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## **County Employment and Wages in Minnesota — Third Quarter 2018**

Employment increased in seven of the eight large counties in Minnesota from September 2017 to September 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or greater as measured by 2017 annual average employment.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that Anoka County had the largest increase, up 2.5 percent, followed by Olmsted, up 1.3 percent. Employment in St. Louis County declined 0.4 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.6 percent from September 2017 to September 2018 as 295 of the 349 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Midland, TX, had the largest over-the-year increase in employment with a gain of 11.9 percent. New Hanover, NC, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 2.0 percent.

Among the eight largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin (932,400) in September 2018, followed by Ramsey (335,200). The remaining six large counties each had employment levels of less than 200,000. Collectively, Minnesota's eight large counties accounted for 67.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 73.0 percent of total U.S. employment.

The eight large counties in Minnesota had average weekly wage increases from the third quarter of 2017 to the third quarter of 2018, with the largest gain in Dakota County (5.4 percent). Hennepin County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,289, followed by Olmsted (\$1,230) and Ramsey (\$1,171). (See [table 1](#).) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 3.3 percent over the year to \$1,055 in the third quarter of 2018.

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**

All of the eight large counties in Minnesota had wage increases from the third quarter of 2017 to the third quarter of 2018. Seven of these counties had wage gains that were greater than the national increase of 3.3 percent. (See [table 1](#).) Dakota County's 5.4-percent wage gain ranked 19<sup>th</sup> among the 349 largest U.S. counties. Three other large counties in the state had over-the-year wage increases that ranked among the top 50 nationwide: St. Louis (4.8 percent, 32<sup>nd</sup>), Anoka (4.5 percent, 41<sup>st</sup>), and Ramsey (4.4 percent, 44<sup>th</sup>).

Nationally, 336 of the 349 largest counties had over-the-year wage growth. Chatham, GA, had the largest increase, up 8.5 percent from the third quarter of 2017. King, WA, was second with a wage increase of 7.9 percent, followed by Santa Clara, CA, and Stanislaus, CA, at 7.8 percent each.

Among the largest U.S. counties, 11 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Elkhart, IN, had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-4.2 percent), followed by Union, NJ (-3.7 percent); Providence, RI (-3.4 percent); and Forsyth, NC (-3.0 percent).

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

Average weekly wages in three of Minnesota's eight large counties were above the national average of \$1,055 in the third quarter of 2018. As noted, Hennepin County (\$1,289) had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 24<sup>th</sup> among the 349 largest U.S. counties. Olmsted (\$1,230) and Ramsey (\$1,171) placed 40<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup>, respectively. Washington (\$871) 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 (\$1,055) in 94 of the 349 largest counties in the third quarter of 2018. Santa Clara, CA, held the top position among the highest-paid large counties in the nation with an average weekly wage of \$2,460. San Mateo, CA, was second at \$2,363, followed by San Francisco, CA (\$2,097); New York, NY (\$1,997); and Washington, DC (\$1,807).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 255 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2018. Cameron, TX, had the lowest wage at \$632, followed by Horry, SC (\$635); Hidalgo, TX (\$662); and Webb, TX (\$698).

### **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 \$1,002, followed by Scott County at \$976. Cass County had the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties at \$618, followed by Cook and Pine Counties each at \$622. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, 4 reported average weekly wages of \$649 or lower, 29 had wages from \$650 to \$749, 31 reported wages from \$750 to \$849, and 23 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, which was published in September 2018, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2018 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2017* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2017/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2017/home.htm). The 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2019.

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**The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 22, 2019. The County Employment and Wages full data update for fourth quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 5, 2019.**

## 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. 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 2018**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2017-18 <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 2017-18 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	146,824.1	1.6	--	\$1,055	--	3.3	--
Minnesota.....	2,904.3	0.8	--	1,074	12	4.2	5
Anoka, MN.....	127.0	2.5	65	1,053	96	4.5	41
Dakota, MN.....	190.3	0.4	249	1,018	124	5.4	19
Hennepin, MN.....	932.4	0.6	219	1,289	24	4.0	65
Olmsted, MN.....	100.0	1.3	148	1,230	40	3.6	101
Ramsey, MN.....	335.2	0.4	249	1,171	51	4.4	44
St. Louis, MN.....	98.8	-0.4	320	887	250	4.8	32
Stearns, MN.....	87.7	1.1	168	911	223	3.5	115
Washington, MN.....	87.8	1.1	168	871	269	1.5	304

