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NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE: Boston, Mass.

Technical information: (617) 565-2327 BLSInfoBoston@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/new-england

Media contact: (617) 565-2326 BLSMediaBoston@bls.gov

County Employment and Wages in Vermont – Fourth Quarter 2016

Employment in Vermont's only large county, Chittenden, decreased 0.6 percent from December 2015 to December 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2015 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that the employment decline in Chittenden ranked 314th among the 344 large counties in the nation. Nationally, employment increased 1.2 percent from December 2015 to December 2016.

Nationwide, employment increased in 280 of the 344 largest counties from December 2015 to December 2016. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase, with a gain of 5.1 percent over the year. Lafayette, La., had the largest over-the-year decrease in employment among the large U.S. counties, with a loss of 5.1 percent.

Employment in Chittenden County was 102,043 in December 2016, accounting for 32.6 percent of employment statewide. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties accounted for 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Chittenden County declined 3.6 percent to \$1,033 from the fourth quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2016. (See [table 1.](#)) Nationally, the average weekly wage decreased by 1.5 percent over the year to \$1,067 in the fourth quarter of 2016. This was one of only eight declines for the nation in the history of the series, which dates back to 1978.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 13 counties in Vermont with employment below 75,000. All 13 of the smaller counties in Vermont had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large County Wage Changes

Chittenden County's 3.6-percent wage decrease from the fourth quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2016 placed 294th nationally. (See [table 1.](#)) Nationwide, 290 of the 344 largest counties had over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage decline in average weekly wages (-9.2 percent). Clay, Mo., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 8.3 percent, followed by Lafayette, La. (-8.0 percent) and Douglas, Colo. (-6.8 percent).

Forty-eight large U.S. counties experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest wage gain, up 11.3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2015. Washington, Pa., was second with a wage gain of 4.9 percent, followed by Marin, Calif. (4.3 percent) and Elkhart, Ind. (4.0 percent).

Large County Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wage in Chittenden County placed in the top half (117th) among the 344 largest U.S. counties in the fourth quarter of 2016. The county's \$1,033 average weekly wage was lower than the U.S. average of \$1,067.

Nationally, 243 of the 344 large counties had an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the fourth quarter 2016. Cameron County, Texas (\$640) reported the lowest wage nationwide, followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$648) and Horry, S.C. (\$654).

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 100 of the 344 large U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif. (\$2,365) held the top position, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$2,212) and San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,098).

Average Weekly Wages in Vermont's Smaller Counties

The 13 counties in Vermont with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$1,067. Among these smaller counties, Washington had the highest wage (\$956), followed by Addison (\$889). Grand Isle reported the lowest weekly wage, averaging \$679 in the fourth quarter of 2016. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 14 counties in Vermont are considered, 2 reported average weekly wages under \$699, 5 had wages from \$700 to \$799, 5 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 2 had wages of \$900 or more. (See [chart 1.](#))

Additional Statistics and other Information

QCEW data for states has been included in this release in [table 3.](#) For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at 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 2016 version of this news release. Tables and additional content from the 2015 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available 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.

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 143.7 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; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in Vermont, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	143,749.9	1.2	--	1067	--	-1.5	--
Vermont.....	312.6	0.1	--	897	36	-2.4	39
Chittenden, Vt.....	102.0	-0.6	314	1033	117	-3.6	294

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 Vermont, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment December 2016	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	143,749,910	1,067
Vermont.....	312,575	897
Addison.....	15,023	889
Bennington.....	17,002	833
Caledonia.....	10,709	785
Chittenden.....	102,043	1,033
Essex.....	1,046	743
Franklin.....	17,996	862
Grand Isle.....	1,063	679
Lamoille.....	12,608	761
Orange.....	7,602	751
Orleans.....	11,017	684
Rutland.....	27,752	822
Washington.....	33,361	956
Windham.....	23,115	795
Windsor.....	23,839	862
Footnotes:		

