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## **County Employment and Wages in North Dakota – Third Quarter 2013**

North Dakota's only large county, Cass, reported an average weekly wage of \$861 in the third quarter of 2013, 4.0 percent higher than one year ago, 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 2012 preliminary annual averages of employment.) Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 1.9 percent over the year to \$922 in the third quarter of 2013. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that though Cass County's wages were below the U.S. average, ten of the state's smaller counties, those with employment below 75,000, reported wages above that for the nation. (See [tables 1](#) and [2](#).)

Employment in Cass County increased 2.7 percent from September 2012 to September 2013. Cass County's employment level of 111,300 accounted for 25.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationally, employment rose 1.7 percent during this 12-month period, as 286 of the 334 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.4 percent of total U.S. employment.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 52 smaller counties in North Dakota. Average weekly wages varied widely across the state, with nine having wages above \$1,000 and two reporting wages under \$550. (See [table 2](#).)

### **Large county wage changes**

Cass County's 4.0-percent wage growth from the third quarter of 2012 to the third quarter of 2013 ranked 17th nationally. (See [table 1](#).) Among the 334 largest U.S. counties, 291 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. San Mateo, Calif., had the largest increase with a gain of 9.9 percent. Dane, Wis., was second with wage growth of 9.3 percent, followed by Collier, Fla. (8.0 percent). Wage decreases were recorded in 40 large counties nationwide; Pinellas, Fla., experienced the largest over-the-year wage loss at 4.3 percent.

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

Cass County's \$861 average wage placed in the top half among the 334 large counties, ranking 164th. Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 101 of the largest counties in the country. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,868. San Mateo, Calif., was second at \$1,698, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$1,667), Washington, D.C. (\$1,560), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,549).

Of the largest counties in the United States, 232, or more than two-thirds, reported average weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2013. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C., at \$564 per week. Pasco, Fla. (\$635), joined the Texas counties of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Webb among the bottom five.

### **Average weekly wages in North Dakota's smaller counties**

Forty-two of the 52 counties in North Dakota with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$922. Ten small counties had above-average wages, all located in the western portion of the state. The highest wage was reported in Williams County at \$1,493, followed by McKenzie (\$1,386) and Slope (\$1,362). Logan County reported the lowest wage in the state, averaging \$500 in the third quarter of 2013. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 53 counties in North Dakota were considered, 2 reported average weekly wages under \$550, 13 had wages from \$550 to \$649, 18 reported wages from \$650 to \$749, 4 reported wages from \$750 to \$849, and 16 had wages of \$850 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 2012 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 2013 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2012/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2012/home.htm). The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in September 2014.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

### **Changes to QCEW Data Files**

BLS discontinued its ftp service on February 28, 2014. As part of this transition, the QCEW data file collection was substantially reorganized and improved. For more information see [www.bls.gov/cew/about-data/data-files-guide.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/about-data/data-files-guide.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 9.3 million employer reports cover 135.0 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/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised (see Technical Note below) 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 <sup>(1)</sup> employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in North Dakota, third quarter 2013 <sup>(2)</sup>**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(3)</sup>			
	September 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2012-13 <sup>(4)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(5)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(5)</sup>	Percent change, third quarter 2012-13 <sup>(4)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(5)</sup>
United States <sup>(6)</sup> .....	134,957.5	1.7	--	\$922	--	1.9	--
North Dakota .....	436.7	3.4	--	921	16	5.5	1
Cass, N.D. ....	111.3	2.7	68	861	164	4.0	17

Footnotes:

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

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

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

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

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

**Table 2. Covered <sup>(1)</sup> employment and wages in the United States and all counties in North Dakota, third quarter 2013 <sup>(2)</sup>**