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 2018**

Area	Employment September 2018	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	146,824,093	\$1,055
Minnesota	2,904,306	1,074
Aitkin	4,115	696
Anoka	126,997	1,053
Becker	14,617	709
Beltrami	20,247	821
Benton	17,494	824
Big Stone	1,714	735
Blue Earth	40,357	852
Brown	14,380	782
Carlton	13,470	872
Carver	41,015	1,002
Cass	11,266	618
Chippewa	5,809	747
Chisago	15,649	850
Clay	19,228	774
Clearwater	2,755	765
Cook	3,147	622
Cottonwood	5,009	715
Crow Wing	30,542	763
Dakota	190,311	1,018
Dodge	6,211	921
Douglas	19,122	805
Faribault	4,667	767
Fillmore	6,184	640
Freeborn	12,021	783
Goodhue	21,689	893
Grant	1,894	728
Hennepin	932,355	1,289
Houston	5,158	652
Hubbard	6,459	734
Isanti	11,079	796
Itasca	16,395	789
Jackson	5,087	724
Kanabec	3,881	780
Kandiyohi	24,672	767
Kittson	1,495	690
Koochiching	4,641	848
Lac qui Parle	2,148	663
Lake	4,386	801
Lake of the Woods	1,619	670
Le Sueur	8,932	854
Lincoln	1,693	679
Lyon	14,510	819
McLeod	16,349	849
Mahnomen	1,924	695
Marshall	2,302	822
Martin	8,620	818
Meeker	7,346	749
Mille Lacs	9,796	687
Morrison	10,984	728
Mower	16,418	934
Murray	3,060	697
Nicollet	15,417	865
Nobles	10,510	810
Norman	1,641	720
Olmsted	100,004	1,230

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2018 - Continued**

Area	Employment September 2018	Average weekly wage(1)
Otter Tail .....	23,437	743
Pennington .....	10,503	890
Pine .....	8,341	622
Pipestone .....	4,630	733
Polk .....	12,449	775
Pope .....	4,539	818
Ramsey .....	335,188	1,171
Red Lake .....	1,032	700
Redwood .....	6,063	756
Renville .....	6,174	749
Rice .....	25,424	885
Rock .....	3,397	732
Roseau .....	7,979	826
St. Louis .....	98,809	887
Scott .....	54,405	976
Sherburne .....	26,908	881
Sibley .....	4,694	785
Stearns .....	87,744	911
Steele .....	21,189	863
Stevens .....	5,650	917
Swift .....	3,663	754
Todd .....	6,628	775
Traverse .....	1,133	674
Wabasha .....	7,020	722
Wadena .....	5,590	731
Waseca .....	6,155	816
Washington .....	87,793	871
Watonwan .....	4,324	713
Wilkin .....	1,878	809
Winona .....	24,802	813
Wright .....	44,697	830
Yellow Medicine .....	4,050	712

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 2018**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	September 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	146,824.1	1.6	\$1,055	--	3.3	--
Alabama	1,966.0	1.2	885	38	3.1	25
Alaska	334.0	-0.4	1,065	13	3.7	12
Arizona	2,838.6	2.8	974	23	2.9	31
Arkansas	1,222.1	0.7	811	49	2.9	31
California	17,457.5	1.8	1,260	5	3.8	9
Colorado	2,684.0	2.1	1,104	9	3.5	18
Connecticut	1,681.5	0.3	1,209	6	2.5	41
Delaware	447.8	0.6	1,046	15	2.4	42
District of Columbia	770.7	0.7	1,807	1	2.8	36
Florida	8,690.7	4.6	924	29	3.1	25
Georgia	4,448.8	2.3	993	20	3.3	21
Hawaii	654.7	0.0	975	22	2.4	42
Idaho	743.5	3.0	805	50	3.2	23
Illinois	6,029.2	0.8	1,087	10	3.0	28
Indiana	3,072.3	0.9	883	39	2.4	42
Iowa	1,555.0	0.6	887	37	3.7	12
Kansas	1,390.4	1.0	867	42	3.5	18
Kentucky	1,898.7	0.5	855	43	2.2	47
Louisiana	1,915.4	0.5	901	33	3.7	12
Maine	626.5	0.6	851	45	3.7	12
Maryland	2,683.9	0.7	1,130	8	2.4	42
Massachusetts	3,598.1	0.7	1,305	2	3.2	23
Michigan	4,366.5	0.8	991	21	2.8	36
Minnesota	2,904.3	0.8	1,074	12	4.2	5
Mississippi	1,133.7	0.2	754	51	3.4	20
Missouri	2,812.0	0.4	907	31	3.3	21
Montana	473.3	1.0	815	48	2.8	36
Nebraska	980.3	0.6	873	41	2.8	36
Nevada	1,382.9	3.4	936	28	2.4	42
New Hampshire	662.3	0.5	1,040	16	1.7	49
New Jersey	4,072.6	0.8	1,181	7	2.1	48
New Mexico	826.2	1.2	855	43	3.9	7
New York	9,467.5	1.4	1,272	4	4.2	5
North Carolina	4,398.0	1.1	938	26	3.8	9
North Dakota	424.3	1.1	995	19	4.4	3
Ohio	5,424.4	0.7	947	25	2.9	31
Oklahoma	1,616.8	1.2	874	40	3.6	16
Oregon	1,939.8	1.5	1,005	18	3.8	9
Pennsylvania	5,894.8	1.0	1,031	17	3.0	28
Rhode Island	489.4	1.0	963	24	-1.3	51
South Carolina	2,088.2	2.8	834	46	0.8	50
South Dakota	431.5	1.3	827	47	3.0	28
Tennessee	3,005.6	1.7	938	26	3.9	7
Texas	12,327.0	2.6	1,064	14	3.1	25
Utah	1,494.4	3.4	911	30	3.6	16
Vermont	310.9	0.0	892	36	2.6	40
Virginia	3,889.6	1.1	1,082	11	2.9	31
Washington	3,425.6	2.4	1,280	3	6.2	2
West Virginia	706.0	1.7	894	35	8.1	1
Wisconsin	2,888.9	0.7	901	33	2.9	31
Wyoming	278.2	0.6	905	32	4.3	4
Puerto Rico	862.5	0.2	534	(3)	5.3	(3)
Virgin Islands	33.4	-8.0	888	(3)	18.6	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

