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## **County Employment and Wages in North Dakota — Third Quarter 2021**

Employment rose 3.8 percent in North Dakota's only large county, Cass, from September 2020 to September 2021, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more in 2020.) Regional Commissioner Jason Palmer noted that in September 2021, Cass County's employment level was 121,500. (See [table 1](#).)

National employment increased 4.4 percent over the year, with 332 of the 343 largest U.S. counties reporting gains. Honolulu, HI, had the largest over-the-year increase in employment with a gain of 13.3 percent. Jefferson, LA, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 3.2 percent.

Cass County's employment accounted for 29.8 percent of total employment within the state in September 2021. Within the county's private industry, health care and social assistance accounted for the largest employment. Nationwide, the 343 largest counties made up 72.3 percent of total U.S. employment.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 52 counties in North Dakota with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in 44 of the 52 smaller counties were below the national average of \$1,251 in the third quarter of 2021. (See [table 2](#).)

### **Large county wage changes**

Cass County's 4.8-percent wage growth from the third quarter of 2020 to the third quarter of 2021 was lower than the national rate of 6.7 percent and ranked 216<sup>th</sup> nationally. Among the 343 largest counties in the United States, 333 had over-the-year wage increases. San Mateo, CA, had the largest percentage wage increase (+27.2 percent). Union, NJ, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-1.2 percent).

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

Cass County's \$1,109 average weekly was below the national average of \$1,251 and ranked 181<sup>st</sup> among the 343 large U.S. counties in the third quarter of 2021. Among the largest U.S. counties, 85 reported average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the second quarter of 2021. San Mateo, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$3,710. Average weekly wages were at or below the national average in the remaining 258 counties. At \$756 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

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

Among the 52 smaller counties in North Dakota—those with employment below 75,000—eight counties reported average weekly wages above the national average of \$1,251. Oliver County (\$1,517) reported the highest average weekly wage among North Dakota's small counties, while Sheridan County (\$547) reported the lowest average weekly wage in the state.

When all 53 counties in North Dakota were considered, 14 reported average weekly wages of less than \$800, 15 registered wages from \$800 to \$899, 9 had wages from \$900 to \$999, and 15 had average weekly wages of \$1,000 or higher. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying counties were concentrated in and around the Bakken Shale field in the western portion of the state and the Bismarck and Fargo metropolitan areas.

#### **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. This publication is typically published in September of the following year of the reference period or shortly after the QCEW first quarter full data update. The *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* is available at [www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/).

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**The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2021 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 25, 2022.**

**The County Employment and Wages full data update for fourth quarter 2021 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 8, 2022.**

#### **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](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 individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Telecommunications Relay Service: 7-1-1.

**Table 1. Covered establishments, employment, and wages in the United States and the largest county in North Dakota, third quarter 2021**

Area	Establishments, third quarter (thousands)	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
		September 2021 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2020–21 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Third quarter 2021	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, third quarter 2020–21 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	11,021.4	144,863.9	4.4	--	\$1,251	--	6.7	--
North Dakota .....	33.0	407.2	2.2	--	1,076	30	5.1	40
Cass .....	8.0	121.5	3.8	141	1,109	181	4.8	216

Footnotes:

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

(2) Percent changes were computed from 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 establishments, employment, and wages in the United States and all counties in North Dakota, third quarter 2021**

Area	Establishments	Employment September 2021	Average weekly wage (1)
United States (2)	11,021,414	144,863,915	\$1,251
North Dakota	33,001	407,247	1,076
Adams	119	820	864
Barnes	434	4,444	834
Benson	145	1,983	888
Billings	52	747	776
Bottineau	324	2,390	849
Bowman	193	1,390	802
Burke	122	649	1,143
Burleigh	3,974	56,710	1,064
Cass	7,977	121,466	1,109
Cavalier	163	1,286	884
Dickey	255	1,741	762
Divide	123	705	949
Dunn	209	2,053	1,344
Eddy	101	741	682
Emmons	158	952	764
Foster	165	1,532	888
Golden Valley	94	596	744
Grand Forks	2,403	38,676	974
Grant	96	603	735
Griggs	103	817	807
Hettinger	137	741	891
Kidder	111	818	759
LaMoure	220	1,286	778
Logan	108	602	607
McHenry	210	1,392	894
McIntosh	138	981	761
McKenzie	793	9,383	1,507
McLean	370	3,293	1,271
Mercer	308	4,104	1,293
Morton	1,102	11,771	952
Mountrail	525	5,137	1,309
Nelson	161	995	707
Oliver	66	752	1,517
Pembina	377	3,411	976
Pierce	194	1,529	833
Ramsey	501	5,626	855
Ransom	253	2,000	761
Renville	142	705	822
Richland	640	7,643	918
Rolette	269	4,421	880
Sargent	169	2,968	1,110
Sheridan	48	227	547
Sioux	65	1,425	966
Slope	16	99	1,285
Stark	1,474	17,525	1,179
Steele	81	549	1,021
Stutsman	825	10,403	934
Towner	99	692	833
Traill	392	3,373	934
Walsh	514	5,113	908
Ward	2,442	30,358	1,025
Wells	198	1,412	781
Williams	2,098	23,017	1,423