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(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, fourth quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	143,749.9	1.2	\$1,067	--	-1.5	--
Alabama	1,932.6	0.7	901	35	-1.3	21
Alaska	310.0	-1.9	1,038	17	-5.2	51
Arizona	2,760.1	2.1	945	25	-2.2	34
Arkansas	1,205.4	0.4	827	47	-1.4	22
California	16,923.3	1.9	1,271	5	-0.3	4
Colorado	2,588.6	2.0	1,086	12	-1.5	24
Connecticut	1,685.5	0.0	1,289	4	-3.4	46
Delaware	441.2	-0.1	1,055	15	-2.9	44
District of Columbia	760.9	0.5	1,763	1	0.6	2
Florida	8,538.9	2.7	942	27	-1.8	28
Georgia.....	4,349.3	2.4	993	20	-0.9	14
Hawaii.....	658.3	0.7	954	24	-0.3	4
Idaho	691.6	3.2	800	50	-0.4	8
Illinois	5,947.6	0.4	1,122	9	-2.0	31
Indiana.....	3,021.7	0.9	883	38	-0.9	14
Iowa	1,542.0	0.1	911	33	-1.0	16
Kansas	1,384.5	0.1	877	39	-2.2	34
Kentucky.....	1,894.2	0.6	874	41	-1.4	22
Louisiana	1,907.4	-1.6	914	32	-2.9	44
Maine.....	602.6	0.8	855	43	-2.1	33
Maryland.....	2,666.7	1.0	1,169	7	-0.4	8
Massachusetts	3,530.4	1.3	1,352	2	-2.4	39
Michigan	4,283.0	1.5	1,026	19	-1.6	25
Minnesota	2,839.7	1.2	1,062	14	-1.1	18
Mississippi	1,134.0	0.0	756	51	-1.8	28
Missouri	2,783.2	0.9	918	31	-1.7	27
Montana	456.5	0.7	822	48	0.5	3
Nebraska	972.4	0.0	876	40	-0.5	10
Nevada	1,307.8	2.7	924	29	-1.2	20
New Hampshire.....	656.9	1.3	1,092	10	-4.1	48
New Jersey.....	4,042.1	1.4	1,239	6	-1.9	30
New Mexico	811.4	0.0	844	45	-2.5	41
New York	9,332.5	1.2	1,342	3	-2.3	36
North Carolina	4,326.3	1.8	932	28	-0.7	13
North Dakota	414.4	-3.2	978	21	-4.2	49
Ohio	5,365.6	0.7	943	26	-2.3	36
Oklahoma	1,587.7	-1.2	864	42	-3.5	47
Oregon	1,860.7	2.4	970	22	-1.0	16
Pennsylvania	5,799.8	0.7	1,039	16	-2.3	36
Rhode Island	478.3	0.0	1,027	18	-1.6	25
South Carolina.....	2,024.3	1.8	855	43	-0.6	12
South Dakota.....	419.9	0.5	828	46	-0.5	10
Tennessee	2,947.5	1.8	970	22	-1.1	18
Texas	11,974.7	1.2	1,072	13	-2.5	41
Utah	1,415.1	2.9	910	34	-0.3	4
Vermont.....	312.6	0.1	897	36	-2.4	39
Virginia.....	3,831.6	0.6	1,091	11	-0.3	4
Washington.....	3,227.9	2.8	1,150	8	1.7	1
West Virginia	693.1	-1.6	809	49	-2.5	41
Wisconsin	2,842.4	0.5	924	29	-2.0	31
Wyoming	265.8	-3.9	894	37	-4.7	50
Puerto Rico.....	928.2	-0.3	555	(3)	-1.9	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	0.2	769	(3)	-1.8	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

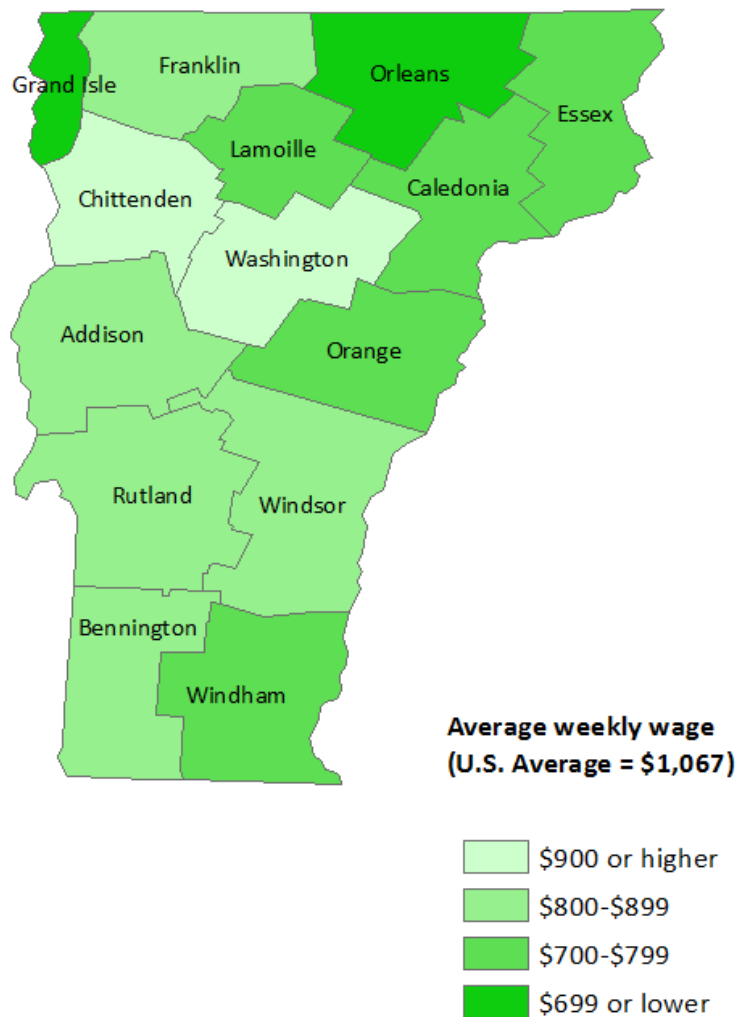
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 Vermont, fourth quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.