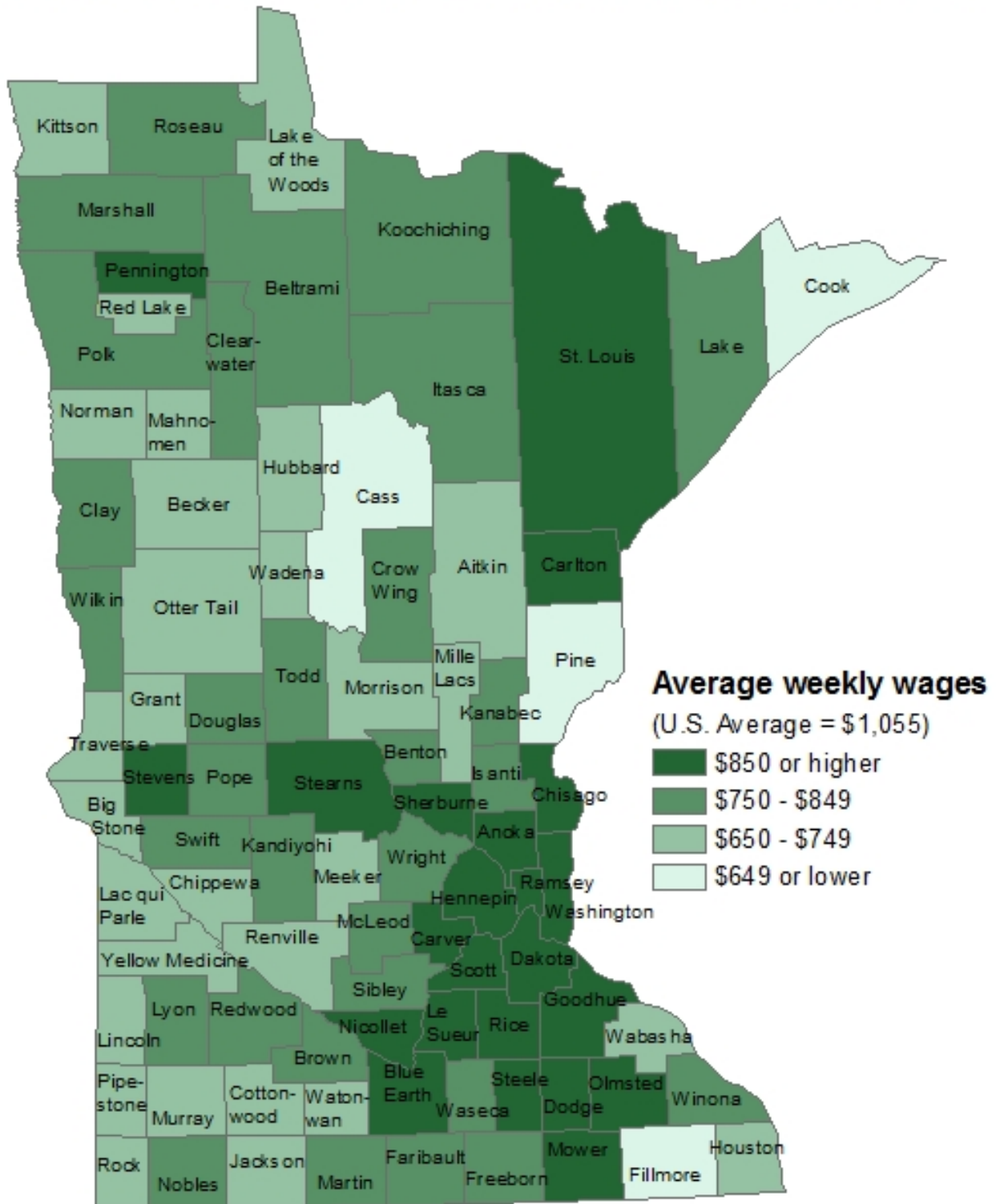
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 2018**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.