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## **County Employment and Wages in Minnesota — Third Quarter 2017**

Employment increased in all eight of the large counties in Minnesota from September 2016 to September 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2016 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Washington County had the largest increase, up 3.3 percent, followed by Anoka, up 2.0 percent. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that the rates of job growth in 4 of the 8 large counties were above the national increase of 1.0 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Among the eight largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin (927,200) in September 2017, followed by Ramsey (334,900). Two other counties—Dakota and Anoka—each had employment levels of more than 100,000. Collectively, Minnesota's eight large counties accounted for 67.4 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 72.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the third quarter of 2016 to the third quarter of 2017, 7 of Minnesota's 8 large counties had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Olmsted County was the state's only large county that had a wage gain (2.5 percent). Hennepin County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,236, followed by Olmsted (\$1,180) and Ramsey (\$1,124). (See [table 1](#).) Nationally, the average weekly wage fell 0.6 percent over the year to \$1,021 in the third quarter of 2017.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 79 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

### **Large county wage changes**

Average weekly wages declined over the year in 7 of the 8 large counties in Minnesota, with all of the losses larger than the national decrease of 0.6 percent. (See [table 1](#).) Wage declines in the seven counties ranged from 0.8 percent in Stearns to 3.6 percent in Dakota. Olmsted County's 2.5-percent wage increase ranked 14<sup>th</sup> nationwide.

Nationally, 265 of the 346 largest counties registered over-the-year wage decreases. Mercer, N.J., had the largest decline, down 8.8 percent from the third quarter of 2016. Wyandotte, Kan., was second with a wage decrease of 6.0 percent, followed by Clark, Nev. (-5.3 percent); Somerset, N.J. (-5.0 percent); and Clay, Mo. (-4.8 percent).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 71 experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase in average weekly wages (8.4 percent), followed by Union, N.J. (8.2 percent); Elkhart, Ind. (6.5 percent); Forsyth, N.C. (5.3 percent); and Maui + Kalawao, Hawaii (4.6 percent).

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

Average weekly wages in 3 of Minnesota's 8 large counties were above the national average of \$1,021 in the third quarter of 2017. As noted, Hennepin County (\$1,236) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 29<sup>th</sup> among the 346 largest U.S. counties. Olmsted (\$1,180) and Ramsey (\$1,124) placed 43<sup>rd</sup> and 56<sup>th</sup>, respectively. St. Louis (\$844) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties and ranked 269<sup>th</sup> nationwide.

Nationwide, average weekly wages were above the U.S. average (\$1,021) in 96 of the 346 largest counties in the third quarter of 2017. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties in the nation with an average weekly wage of \$2,320. San Mateo, Calif., was second at \$2,123, followed by San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,954); New York, N.Y. (\$1,889); and Washington, D.C. (\$1,759).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 250 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2017. Cameron, Texas (\$612), had the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Horry, S.C. (\$633); Hidalgo, Texas (\$649); and Webb, Texas (\$672).

### **Average weekly wages in Minnesota's smaller counties**

Among the 79 smaller counties in the state (those with employment below 75,000), Carver County had the highest average weekly wage at \$971, followed by Mower County at \$898. Cass County had the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties at \$590, followed by Cook County at \$591. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, 7 reported average weekly wages of \$649 or lower, 35 had wages from \$650 to \$749, 31 reported wages from \$750 to \$849, and 14 had wages of \$850 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](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 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 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at [www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2016/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2016/home.htm). The 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2018.

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**The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 23, 2018.**

## **QCEW Publication Acceleration and Conversion to Two Data Releases**

The national QCEW publication process is accelerating for a more timely release. Beginning with the national fourth quarter 2017 release, QCEW data will be published in two parts. The current County Employment and Wages news release and associated data will be accelerated and published first. The full QCEW data release will occur two weeks later, accompanied by a data release notice.