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

**Table 3. Covered establishments, employment, and wages by state, third quarter 2021**

State	Establishments, third quarter (thousands)	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
		September 2021 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2020–21	Third quarter 2021	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2020–21	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup>	11,021.4	144,863.9	4.4	\$1,251	--	6.7	--
Alabama	139.8	1,955.3	2.6	1,030	36	5.3	37
Alaska	24.0	316.9	4.6	1,205	16	3.4	50
Arizona	184.5	2,926.3	4.6	1,167	19	7.0	13
Arkansas	97.4	1,212.9	2.9	963	47	7.8	6
California	1,679.6	17,208.7	6.6	1,576	4	7.7	8
Colorado	231.8	2,723.4	4.8	1,322	9	7.0	13
Connecticut	132.0	1,605.1	2.9	1,401	6	5.7	31
Delaware	35.9	439.7	2.1	1,198	18	4.4	45
District of Columbia	45.4	736.1	3.1	2,042	1	4.1	46
Florida	808.4	8,910.9	7.0	1,120	25	8.7	3
Georgia	343.9	4,491.4	4.9	1,158	20	6.8	17
Hawaii	49.2	592.8	16.6	1,150	22	3.3	51
Idaho	79.2	804.0	5.3	953	50	7.8	6
Illinois	398.4	5,751.2	3.3	1,274	11	6.3	22
Indiana	178.9	3,020.6	2.6	1,032	34	7.4	10
Iowa	106.8	1,509.6	2.2	1,015	39	4.9	43
Kansas	92.1	1,349.3	1.7	997	40	4.7	44
Kentucky	134.3	1,869.0	3.4	989	43	5.8	28
Louisiana	144.2	1,772.7	1.7	1,021	37	5.4	36
Maine	58.5	619.9	3.6	1,031	35	6.7	18
Maryland	178.1	2,604.6	3.9	1,314	10	3.5	49
Massachusetts	281.4	3,501.0	5.5	1,593	2	7.0	13
Michigan	271.3	4,181.4	3.6	1,154	21	5.3	37
Minnesota	186.9	2,780.5	2.7	1,249	13	6.1	24
Mississippi	77.3	1,122.2	2.6	859	51	6.3	22
Missouri	223.9	2,760.3	2.9	1,055	31	6.0	26
Montana	57.0	487.5	4.4	963	47	6.5	21
Nebraska	75.6	964.6	1.4	1,017	38	5.5	35
Nevada	96.0	1,389.5	10.8	1,135	23	8.3	5
New Hampshire	60.0	654.6	3.3	1,349	8	15.0	1
New Jersey	304.1	3,977.2	5.1	1,384	7	4.1	46
New Mexico	64.8	806.2	4.2	997	40	5.6	32
New York	671.2	8,922.4	4.4	1,534	5	6.1	24
North Carolina	318.4	4,516.4	4.5	1,112	26	7.1	11
North Dakota	33.0	407.2	2.2	1,076	30	5.1	40
Ohio	315.7	5,248.0	2.2	1,098	28	5.6	32
Oklahoma	116.4	1,576.6	1.8	966	45	5.6	32
Oregon	171.2	1,909.5	3.7	1,220	15	9.6	2
Pennsylvania	375.4	5,685.4	3.2	1,205	16	5.8	28
Rhode Island	43.2	474.1	4.8	1,131	24	3.6	48
South Carolina	152.9	2,086.0	2.8	988	44	6.9	16
South Dakota	37.0	435.6	3.1	965	46	5.1	40
Tennessee	187.7	3,044.1	4.2	1,111	27	8.7	3
Texas	770.0	12,613.1	5.6	1,227	14	6.7	18
Utah	123.1	1,594.7	5.0	1,087	29	7.1	11
Vermont	28.1	293.5	2.7	1,055	31	5.8	28
Virginia	299.2	3,845.3	2.9	1,264	12	5.3	37
Washington	266.6	3,415.2	4.4	1,578	3	6.6	20
West Virginia	53.6	664.2	2.7	960	49	5.0	42
Wisconsin	189.5	2,815.9	2.3	1,049	33	7.5	9
Wyoming	28.7	271.1	2.5	995	42	6.0	26
Puerto Rico	47.9	887.9	6.5	568	(3)	4.0	(3)
Virgin Islands	3.6	34.5	1.9	956	(3)	-5.4	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

