1	1,078	15	3.3	32
District of Columbia	776.4	0.6	1,851	1	2.5	49
Florida	8,838.2	1.7	955	29	3.4	27
Georgia	4,509.7	1.4	1,026	20	3.4	27
Hawaii	654.1	-0.3	1,012	23	3.9	15
Idaho	765.2	2.9	838	50	4.1	10
Illinois	6,023.1	0.0	1,125	10	3.6	23
Indiana	3,083.5	0.3	914	37	3.5	26
Iowa	1,556.9	0.1	914	37	3.0	39
Kansas	1,395.9	0.4	893	43	2.9	43
Kentucky	1,910.8	0.7	884	45	3.4	27
Louisiana	1,913.5	-0.3	923	35	2.6	47
Maine	632.6	0.9	887	44	4.2	7
Maryland	2,696.9	0.2	1,169	9	3.6	23
Massachusetts	3,642.5	0.9	1,359	2	4.2	7
Michigan	4,375.8	0.2	1,021	21	3.0	39
Minnesota	2,917.8	0.4	1,107	13	3.0	39
Mississippi	1,135.8	0.1	768	51	2.7	46
Missouri	2,826.5	0.6	942	31	3.9	15
Montana	478.9	1.2	848	48	3.9	15
Nebraska	984.7	0.3	908	39	4.0	13
Nevada	1,412.2	2.1	973	26	4.1	10
New Hampshire	667.9	0.8	1,075	16	3.4	27
New Jersey	4,104.0	0.9	1,217	7	3.0	39
New Mexico	842.1	1.7	899	40	5.1	2
New York	9,575.4	1.1	1,314	4	3.3	32
North Carolina	4,501.3	2.2	972	27	3.6	23
North Dakota	428.4	0.9	1,028	19	3.3	32
Ohio	5,443.3	0.3	976	25	3.1	37
Oklahoma	1,628.8	0.5	897	41	2.6	47
Oregon	1,970.7	1.4	1,037	18	3.2	35
Pennsylvania	5,947.9	0.8	1,064	17	3.2	35
Rhode Island	491.3	0.6	991	24	2.8	44
South Carolina	2,132.4	2.2	866	46	3.7	21
South Dakota	433.4	0.4	855	47	3.4	27
Tennessee	3,060.8	1.9	966	28	2.8	44
Texas	12,603.2	2.1	1,109	12	4.1	10
Utah	1,535.2	2.8	954	30	4.8	3
Vermont	311.0	0.0	927	34	4.3	5
Virginia	3,931.4	1.0	1,125	10	4.0	13
Washington	3,489.8	2.1	1,335	3	4.3	5
West Virginia	694.4	-1.8	897	41	0.3	51
Wisconsin	2,893.8	0.1	929	33	3.1	37
Wyoming	283.1	1.5	942	31	4.2	7
Puerto Rico	878.9	1.9	528	(3)	-0.8	(3)
Virgin Islands	37.8	9.6	1,012	(3)	12.8	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

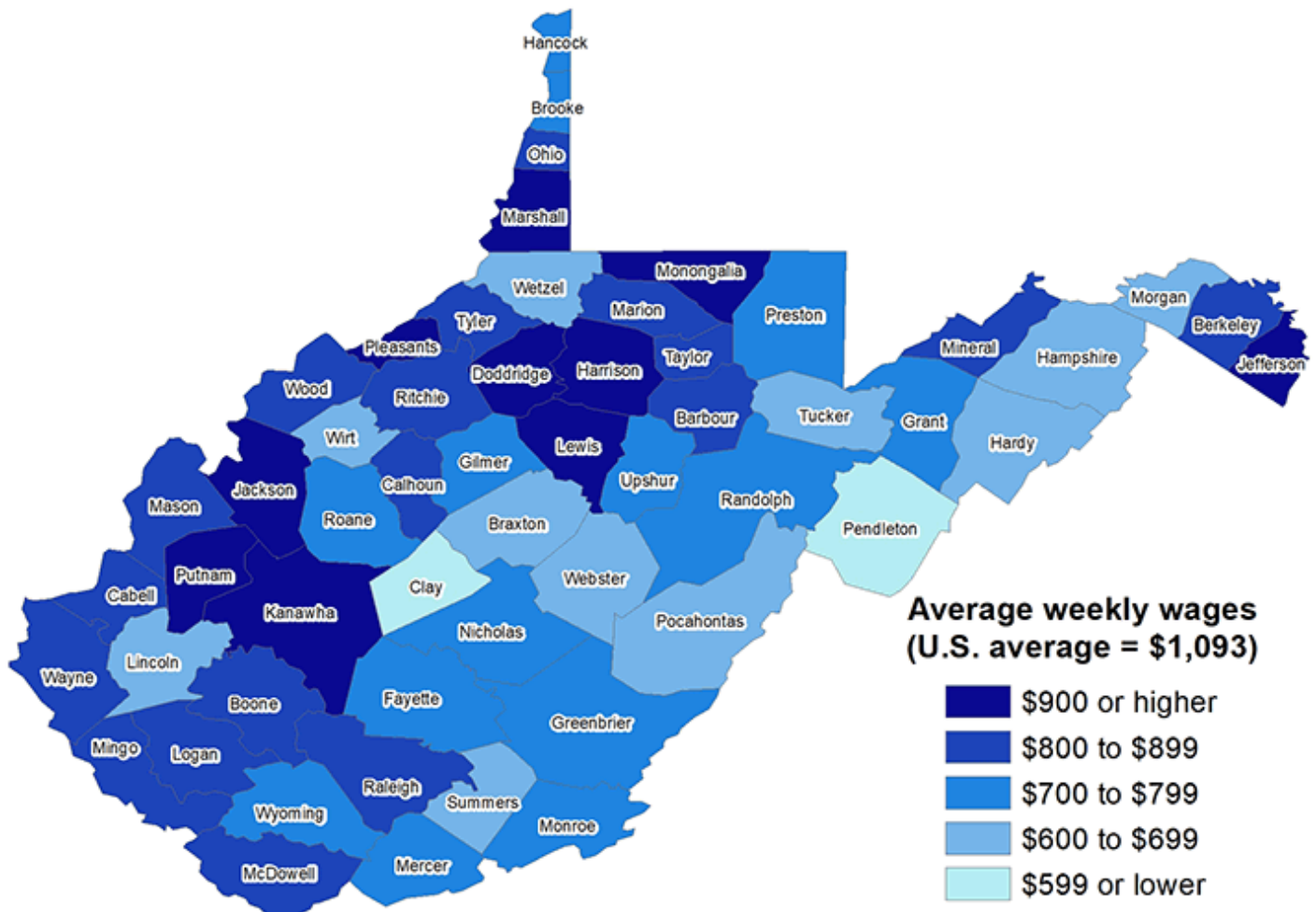
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 2019**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.