### **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 9.9 million employer reports cover 144.5 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. 13, the number of weeks in a quarter, then divide the result. 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 United States and the 8 largest counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2017**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2016-17 <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 2016-17 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	144,464.4	1.0	--	\$1,021	--	-0.6	--
Minnesota.....	2,883.0	1.1	--	1,030	13	-2.0	45
Anoka, Minn. ....	123.0	2.0	60	1,008	109	-1.9	245
Dakota, Minn. ....	188.7	0.7	192	959	149	-3.6	326
Hennepin, Minn. ....	927.2	1.8	75	1,236	29	-2.9	307
Olmsted, Minn. ....	97.7	1.6	80	1,180	43	2.5	14
Ramsey, Minn.....	334.9	0.4	233	1,124	56	-2.5	285
St. Louis, Minn.....	99.1	0.6	209	844	269	-3.1	314
Stearns, Minn. ....	87.2	0.9	167	877	230	-0.8	142
Washington, Minn.....	85.4	3.3	16	851	262	-2.0	256

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 Minnesota, third quarter 2017**

Area	Employment September 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2) .....	144,464,425	\$1,021
Minnesota .....	2,883,045	1,030
Aitkin .....	4,138	655
Anoka .....	122,967	1,008
Becker .....	14,602	724
Beltrami .....	19,629	799
Benton .....	17,598	786
Big Stone .....	1,791	723
Blue Earth .....	40,267	826
Brown .....	14,045	769
Carlton .....	13,745	843
Carver .....	39,126	971
Cass .....	11,100	590
Chippewa .....	5,718	705
Chisago .....	15,608	840
Clay .....	19,193	751
Clearwater .....	2,879	727
Cook .....	3,202	591
Cottonwood .....	4,582	699
Crow Wing .....	30,351	727
Dakota .....	188,687	959
Dodge .....	5,977	874
Douglas .....	18,900	758
Faribault .....	4,757	709
Fillmore .....	6,068	629
Freeborn .....	11,988	767
Goodhue .....	21,626	871
Grant .....	1,877	728
Hennepin .....	927,199	1,236
Houston .....	5,175	627
Hubbard .....	6,470	716
Isanti .....	10,802	786
Itasca .....	15,977	770
Jackson .....	5,034	695
Kanabec .....	3,887	748
Kandiyohi .....	24,534	728
Kittson .....	1,491	670
Koochiching .....	4,561	774
Lac qui Parle .....	2,174	633
Lake .....	4,348	766
Lake of the Woods .....	1,543	655
Le Sueur .....	9,120	816
Lincoln .....	1,723	676
Lyon .....	14,506	795
McLeod .....	16,244	829
Mahnomen .....	1,939	689
Marshall .....	2,227	757
Martin .....	8,744	781
Meeker .....	7,385	706
Mille Lacs .....	9,671	678
Morrison .....	10,844	709
Mower .....	16,664	898
Murray .....	3,038	669
Nicollet .....	15,221	818
Nobles .....	10,483	781
Norman .....	1,667	687
Olmsted .....	97,720	1,180

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2017 - Continued**

Area	Employment September 2017	Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>
Otter Tail .....	23,470	722
Pennington .....	10,188	832
Pine .....	8,462	598
Pipestone .....	4,416	711
Polk .....	12,356	734
Pope .....	4,349	787
Ramsey .....	334,884	1,124
Red Lake .....	1,035	682
Redwood .....	5,999	716
Renville .....	6,229	723
Rice .....	25,263	858
Rock .....	3,609	734
Roseau .....	8,038	836
St. Louis .....	99,143	844
Scott .....	53,608	891
Sherburne .....	25,960	849
Sibley .....	4,818	752
Stearns .....	87,193	877
Steele .....	21,033	830
Stevens .....	5,629	874
Swift .....	3,658	725
Todd .....	6,533	749
Traverse .....	1,184	640
Wabasha .....	6,929	683
Wadena .....	5,350	712
Waseca .....	6,591	796
Washington .....	85,391	851
Watonwan .....	4,262	659
Wilkin .....	1,877	786
Winona .....	24,912	777
Wright .....	43,978	796
Yellow Medicine .....	3,916	708

