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County Employment and Wages in New Hampshire — Third Quarter 2016

Employment in Rockingham County rose 2.1 percent from September 2015 to September 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Merrimack and Hillsborough, New Hampshire's other large counties, had employment gains of 1.9 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively. (Large counties are defined as those with 2015 annual average employment of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that employment growth in both Rockingham and Merrimack counties were above the 1.7-percent national average.

Nationwide, employment increased in 307 of the 344 largest U.S. counties. The largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment was in York, S.C. (6.0 percent); Midland, Texas, had the largest over-the-year decrease (-5.8 percent).

Among New Hampshire's three largest counties, employment was highest in Hillsborough County (200,400) in September 2016. Together, all three counties accounted for 65.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Hillsborough rose 10.4 percent to \$1,137 from the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016, the largest increase among New Hampshire's largest counties. In the two other large counties, Rockingham (\$989) increased 5.5 percent in September 2016, and Merrimack (\$954) rose 7.3 percent. (See [table 1](#) .). Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 5.4 percent over the year to \$1,027.

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

Large County Wage Changes

The 10.4-percent wage gain in Hillsborough County ranked 3rd among the 344 largest U.S. counties. Merrimack's 7.3-percent wage increase ranked 47th while Rockingham's 5.5-percent wage gain ranked 177th. Nationwide, Clark, Nev., had the largest over-the-year increase in average weekly wages with a gain of 12.2 percent in the third quarter of 2016. Across the country, 339 of the largest counties experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages.

Of the 344 largest counties, five experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Rockland, N.Y., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-14.9 percent), followed by Lafayette, La.; Benton, Ark.; Lake, Ill.; and Midland, Texas.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Hillsborough County's average weekly wage of \$1,137 placed 54th in the national ranking, putting it in the top quarter of the 344 largest counties. Rockingham County's \$989 weekly wage was in the top half (134th) but was below the U.S. average of \$1,027. Merrimack County's \$954 weekly wage ranked 164th.

Among the 242 counties with average weekly wages below the national average, Horry, S.C. (\$632), reported the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$636), Hidalgo, Texas (\$654), Webb, Texas (\$680), and Osceola, Fla. (\$707).

Nationally, average weekly wages were greater than the national average (\$1,027) in 102 of the largest U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,260. San Mateo, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of \$2,098, followed by San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,892) and New York, N.Y. (\$1,879).

Average Weekly Wages in New Hampshire's Smaller Counties

All seven counties in New Hampshire with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$1,027 except Grafton. Grafton had the highest average weekly wage in the third quarter of 2016 at \$1,063, while Carroll had the lowest at \$677.

When all 10 counties in New Hampshire were considered, 8 had wages below the national average. One had average weekly wages at or below \$699, three had wages from \$700 to \$799, one had wages from \$800 to \$899, and five had wages above \$900. The lowest-paid counties were generally located in the northeastern part of the state. (See [chart 1](#).) The county with the highest wages encompassed the Manchester 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 2015 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 2015 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online 2015* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2015/home.htm. The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 7, 2017.

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 9.6 million employer reports cover 140.4 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; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 3 largest counties in New Hampshire, third quarter 2016

| Area | Employment | | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| | September 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, September 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level ⁽³⁾ | Percent change, third quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾ | National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾ |
| United States ⁽⁴⁾ | 142,940.5 | 1.7 | -- | \$1,027 | -- | 5.4 | -- |
| New Hampshire..... | 655.0 | 1.8 | -- | 1,027 | 15 | 7.9 | 2 |
| Hillsborough, N.H. | 200.4 | 1.4 | 203 | 1,137 | 54 | 10.4 | 3 |
| Merrimack, N.H. | 77.2 | 1.9 | 153 | 954 | 164 | 7.3 | 47 |
| Rockingham, N.H. | 149.5 | 2.1 | 131 | 989 | 134 | 5.5 | 177 |

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 New Hampshire, 3rd quarter 2016

| Area | Employment September 2016 | Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾ |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| United States ⁽²⁾ | 142,940,452 | \$1,027 |
| New Hampshire..... | 655,034 | 1,027 |
| Belknap..... | 26,188 | 780 |
| Carroll..... | 20,825 | 677 |
| Cheshire..... | 32,261 | 838 |
| Coos..... | 12,249 | 708 |
| Grafton..... | 54,046 | 1,063 |
| Hillsborough..... | 200,409 | 1,137 |
| Merrimack..... | 77,195 | 954 |
| Rockingham..... | 149,509 | 989 |
| Strafford..... | 48,232 | 975 |
| Sullivan..... | 14,357 | 785 |

