NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For Release: Friday, September 23, 2016 16-1872-ATL

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County Employment And Wages In Kentucky – First Quarter 2016

Each of Kentucky's three large counties reported employment gains from March 2015 to March 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are those with 2015 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that the employment gains in Boone County and Jefferson Counties, at 3.8 and 2.8 percent, respectively, were above the national average. (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment advanced 2.0 percent from March 2015 to March 2016 as 318 of the 344 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase with a gain of 7.9 percent over the year. Midland, Texas, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest U.S. counties, with a loss of 9.0 percent.

Among the three large counties in Kentucky, employment was highest in Jefferson County (454,00) in March 2016, while Boone County had the smallest employment (82,300). Together, Kentucky's large counties accounted for 39.3 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.6 percent of total U.S. employment.

Of Kentucky's three large counties, only Boone County experienced an average weekly wage gain from the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016—up 2.2 percent. Jefferson County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at $1,013. Nationally, the average weekly wage decreased 0.5 percent over the year to $1,043 in the first quarter of 2016. (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 $1,267 to $488. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

As noted, Boone County was the only large county in Kentucky to have average weekly wages increase from the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016. At 2.2 percent, Boone County's wage gain ranked 32nd among the nation's 344 large counties. Jefferson County's 0.3-percent decrease ranked 191st and Fayette County's 2.4-percent decline ranked 287th. (See table 1.)

Of the 344 largest U.S. counties, 167 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage wage decrease nationwide (-13.3 percent). Washington, Pa., was second with a wage decrease of 12.0 percent, followed by the counties of Lafayette, La. (-10.3 percent); Mercer, N.J. (-8.5 percent); and Williamson, Texas (-7.8 percent).

Nationally, 164 large U.S. counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest percentage increase in average weekly wages (15.5 percent), followed by King, Wash. (5.1 percent); San Mateo, Calif. (4.8 percent); Ventura, Calif. (4.4 percent); and Merrimack, N.H. (4.3 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

While average weekly wages in Kentucky's three large counties were below the U.S. average of $1,043, the average weekly wage in Jefferson County ($1,013, 112th) placed in the top third of the national ranking. Average weekly wages in Fayette ($861, 216th) and Boone ($853, 225th) placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, 91 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,043 in the first quarter of 2016. New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at $2,783, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., at $2,210. Rounding out the top five were San Mateo, Calif. ($2,195); San Francisco, Calif. ($2,054); and Somerset, N.J. ($2,022).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 253 had average weekly wages below the national average in the first quarter of 2016. Horry, S.C. ($587), had the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas ($592); Hidalgo, Texas ($614); Webb, Texas ($650); and Lake, Fl. ($653).

Average weekly wages in Kentucky's smaller counties

Among the 117 counties in Kentucky with employment below 75,000, Hancock ($1,267) and Carroll ($1,051) were the only two to report an average weekly wage above the national average of $1,043. Robertson County reported the lowest wage in the state, averaging $488 in the first quarter of 2016. (See table 2.)

When all 120 counties in Kentucky were considered, 38 reported average weekly wages below $600, 43 reported average weekly wages from $600 to $699, 25 had wages from $700 to $799, 8 had wages from $800 to $899, and 6 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 2014 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 2014* are now available online at https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn14.htm. The 2015 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2016.

The County Employment and Wages release for 2nd quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, December 7, 2016.

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 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	March 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2015-16 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, first quarter 2015-16 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	140,070.8	2.0	--	$1,043	--	-0.5	--
Kentucky	1,843.9	1.9	--	823	41	0.1	19
Boone, Ky.	82.3	3.8	33	853	225	2.2	32
Fayette, Ky.	187.6	1.7	200	861	216	-2.4	287
Jefferson, Ky.	454.0	2.8	99	1,013	112	-0.3	191