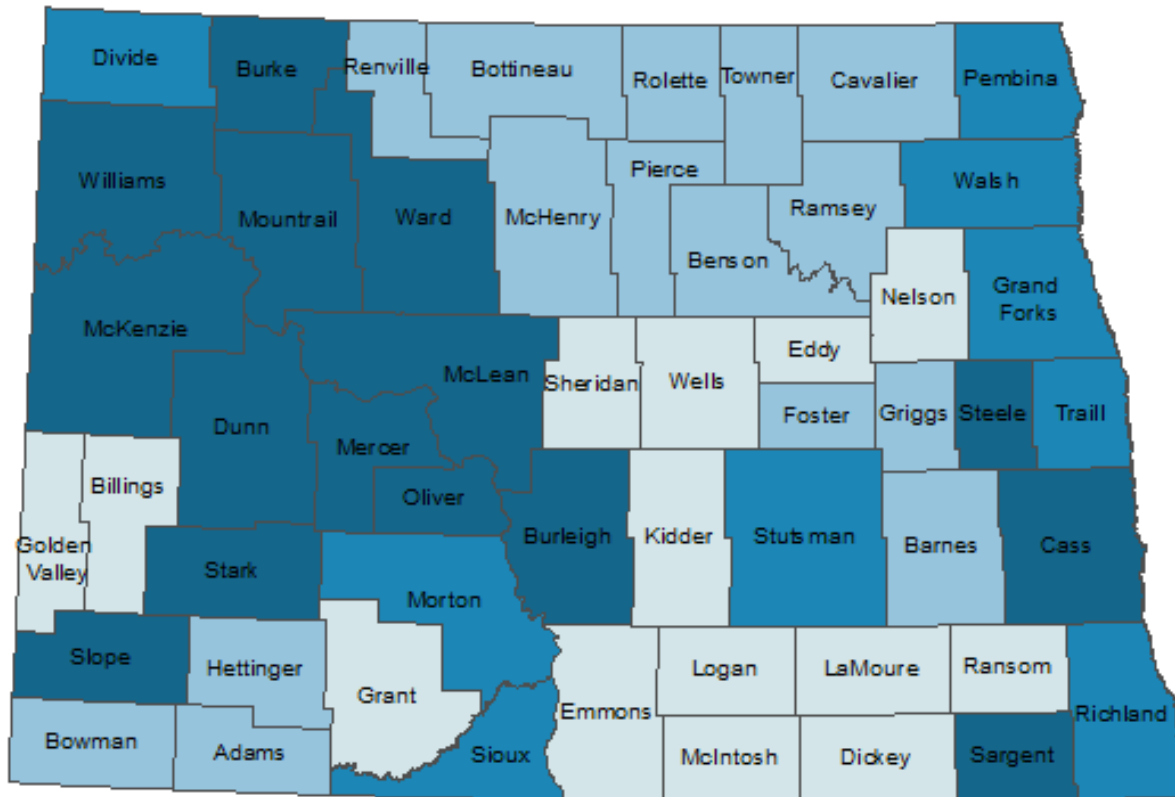
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 North Dakota, third quarter 2021**



**Average weekly wages**

(U.S. average = \$1,251)

■ \$1,000 or higher

■ \$900 - \$999

■ \$800 - \$899

■ \$799 or lower

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.