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County Employment and Wages in Minnesota — Third Quarter 2019

Employment rose in 6 of the 8 large counties in Minnesota from September 2018 to September 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more in 2018.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that Washington County had the fastest rate of job growth at 0.9 percent. (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, had 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.

Among the eight largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin County (939,000) in September 2019, followed by Ramsey County (337,000). The remaining six large counties each had employment levels of less than 200,000. Collectively, the eight largest Minnesota counties accounted for 67.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.4 percent of total U.S. employment.

All eight large Minnesota counties reported average weekly wage gains from the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019, with the fastest rate of increase in Dakota, up 4.0 percent. Anoka and Olmsted Counties reported average weekly wage gains of 3.8 percent each. Hennepin County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,322. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.6 percent from a year ago to \$1,093 in the third quarter of 2019.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 79 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average in September 2019. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

The 4.0-percent annual average weekly wage gain in Dakota County was 114th among the nation's 355 largest counties in the third quarter of 2019. The 3.8-percent wage gains in Anoka and Olmsted Counties tied for 132nd nationally.

Nationwide, 350 of the 355 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. Boulder, CO, had the largest percentage 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

Weekly wages in four of the state's large counties were above the national average of \$1,093 in the third quarter of 2019. Hennepin County (\$1,322), had the highest average weekly wage in the state, ranking 26th among the 355 largest U.S. counties. Average weekly wages in Olmsted (\$1,279), Ramsey (\$1,196), and Anoka (\$1,094) Counties ranked in the top third for the nation. The average weekly wage in Washington County (\$908) ranked 266th, in the bottom third 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, followed by Horry, S.C. (\$660).

Average weekly wages in Minnesota's smaller counties

All 79 smaller counties in Minnesota—those with employment below 75,000—reported average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,093. Among these smaller counties, Carver posted the highest weekly wage, \$1,070, followed by Scott (\$994), Dodge (\$953), and Stevens (\$950). Cass County reported the lowest average wage in the state at \$626 per week, followed by Cook County at \$640 per week.

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, 8 reported average weekly wages of less than \$700, 18 registered wages from \$700 to \$749, 13 had wages from \$750 to \$799, 17 had wages from \$800 to \$849, and 31 had average weekly wages of \$850 or more. (See [chart 1.](#)) The higher-paying counties were located in and around the Minneapolis metropolitan area.

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 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 this 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. The 2019 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2020.

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/. 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 2019

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	148,556.5	1.1	--	\$1,093	--	3.6	--
Minnesota.....	2,917.8	0.4	--	1,107	13	3.0	39
Anoka.....	128.3	0.7	206	1,094	98	3.8	132
Dakota.....	191.5	0.0	284	1,057	125	4.0	114
Hennepin.....	939.0	0.5	226	1,322	26	2.4	276
Olmsted.....	100.7	0.1	274	1,279	38	3.8	132
Ramsey.....	337.0	0.1	274	1,196	60	2.3	283
St. Louis.....	98.0	-1.0	339	915	256	3.0	227
Stearns.....	88.0	0.2	261	943	219	3.5	168
Washington.....	88.2	0.9	186	908	266	3.1	212

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 2019

Area	Employment September 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	148,556,525	\$1,093
Minnesota	2,917,769	1,107
Aitkin	4,133	699
Anoka	128,333	1,094
Becker	14,590	744
Beltrami	20,531	839
Benton	17,692	852
Big Stone	1,735	748
Blue Earth	40,695	889
Brown	14,113	817
Carlton	13,234	890
Carver	40,281	1,070
Cass	11,168	626
Chippewa	5,802	749
Chisago	15,689	880
Clay	19,483	804
Clearwater	2,740	792
Cook	3,191	640
Cottonwood	5,122	734
Crow Wing	30,318	792
Dakota	191,458	1,057
Dodge	6,095	953
Douglas	19,396	813
Faribault	4,645	833
Fillmore	6,199	665
Freeborn	12,161	808
Goodhue	21,955	910
Grant	1,859	769
Hennepin	938,982	1,322
Houston	5,163	670
Hubbard	6,507	762
Isanti	11,162	799
Itasca	16,351	825
Jackson	5,133	737
Kanabec	3,965	820
Kandiyohi	24,324	791
Kittson	1,530	685
Koochiching	4,553	888
Lac qui Parle	2,222	701
Lake	4,309	843
Lake of the Woods	1,705	696
Le Sueur	9,116	863
Lincoln	1,691	712
Lyon	14,094	855
McLeod	15,974	858
Mahnomen	1,849	731
Marshall	2,341	850
Martin	8,340	847
Meeker	7,590	783
Mille Lacs	9,923	708
Morrison	10,759	754
Mower	16,249	930
Murray	2,965	733
Nicollet	15,495	906
Nobles	10,542	847
Norman	1,559	727
Olmsted	100,657	1,279

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2019 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2019	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Otter Tail	23,334	760
Pennington	10,211	914
Pine	8,480	649
Pipestone	4,582	745
Polk	12,410	806
Pope	4,570	814
Ramsey	337,028	1,196
Red Lake	1,032	712
Redwood	6,080	773
Renville	5,869	770
Rice	25,722	897
Rock	3,298	813
Roseau	7,817	861
St. Louis	98,010	915
Scott	55,763	994
Sherburne	26,859	901
Sibley	4,645	798
Stearns	88,003	943
Steele	21,995	863
Stevens	5,591	950
Swift	3,551	739
Todd	6,648	814
Traverse	1,164	708
Wabasha	6,967	732
Wadena	5,534	751
Waseca	6,165	833
Washington	88,238	908
Watsonwan	4,224	739
Wilkin	1,741	880
Winona	24,647	827
Wright	45,653	864
Yellow Medicine	4,052	709

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 ⁽¹⁾			
	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 ⁽²⁾	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.

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
(U.S. Average = \$1,093)

- \$850 or higher
- \$800 - \$849
- \$750 - \$799
- \$700 - \$749
- \$699 or lower

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