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County Employment and Wages in North Dakota — Third Quarter 2014

North Dakota's only large county, Cass, reported an average weekly wage of \$897 in the third quarter of 2014, 4.3 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 2013 preliminary annual averages of employment.) Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 2.9 percent over the year to \$949 in the third quarter of 2014. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that though Cass County's wages were below the U.S. average, eleven of the state's smaller counties, those with employment below 75,000, reported wages above that for the nation. (See [table 1](#).)

Employment in Cass County increased 4.4 percent from September 2013 to September 2014. Cass County's employment level of 116,300 accounted for 25.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationally, employment rose 2.0 percent during this 12-month period, as 306 of the 339 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Nationwide, the 339 largest counties made up 71.8 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 three having wages above \$1,400 and two reporting wages under \$550. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Cass County's 4.3-percent wage growth from the third quarter of 2013 to the third quarter of 2014 ranked 28th nationally. (See [table 1](#).) Among the 339 largest U.S. counties, 328 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Olmsted, Minn., had the largest increase with a gain of 11.1 percent. San Francisco, Calif., was second with wage growth of 8.6 percent, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., (7.4 percent). Wage decreases were recorded in 10 large counties nationwide; Collier, Fla., experienced the largest over-the-year wage loss at 3.9 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Cass County's \$897 average wage placed in the top half among the 339 large counties, ranking 147th. Nationally, Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,012. San Mateo, Calif., was second at \$1,824, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$1,733), San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,685), and Washington, D.C. (\$1,631).

Average weekly wages in North Dakota's smaller counties

Forty-one of the 52 counties in North Dakota with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$949. Eleven small counties had above-average wages, all located in the western portion of the state. The highest wage was reported in Williams County at \$1,563, followed by McKenzie (\$1,491) and Slope (\$1,409). Sheridan County reported the lowest wage in the state, averaging \$468 in the third quarter of 2014. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 53 counties in North Dakota were considered, 5 reported average weekly wages under \$600, 14 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 15 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 6 reported wages from \$800 to \$899, and 13 had 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.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2013 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 2014 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2013 are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2013/home.htm. The 2014 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online will be available in September 2015.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2014 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 17, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. (CT).

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 9.4 million employer reports cover 137.7 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.

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.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in North Dakota, third quarter 2014

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	137,724.1	2.0	--	\$949	--	2.9	--
North Dakota	455.9	4.3	--	977	14	6.1	1
Cass, N.D.	116.3	4.4	19	897	147	4.3	28

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 North Dakota, third quarter 2014

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	137,724,117	\$949
North Dakota	455,912	977
Adams	980	678
Barnes	4,967	671
Benson	2,199	733
Billings	773	732
Bottineau	2,785	821
Bowman	1,872	856
Burke	970	1,089
Burleigh	57,977	911
Cass	116,334	897
Cavalier	1,502	761
Dickey	2,143	644
Divide	1,110	1,011
Dunn	3,347	1,379
Eddy	772	615
Emmons	990	613
Foster	1,685	706
Golden Valley	731	787
Grand Forks	41,417	796
Grant	625	630
Griggs	996	641
Hettinger	747	703
Kidder	669	685
LaMoure	1,433	663
Logan	633	545
McHenry	1,381	751
McIntosh	1,083	579
McKenzie	12,012	1,491
McLean	3,631	896
Mercer	5,414	1,206
Morton	11,182	829
Mountrail	8,569	1,381
Nelson	1,110	597
Oliver	859	1,313
Pembina	4,025	816
Pierce	1,747	690
Ramsey	5,971	722
Ransom	2,085	612
Renville	944	958
Richland	7,903	714
Rolette	4,610	658
Sargent	2,839	707
Sheridan	264	468
Sioux	1,715	764
Slope	227	1,409
Stark	25,096	1,274
Steele	600	797
Stutsman	11,239	744
Towner	745	600
Traill	3,531	717
Walsh	5,624	678
Ward	36,921	948
Wells	1,664	589
Williams	43,071	1,563

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.

