



For Release: Friday, October 16, 2015

15-2025-ATL

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

County Employment And Wages In Kentucky – First Quarter 2015

Each of Kentucky's three large counties reported employment gains from March 2014 to March 2015, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are those with 2014 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that Boone County had the largest increase, up 3.0 percent, followed by the counties of Fayette (2.7 percent) and Jefferson (2.5 percent). (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 2.1 percent from March 2014 to March 2015 as 323 of the 342 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Utah, Utah, recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 6.1 percent over the year. Atlantic, N.J., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S. with a loss of 4.3 percent.

Among the three large counties in Kentucky, employment was highest in Jefferson County (442,300) in March 2015, while Boone County had the smallest employment (79,100). Together, Kentucky's large counties accounted for 39.0 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 342 largest counties made up 72.3 percent of total U.S. employment.

All three large Kentucky counties experienced average weekly wage gains from the first quarter of 2014 to the first quarter of 2015. Jefferson County had the largest over-the-year wage gain at 2.3 percent. Jefferson County also had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,016. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 2.1 percent over the year to \$1,048 in the first quarter of 2015. (See [table 1](#).)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 117 counties in Kentucky with employment levels below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from \$1,265 to \$487. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages increased in all three of Kentucky's large counties from the first quarter of 2014 to the first quarter of 2015. At 2.3 percent, Jefferson County's wage gain ranked 119th among the nation's 342 large counties. Fayette County's 1.6-percent increase ranked 185th. Boone County's 1.3-percent advance ranked 223rd. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, 297 of the 342 largest counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Olmsted, Minn., had the largest percentage wage increase among the largest U.S. counties (11.7 percent). Washington, Pa., was second with a wage increase of 10.7 percent, followed by the counties of Riverside, Calif. (10.1 percent); Lake, Ill. (9.2 percent); and Orange, Calif. (9.1 percent).

Of the 342 largest counties, 39 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Snohomish, Wash., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, with a loss of 4.8 percent. Chester, Pa., had the second largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, followed by Williamson, Texas; Saginaw, Mich.; and Palm Beach, Fla.

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in Kentucky's three large counties were below the U.S. average of \$1,048. Jefferson County (\$1,016, 112th) placed in the top third of the national ranking among the 342 largest counties in the first quarter of 2015. Average weekly wages in Fayette (\$883, 199th) and Boone (\$833, 251st) placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, 93 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,048 in the first quarter of 2015. New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,847, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., at \$2,203. Rounding out the top five were Somerset, N.J. (\$2,080); San Francisco, Calif. (\$2,070); and San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,066).

Seventy-three percent of the largest U.S. counties (248) reported weekly wages below the national average. Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$583), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron and Hidalgo (\$593 and \$607); Lake, Fla.. (\$649); and Yakima, Wash. (\$658).

Average weekly wages in Kentucky's smaller counties

Among the 117 counties in Kentucky with employment below 75,000, Hancock (\$1,265), Ballard (\$1,105), and Carroll (\$1,063) were the only three to report an average weekly wage above the national average of \$1,048. Robertson County reported the lowest wage in the state, averaging \$487 in the first quarter of 2015. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 120 counties in Kentucky were considered, 41 reported average weekly wages below \$600, 41 reported average weekly wages from \$600 to \$699, 22 had wages from \$700 to \$799, 8 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 8 had wages above \$900. (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.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2013 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 2014 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2013* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2013.home.htm. The 2014 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2015.

The County Employment and Wages release for 2nd quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, December 17, 2015.

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 9.5 million employer reports cover 137.4 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; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 3 largest counties in Kentucky, first quarter 2015

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	137,412.4	2.1	--	\$1,048	--	2.1	--
Kentucky.....	1,810.3	1.5	--	823	41	1.5	35
Boone, Ky.	79.1	3.0	90	833	251	1.3	223
Fayette, Ky.....	184.9	2.7	112	883	199	1.6	185
Jefferson, Ky.....	442.3	2.5	127	1,016	112	2.3	119

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 Kentucky, 1st quarter 2015

Area	Employment March 2015	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	137,412,381	\$1,048
Kentucky	1,810,284	823
Adair	4,712	524
Allen	4,077	645
Anderson	4,446	640
Ballard	2,134	1,105
Barren	16,385	638
Bath	1,770	626
Bell	8,515	587
Boone	79,057	833
Bourbon	6,768	711
Boyd	25,033	821
Boyle	13,335	722
Bracken	1,318	612
Breathitt	3,181	631
Breckinridge	3,455	581
Bullitt	21,966	633
Butler	2,814	606
Caldwell	4,098	587
Calloway	16,201	590
Campbell	28,269	761
Carlisle	990	521
Carroll	6,381	1,063
Carter	5,679	566
Casey	3,767	559
Christian	32,170	726
Clark	13,713	743
Clay	4,037	634
Clinton	3,746	536
Crittenden	1,897	496
Cumberland	1,655	574
Daviess	44,433	719
Edmonson	1,496	589
Elliott	897	528
Estill	2,366	591
Fayette	184,932	883
Fleming	3,035	560
Floyd	11,006	685
Franklin	30,579	778
Fulton	2,159	652
Gallatin	2,605	930
Garrard	2,268	602
Grant	4,771	697
Graves	10,890	648
Grayson	7,497	590
Green	1,765	498
Greenup	7,666	685
Hancock	4,425	1,265
Hardin	45,785	751
Harlan	6,448	666
Harrison	4,759	768
Hart	4,846	620
Henderson	19,649	740
Henry	2,637	663
Hickman	1,067	516
Hopkins	17,143	773
Jackson	1,765	573