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 2016

Area	Employment March 2016	Average weekly wage [1]
United States [2]	140,070,814	$1,043
Kentucky	1,843,903	823
Adair	4,501	552
Allen	4,418	630
Anderson	4,547	657
Ballard	1,861	883
Barren	17,057	633
Bath	1,983	608
Bell	8,411	599
Boone	82,255	853
Bourbon	6,626	733
Boyd	24,095	843
Boyle	13,526	725
Bracken	1,354	641
Breathitt	3,164	623
Breckinridge	3,319	590
Bullitt	23,747	624
Butler	2,954	612
Caldwell	4,320	581
Calloway	16,564	612
Campbell	29,604	798
Carlisle	1,003	528
Carroll	6,866	1,051
Carter	5,638	574
Casey	3,890	555
Christian	31,041	714
Clark	14,123	728
Clay	4,189	634
Clinton	3,527	548
Crittenden	1,941	507
Cumberland	1,700	629
Daviess	44,758	730
Edmonson	1,470	605
Elliott	943	545
Estill	2,460	590
Fayette	187,638	861
Fleming	2,920	584
Floyd	10,864	699
Franklin	31,028	795
Fulton	2,016	649
Gallatin	2,509	823
Garrard	2,330	603
Grant	4,895	703
Graves	10,792	668
Grayson	7,846	602
Green	1,699	505
Greenup	7,873	692
Hancock	4,151	1,267
Hardin	48,084	759
Harlan	6,042	630
Harrison	4,768	760
Hart	5,112	609
Henderson	19,854	753
Henry	2,680	651
Hickman	1,081	539
Hopkins	18,187	746
Jackson	1,779	578

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Kentucky, 1st quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2016	Average weekly wage [1]
Jefferson	453,998	1,013
Jessamine	16,501	676
Johnson	5,237	612
Kenton	64,743	952
Knott	2,370	584
Knox	7,621	566
Larue	2,583	569
Laurel	25,977	646
Lawrence	3,180	687
Lee	1,459	612
Leslie	1,683	635
Letcher	4,328	597
Lewis	1,987	564
Lincoln	4,298	568
Livingston	2,535	777
Logan	8,351	725
Lyon	2,269	559
McCracken	39,478	778
McCreary	2,627	640
McLean	2,124	610
Madison	33,584	690
Magoffin	1,749	506
Marion	8,574	690
Marshall	11,041	884
Martin	2,484	754
Mason	8,659	715
Meade	4,247	677
Menifee	860	573
Mercer	6,426	885
Metcalfe	1,829	585
Monroe	3,156	527
Montgomery	10,957	666
Morgan	2,810	602
Muhlenberg	9,020	767
Nelson	15,194	689
Nicholas	820	545
Ohio	7,487	583
Oldham	15,424	757
Owen	1,737	694
Owsley	682	493
Pendleton	2,280	752
Perry	11,344	655
Pike	20,239	748
Powell	2,526	562
Pulaski	25,495	630
Robertson	285	488
Rockcastle	3,402	560
Rowan	10,364	608
Russell	5,450	533
Scott	25,571	903
Shelby	15,899	721
Simpson	8,621	675
Spencer	1,850	629
Taylor	11,558	584
Todd	2,290	545
Trigg	2,959	588

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Kentucky, 1st quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2016	Average weekly wage [1]
Trimble	1,091	928
Union	5,091	754
Warren	62,068	770
Washington	3,470	667
Wayne	5,399	552
Webster	3,189	833
Whitley	11,609	660
Wolfe	1,271	515
Woodford	9,111	760

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.