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 2014

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2013-14	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2013-14	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	137,724.1	2.0	\$949	--	2.9	--
Alabama	1,871.2	1.3	815	34	2.5	30
Alaska	344.7	-0.1	1,019	9	3.0	19
Arizona	2,539.6	1.8	876	24	2.0	40
Arkansas	1,170.9	1.3	737	47	1.8	44
California	16,013.4	3.1	1,095	5	3.7	7
Colorado	2,443.0	3.7	982	12	3.0	19
Connecticut	1,663.2	0.8	1,124	4	1.4	49
Delaware	426.1	1.9	961	16	2.2	37
District of Columbia	732.9	0.8	1,631	1	4.5	2
Florida	7,748.4	3.3	826	32	2.1	38
Georgia.....	4,059.0	3.4	891	21	2.8	23
Hawaii.....	625.1	0.9	870	25	3.9	4
Idaho	658.4	2.1	721	50	2.6	26
Illinois	5,807.4	1.2	982	12	2.5	30
Indiana.....	2,924.7	1.4	799	39	1.9	42
Iowa	1,528.8	1.1	800	38	3.6	10
Kansas	1,363.1	1.2	794	40	2.3	35
Kentucky.....	1,827.8	1.8	781	42	2.5	30
Louisiana	1,928.3	1.7	852	27	3.1	16
Maine.....	604.5	0.3	754	46	2.6	26
Maryland.....	2,574.5	1.1	1,042	8	3.1	16
Massachusetts	3,386.7	1.8	1,164	2	3.0	19
Michigan	4,141.0	1.7	896	19	2.4	33
Minnesota.....	2,757.9	1.1	965	15	2.9	22
Mississippi.....	1,105.0	0.5	697	51	1.3	50
Missouri	2,686.4	1.0	828	31	2.7	25
Montana	449.5	0.7	732	49	3.7	7
Nebraska	950.0	1.1	779	43	1.8	44
Nevada	1,215.8	4.0	840	28	0.5	51
New Hampshire.....	633.5	1.4	927	18	3.6	10
New Jersey.....	3,880.4	0.8	1,087	6	1.7	47
New Mexico	804.0	1.1	786	41	2.6	26
New York	8,902.1	2.0	1,145	3	3.2	15
North Carolina	4,085.5	1.9	839	29	2.8	23
North Dakota	455.9	4.3	977	14	6.1	1
Ohio	5,219.1	1.4	863	26	3.1	16
Oklahoma	1,592.3	1.0	826	32	3.6	10
Oregon	1,752.8	2.4	887	22	3.6	10
Pennsylvania	5,676.2	1.0	937	17	2.6	26
Rhode Island	471.8	1.4	895	20	1.8	44
South Carolina.....	1,902.7	2.4	768	45	2.4	33
South Dakota.....	415.8	1.7	733	48	3.7	7
Tennessee	2,775.5	2.4	837	30	2.1	38
Texas	11,433.6	3.1	988	11	3.8	6
Utah	1,304.7	3.1	803	37	1.5	48
Vermont.....	306.5	1.2	805	36	2.3	35
Virginia.....	3,667.9	0.6	989	10	2.0	40
Washington.....	3,112.8	3.2	1,087	6	3.9	4
West Virginia	709.3	-0.2	778	44	3.5	14
Wisconsin	2,783.1	1.1	808	35	1.9	42
Wyoming	291.3	1.7	877	23	4.4	3
Puerto Rico.....	896.7	-1.5	505	(3)	0.8	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	37.5	-1.0	720	(3)	2.0	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Average weekly wages
(National Average = \$949)

- < \$599
- \$600 - 699
- \$700 - 799
- \$800 - 899
- \$900 or more

Counties shown on the map: Divide, Burke, Renville, Bottineau, Rolette, Towner, Cavalier, Pembina, Williams, Mountrail, Ward, McHenry, Pierce, Walsh, Ramsey, Benson, Nelson, Grand Forks, McKenzie, McLean, Sheridan, Wells, Eddy, Foster, Griggs, Steele, Traill, Dunn, Mercer, Oliver, Burleigh, Kidder, Stutsman, Barnes, Cass, Golden Valley, Billings, Stark, Morton, Slope, Hettinger, Grant, Emmons, Logan, LaMoure, Ransom, Bowman, Adams, Sioux, McIntosh, Dickey, Sargent, Richland.

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