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Kentucky, 1st quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2015	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
Jefferson.....	442,316	1,016
Jessamine.....	15,784	681
Johnson.....	5,576	618
Kenton.....	63,579	936
Knott.....	2,455	646
Knox.....	7,730	579
Larue.....	2,631	540
Laurel.....	25,274	623
Lawrence.....	3,251	676
Lee.....	1,678	581
Leslie.....	1,715	615
Letcher.....	4,606	657
Lewis.....	1,922	529
Lincoln.....	4,163	585
Livingston.....	2,613	742
Logan.....	8,167	728
Lyon.....	2,169	524
McCracken.....	37,293	763
McCreary.....	2,662	630
McLean.....	1,987	603
Madison.....	33,687	686
Magoffin.....	1,945	516
Marion.....	8,042	712
Marshall.....	10,903	875
Martin.....	2,602	836
Mason.....	9,115	755
Meade.....	4,163	644
Menifee.....	868	569
Mercer.....	6,154	909
Metcalfe.....	1,775	608
Monroe.....	3,084	534
Montgomery.....	10,726	661
Morgan.....	2,827	566
Muhlenberg.....	9,395	786
Nelson.....	14,630	686
Nicholas.....	807	524
Ohio.....	7,303	589
Oldham.....	14,701	742
Owen.....	1,702	693
Owsley.....	648	497
Pendleton.....	2,283	770
Perry.....	11,952	692
Pike.....	21,791	778
Powell.....	2,471	556
Pulaski.....	25,076	629
Robertson.....	281	487
Rockcastle.....	3,505	569
Rowan.....	10,111	597
Russell.....	5,249	545
Scott.....	25,281	882
Shelby.....	15,448	690
Simpson.....	8,576	651
Spencer.....	1,846	600
Taylor.....	10,808	601
Todd.....	2,230	541
Trigg.....	3,111	564

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Kentucky, 1st quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2015	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
Trimble.....	1,026	839
Union.....	5,054	882
Warren.....	59,656	775
Washington.....	3,319	667
Wayne.....	5,172	536
Webster.....	3,493	1,021
Whitley.....	11,506	647
Wolfe.....	1,201	518
Woodford.....	8,936	729

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. Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2015

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	137,412.4	2.1	\$1,048	--	2.1	--
Alabama	1,873.5	1.3	844	39	2.2	19
Alaska	322.2	1.0	1,051	15	2.6	10
Arizona	2,605.6	2.5	926	23	1.0	45
Arkansas	1,166.6	1.3	790	47	0.8	47
California	16,029.5	3.0	1,207	6	3.7	3
Colorado	2,458.0	3.7	1,071	13	2.4	16
Connecticut	1,640.5	0.8	1,382	3	1.5	35
Delaware	422.8	2.5	1,105	9	-0.5	51
District of Columbia	732.6	1.4	1,764	1	3.2	4
Florida	8,018.0	3.6	885	28	1.8	27
Georgia.....	4,107.0	3.5	989	18	1.7	31
Hawaii.....	633.7	1.3	881	31	2.8	9
Idaho	650.3	3.1	736	50	2.2	19
Illinois	5,724.6	1.2	1,130	7	2.4	16
Indiana.....	2,894.8	1.8	857	35	1.4	38
Iowa	1,504.3	1.3	848	37	2.9	7
Kansas	1,357.1	1.0	851	36	1.4	38
Kentucky.....	1,810.3	1.5	823	41	1.5	35
Louisiana	1,927.1	1.0	885	28	2.0	21
Maine.....	571.4	0.9	793	45	0.9	46
Maryland.....	2,540.8	1.2	1,113	8	2.5	12
Massachusetts	3,338.6	1.7	1,341	4	3.2	4
Michigan	4,079.5	1.8	969	21	1.9	24
Minnesota.....	2,709.2	1.8	1,079	12	4.3	1
Mississippi	1,102.3	0.6	711	51	0.7	48
Missouri	2,678.0	1.7	882	30	1.8	27
Montana	441.0	2.7	750	49	2.6	10
Nebraska	943.1	1.4	818	42	2.5	12
Nevada	1,227.7	3.7	865	34	-0.2	50
New Hampshire.....	623.5	1.5	982	20	1.2	43
New Jersey.....	3,834.6	1.4	1,288	5	1.9	24
New Mexico	798.7	1.4	805	43	1.5	35
New York	8,865.0	1.9	1,463	2	0.2	49
North Carolina	4,099.4	2.5	930	22	1.9	24
North Dakota	436.0	1.6	984	19	4.2	2
Ohio	5,144.5	1.4	922	24	1.4	38
Oklahoma	1,592.7	1.3	869	33	2.0	21
Oregon	1,748.7	3.5	919	25	2.9	7
Pennsylvania.....	5,606.9	0.9	1,031	16	2.4	16
Rhode Island	456.1	1.4	1,008	17	1.2	43
South Carolina.....	1,919.1	2.5	801	44	1.8	27
South Dakota.....	406.5	1.5	763	48	3.0	6
Tennessee.....	2,772.7	2.1	886	27	1.4	38
Texas	11,557.0	2.9	1,089	10	2.5	12
Utah	1,318.8	3.7	845	38	1.7	31
Vermont.....	303.9	0.9	824	40	2.0	21
Virginia.....	3,649.3	1.1	1,068	14	1.7	31
Washington.....	3,064.4	3.2	1,087	11	1.8	27
West Virginia	692.4	-0.3	792	46	1.4	38
Wisconsin.....	2,734.3	1.5	877	32	2.5	12
Wyoming	277.8	0.8	892	26	1.7	31
Puerto Rico.....	904.9	-1.1	524	(3)	1.0	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	0.0	738	(3)	-0.7	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