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 2017**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup> .....	144,464.4	1.0	\$1,021	--	-0.6	--
Alabama .....	1,941.1	0.8	859	37	-1.3	38
Alaska .....	335.4	-0.7	1,025	15	-2.8	50
Arizona .....	2,760.1	2.4	948	24	-0.2	10
Arkansas .....	1,213.0	0.6	788	49	-0.6	19
California .....	17,153.4	1.7	1,215	4	0.5	4
Colorado .....	2,625.9	1.9	1,067	9	0.5	4
Connecticut .....	1,676.3	0.1	1,179	6	-2.2	47
Delaware .....	443.0	0.4	1,026	14	0.4	6
District of Columbia .....	764.7	0.7	1,759	1	1.3	2
Florida .....	8,305.8	-0.2	896	29	-1.1	31
Georgia.....	4,343.5	1.3	961	21	-0.9	27
Hawaii.....	652.5	0.4	953	22	-0.3	13
Idaho .....	722.3	2.7	778	50	-0.5	16
Illinois .....	5,969.6	0.5	1,057	10	-0.3	13
Indiana.....	3,044.0	0.6	861	36	-0.6	19
Iowa .....	1,546.1	-0.2	855	38	-2.2	47
Kansas .....	1,376.4	-0.1	839	41	-2.1	46
Kentucky.....	1,890.4	0.5	837	42	-2.4	49
Louisiana .....	1,904.3	-0.1	869	33	-1.7	42
Maine.....	621.9	0.7	821	46	-0.5	16
Maryland.....	2,661.8	0.5	1,105	8	-1.7	42
Massachusetts .....	3,568.0	0.9	1,265	2	-0.9	27
Michigan .....	4,334.3	0.9	964	20	-1.1	31
Minnesota.....	2,883.0	1.1	1,030	13	-2.0	45
Mississippi.....	1,129.1	-0.1	729	51	-1.4	39
Missouri .....	2,805.8	0.9	878	31	-1.2	34
Montana .....	468.6	0.9	793	48	0.1	8
Nebraska .....	973.3	-0.2	850	39	-0.8	23
Nevada .....	1,337.7	2.9	914	26	-3.8	51
New Hampshire.....	659.1	0.6	1,022	16	-0.4	15
New Jersey.....	4,043.6	1.1	1,156	7	-1.5	41
New Mexico .....	816.0	0.3	823	45	-0.8	23
New York .....	9,329.8	1.2	1,219	3	-0.2	10
North Carolina .....	4,348.0	1.3	904	27	-0.7	21
North Dakota .....	419.2	-1.0	953	22	-1.2	34
Ohio .....	5,383.6	0.6	920	25	-0.8	23
Oklahoma .....	1,593.3	0.7	843	40	-1.2	34
Oregon .....	1,905.3	1.8	969	19	-0.1	9
Pennsylvania .....	5,836.5	1.0	1,002	17	-1.1	31
Rhode Island .....	484.5	0.8	973	18	-1.8	44
South Carolina.....	2,027.2	0.8	828	43	-0.5	16
South Dakota.....	426.2	0.4	803	47	-0.7	21
Tennessee .....	2,953.3	1.1	903	28	-1.2	34
Texas .....	12,008.9	1.4	1,032	12	-1.0	29
Utah .....	1,444.1	2.6	879	30	-0.2	10
Vermont.....	310.3	0.1	869	33	-1.4	39
Virginia.....	3,843.6	1.0	1,053	11	-0.8	23
Washington.....	3,343.4	2.0	1,208	5	1.7	1
West Virginia .....	694.0	0.2	826	44	1.1	3
Wisconsin .....	2,866.9	0.5	876	32	-1.0	29
Wyoming .....	276.2	0.3	868	35	0.3	7
Puerto Rico.....	862.8	-3.1	509	(3)	-2.7	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	36.9	-1.1	763	(3)	-1.9	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