Area	Employment September 2013	Average weekly wage <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	134,957,493	\$922
North Dakota .....	436,708	921
Adams .....	984	670
Barnes .....	5,034	652
Benson .....	2,203	724
Billings .....	745	687
Bottineau .....	2,725	778
Bowman .....	1,957	891
Burke .....	1,037	1,092
Burleigh .....	56,756	862
Cass .....	111,299	861
Cavalier .....	1,530	733
Dickey .....	2,136	617
Divide .....	1,033	933
Dunn .....	3,256	1,331
Eddy .....	768	601
Emmons .....	993	587
Foster .....	1,648	698
Golden Valley .....	729	683
Grand Forks .....	40,667	763
Grant .....	594	593
Griggs .....	1,014	626
Hettinger .....	724	653
Kidder .....	671	623
LaMoure .....	1,444	642
Logan .....	634	500
McHenry .....	1,390	726
McIntosh .....	1,147	560
McKenzie .....	9,915	1,386
McLean .....	3,657	854
Mercer .....	5,030	1,155
Morton .....	10,855	766
Mountrail .....	7,407	1,255
Nelson .....	1,122	590
Oliver .....	835	1,265
Pembina .....	3,975	785
Pierce .....	1,780	688
Ramsey .....	5,941	704
Ransom .....	2,151	588
Renville .....	854	919
Richland .....	8,086	711
Rolette .....	4,530	616
Sargent .....	2,716	699
Sheridan .....	263	505
Sioux .....	1,720	731
Slope .....	260	1,362
Stark .....	22,011	1,173
Steele .....	637	734
Stutsman .....	11,245	715
Towner .....	796	598
Traill .....	3,497	696
Walsh .....	5,610	660
Ward .....	36,322	910
Wells .....	1,706	552
Williams .....	38,788	1,493

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes

- (1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.
- (2) Data are preliminary.
- (3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
- (4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 3. Covered <sup>(1)</sup> employment and wages by state, third quarter 2013 <sup>(2)</sup>**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(3)</sup>			
	September 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2012-13	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	134,957.5	1.7	\$922	--	1.9	--
Alabama .....	1,847.6	0.8	794	34	1.3	43
Alaska .....	345.0	0.4	990	9	3.0	7
Arizona .....	2,490.9	2.2	859	22	1.5	36
Arkansas .....	1,156.5	0.1	723	47	2.1	21
California .....	15,526.4	2.7	1,057	6	2.1	21
Colorado .....	2,355.7	3.1	952	12	1.7	31
Connecticut .....	1,650.3	0.7	1,109	3	1.9	28
Delaware .....	416.8	2.1	941	14	2.1	21
District of Columbia .....	726.2	1.5	1,560	1	3.0	7
Florida .....	7,501.8	2.6	808	31	1.1	46
Georgia .....	3,928.2	2.3	867	21	1.5	36
Hawaii .....	617.7	1.7	839	25	1.6	33
Idaho .....	644.7	2.3	703	50	2.3	19
Illinois .....	5,731.7	0.7	959	11	1.5	36
Indiana .....	2,883.6	1.2	784	38	1.6	33
Iowa .....	1,512.0	1.5	772	40	2.1	21
Kansas .....	1,347.6	1.8	776	39	2.0	26
Kentucky .....	1,794.5	1.0	760	43	1.1	46
Louisiana .....	1,893.4	1.4	827	28	2.9	10
Maine .....	601.5	0.7	735	46	1.8	30
Maryland .....	2,546.4	0.6	1,011	8	0.4	51
Massachusetts .....	3,318.3	1.2	1,131	2	2.6	11
Michigan .....	4,069.7	2.1	875	20	1.5	36
Minnesota .....	2,724.2	1.7	938	15	2.6	11
Mississippi .....	1,099.1	0.8	688	51	2.5	15
Missouri .....	2,661.0	1.3	805	32	1.4	40
Montana .....	446.7	1.2	705	49	2.3	19
Nebraska .....	937.5	1.3	766	41	3.4	3
Nevada .....	1,169.4	2.5	836	27	2.0	26
New Hampshire .....	624.5	0.6	895	18	2.4	17
New Jersey .....	3,851.9	1.2	1,068	5	1.3	43
New Mexico .....	793.7	0.5	766	41	0.7	49
New York .....	8,724.8	1.3	1,108	4	1.7	31
North Carolina .....	4,006.4	1.7	817	30	1.4	40
North Dakota .....	436.7	3.4	921	16	5.5	1
Ohio .....	5,147.5	1.4	837	26	1.2	45
Oklahoma .....	1,572.6	1.4	797	33	2.4	17
Oregon .....	1,709.8	2.4	856	23	2.6	11
Pennsylvania .....	5,622.4	0.3	913	17	1.6	33
Rhode Island .....	465.2	1.3	878	19	2.6	11
South Carolina .....	1,859.3	2.3	751	44	1.9	28
South Dakota .....	408.9	0.9	706	48	3.4	3
Tennessee .....	2,712.8	1.5	819	29	0.6	50
Texas .....	11,091.9	2.8	952	12	2.5	15
Utah .....	1,265.5	2.9	791	36	3.1	6
Vermont .....	302.5	0.0	788	37	3.4	3
Virginia .....	3,650.1	0.6	971	10	1.1	46
Washington .....	3,017.9	2.4	1,044	7	2.1	21
West Virginia .....	710.3	-0.7	751	44	3.7	2
Wisconsin .....	2,752.7	1.1	793	35	3.0	7
Wyoming .....	286.1	0.2	840	24	1.4	40
Puerto Rico .....	910.9	-2.5	501	(5)	-0.6	(5)
Virgin Islands .....	37.9	-1.9	706	(5)	-0.6	(5)