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 2016

| State | Employment | | Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | September 2016 (thousands) | Percent change, September 2015-16 | Average weekly wage | National ranking by level | Percent change, third quarter 2015-16 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States ⁽²⁾ | 142,940.5 | 1.7 | 1027 | -- | 5.4 | -- |
| Alabama | 1,923.8 | 1.5 | 870 | 36 | 4.9 | 38 |
| Alaska | 337.4 | -2.6 | 1055 | 12 | 1.2 | 49 |
| Arizona | 2,695.5 | 3.1 | 950 | 24 | 6.9 | 5 |
| Arkansas | 1,205.4 | 1.0 | 794 | 48 | 5.2 | 32 |
| California | 16,871.1 | 2.4 | 1210 | 4 | 6.7 | 8 |
| Colorado | 2,576.5 | 2.6 | 1062 | 10 | 5.6 | 23 |
| Connecticut | 1,674.2 | 0.3 | 1204 | 5 | 5 | 34 |
| Delaware | 440.7 | 0.8 | 1022 | 16 | 5.6 | 23 |
| District of Columbia | 759.2 | 1.7 | 1728 | 1 | 3.8 | 45 |
| Florida | 8,320.2 | 3.7 | 905 | 29 | 6.2 | 14 |
| Georgia..... | 4,290.4 | 2.9 | 969 | 21 | 5.9 | 18 |
| Hawaii..... | 648.4 | 1.8 | 956 | 23 | 6.7 | 8 |
| Idaho | 703.7 | 3.5 | 782 | 50 | 6.3 | 12 |
| Illinois | 5,933.6 | 0.6 | 1062 | 10 | 4.4 | 40 |
| Indiana..... | 3,025.9 | 1.8 | 866 | 37 | 5.9 | 18 |
| Iowa | 1,548.6 | 0.8 | 873 | 35 | 6.2 | 14 |
| Kansas | 1,377.2 | 0.5 | 857 | 39 | 5.9 | 18 |
| Kentucky..... | 1,880.2 | 1.5 | 857 | 39 | 6.5 | 10 |
| Louisiana | 1,908.8 | -0.9 | 883 | 32 | 2.9 | 48 |
| Maine..... | 616.2 | 0.9 | 825 | 45 | 5.9 | 18 |
| Maryland..... | 2,648.1 | 1.4 | 1124 | 8 | 5.3 | 30 |
| Massachusetts | 3,522.9 | 2.0 | 1277 | 2 | 6.8 | 7 |
| Michigan | 4,292.2 | 2.1 | 976 | 19 | 5.9 | 18 |
| Minnesota | 2,849.5 | 1.6 | 1053 | 13 | 6.4 | 11 |
| Mississippi | 1,126.9 | 0.7 | 739 | 51 | 4.7 | 39 |
| Missouri | 2,782.1 | 1.6 | 888 | 30 | 5 | 34 |
| Montana | 464.5 | 1.5 | 792 | 49 | 4.3 | 41 |
| Nebraska | 973.9 | 0.9 | 857 | 39 | 5.5 | 26 |
| Nevada | 1,300.7 | 3.8 | 949 | 25 | 10.1 | 1 |
| New Hampshire..... | 655.0 | 1.8 | 1027 | 15 | 7.9 | 2 |
| New Jersey..... | 4,000.0 | 1.8 | 1173 | 7 | 5 | 34 |
| New Mexico | 811.5 | 0.2 | 830 | 44 | 4 | 43 |
| New York | 9,216.6 | 1.6 | 1222 | 3 | 3.5 | 46 |
| North Carolina | 4,290.3 | 2.3 | 909 | 28 | 5.3 | 30 |
| North Dakota | 423.2 | -3.4 | 964 | 22 | 0.7 | 50 |
| Ohio | 5,347.3 | 1.1 | 924 | 26 | 5.4 | 27 |
| Oklahoma | 1,578.7 | -1.3 | 854 | 42 | 3.5 | 46 |
| Oregon | 1,866.5 | 2.6 | 970 | 20 | 5.2 | 32 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 5,776.7 | 1.0 | 1013 | 17 | 5.4 | 27 |
| Rhode Island | 481.1 | 0.8 | 990 | 18 | 7.6 | 3 |
| South Carolina..... | 2,008.6 | 2.5 | 832 | 43 | 5.6 | 23 |
| South Dakota..... | 424.2 | 1.1 | 809 | 47 | 7 | 4 |
| Tennessee..... | 2,918.8 | 2.5 | 912 | 27 | 5.4 | 27 |
| Texas | 11,830.7 | 1.3 | 1042 | 14 | 4.3 | 41 |
| Utah | 1,407.4 | 3.8 | 881 | 33 | 6.3 | 12 |
| Vermont..... | 309.9 | 0.5 | 880 | 34 | 6.2 | 14 |
| Virginia..... | 3,801.0 | 1.0 | 1063 | 9 | 5 | 34 |
| Washington..... | 3,278.9 | 3.0 | 1188 | 6 | 6.9 | 5 |
| West Virginia | 691.5 | -1.6 | 816 | 46 | 3.9 | 44 |
| Wisconsin..... | 2,850.1 | 1.0 | 885 | 31 | 6.2 | 14 |
| Wyoming | 274.8 | -4.7 | 865 | 38 | 0 | 51 |
| Puerto Rico..... | 888.2 | -0.4 | 524 | (3) | 2.3 | (3) |
| Virgin Islands..... | 37.4 | 1.4 | 778 | (3) | 5.9 | (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.