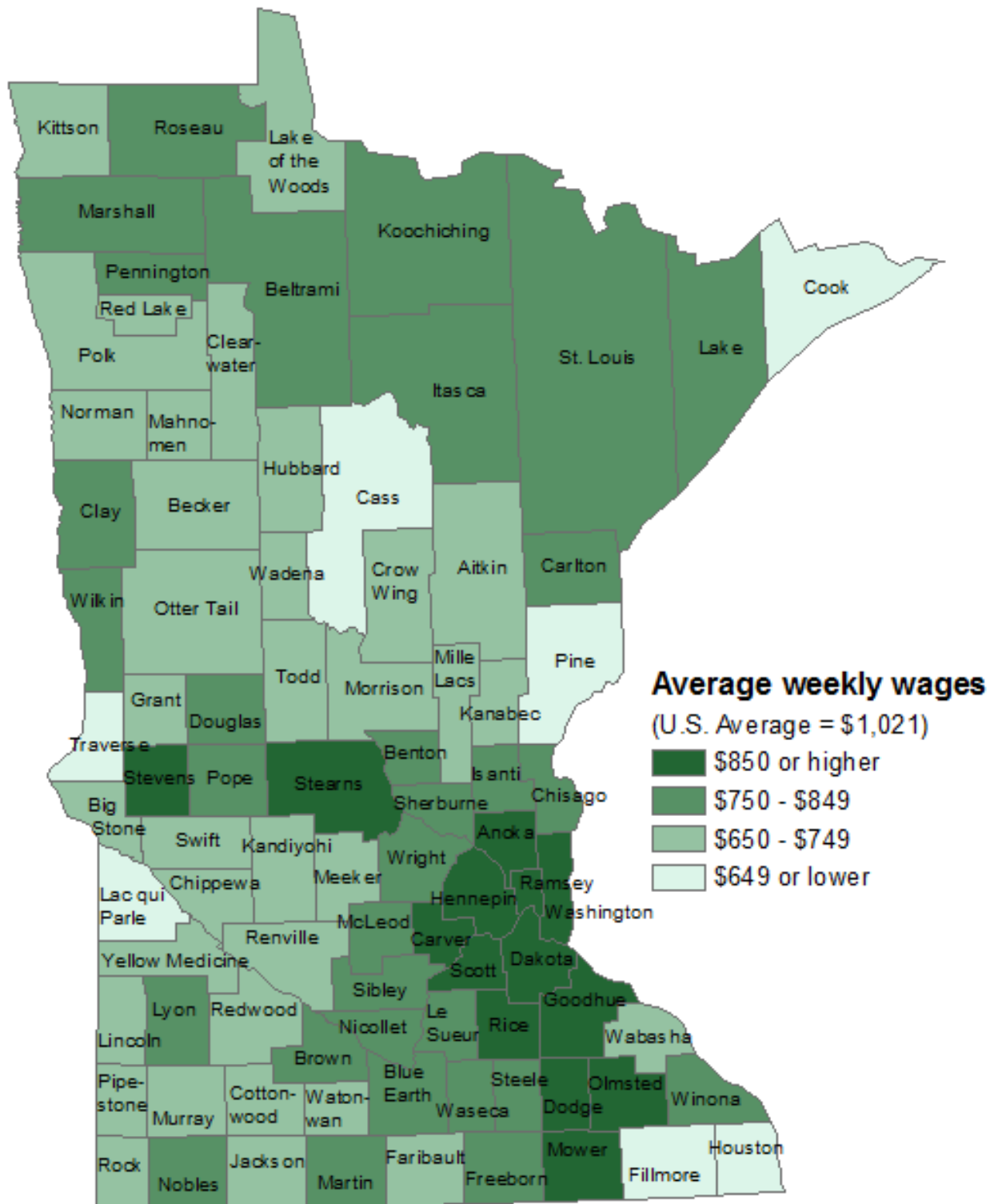
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 Minnesota, third quarter 2017**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.