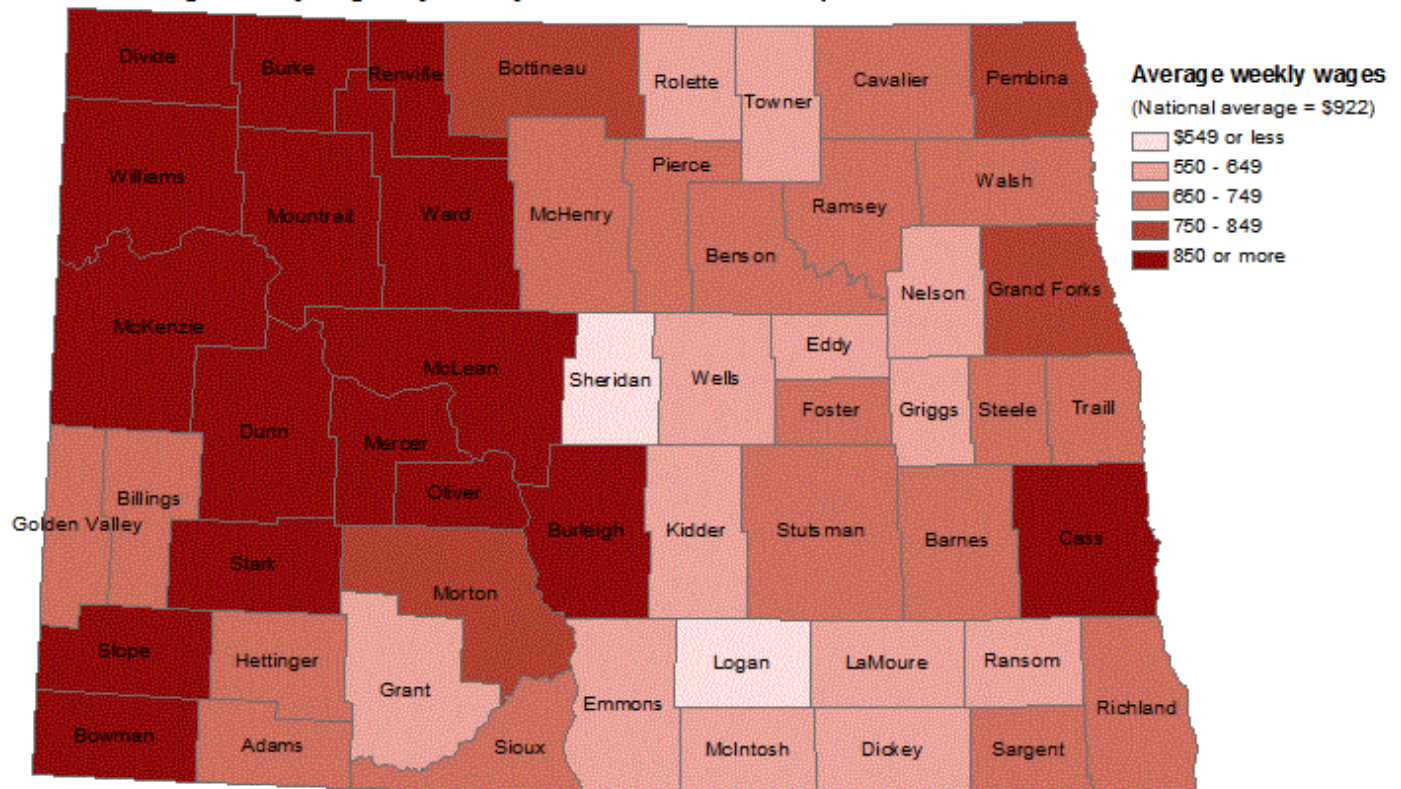
Note: See footnotes at end of table.



Footnotes:

- (1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.
- (2) Data are preliminary.
- (3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
- (4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
- (5) Data not included in the national ranking.

**Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in North Dakota, third quarter 2013**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.