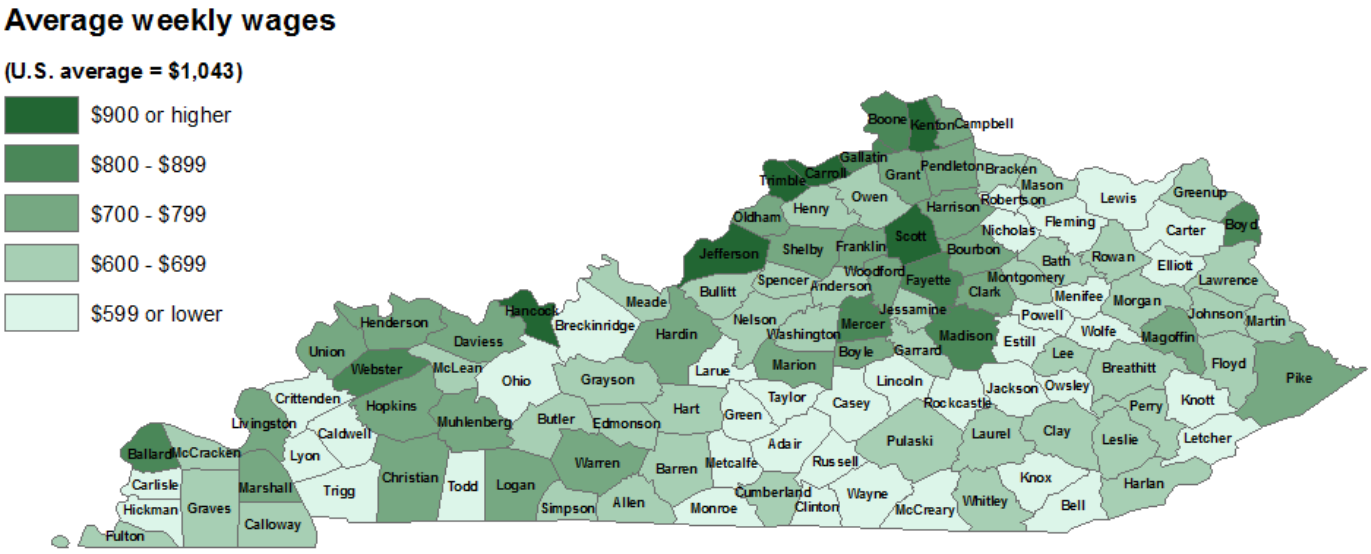
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	March 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	140,070.8	2.0	1043	--	-0.5	--
Alabama	1,902.6	1.6	842	37	-0.2	22
Alaska	317.6	-1.4	1028	15	-2	43
Arizona	2,679.8	2.8	918	23	-0.8	30
Arkansas	1,191.1	2.1	793	45	0.5	13
California	16,455.5	2.6	1206	6	0	20
Colorado	2,514.6	2.4	1057	13	-1.3	36
Connecticut	1,650.6	0.6	1362	3	-1.4	38
Delaware	429.7	1.5	1072	10	-3	48
District of Columbia	749.6	2.0	1766	1	0.4	14
Florida	8,301.8	3.5	887	27	0.2	18
Georgia	4,215.1	3.0	1008	17	1.9	2
Hawaii	645.1	1.4	896	26	1.7	3
Idaho	670.4	3.5	725	50	-1.5	39
Illinois	5,800.6	1.2	1126	7	-0.5	28
Indiana	2,949.5	1.9	853	33	-0.5	28
Iowa	1,518.2	0.9	844	36	-0.4	27
Kansas	1,362.3	0.4	833	38	-2	43
Kentucky	1,843.9	1.9	823	41	0.1	19
Louisiana	1,910.5	-0.8	860	32	-2.6	47
Maine	580.5	1.8	804	44	1.1	8
Maryland	2,591.7	1.9	1103	9	-0.8	30
Massachusetts	3,414.8	2.1	1327	4	-1	33
Michigan	4,163.7	2.1	976	20	0.7	11
Minnesota	2,750.1	1.5	1065	12	-1.2	34
Mississippi	1,121.0	1.7	713	51	0.4	14
Missouri	2,729.5	1.9	879	29	-0.3	25
Montana	447.8	1.8	751	49	0.3	16
Nebraska	956.6	1.4	817	42	0	20
Nevada	1,264.1	3.0	875	30	1.2	5
New Hampshire	635.1	1.9	998	18	1.6	4
New Jersey	3,909.7	2.4	1268	5	-1.7	41
New Mexico	800.4	0.0	792	46	-1.6	40
New York	9,042.2	2.0	1456	2	-0.3	25
North Carolina	4,220.3	3.0	928	22	-0.2	22
North Dakota	409.4	-6.2	908	25	-7.6	51
Ohio	5,236.2	1.8	913	24	-0.8	30
Oklahoma	1,578.6	-0.9	833	38	-4.1	49
Oregon	1,808.2	3.2	929	21	1.2	5
Pennsylvania	5,662.2	1.1	1012	16	-1.9	42
Rhode Island	464.6	1.9	985	19	-2.2	46
South Carolina	1,974.6	2.7	806	43	0.8	10
South Dakota	410.5	0.9	771	48	1.2	5
Tennessee	2,859.2	3.3	887	27	0.3	16
Texas	11,638.7	0.7	1066	11	-2.1	45
Utah	1,369.2	3.8	849	35	0.6	12
Vermont	304.6	0.1	832	40	1	9
Virginia	3,748.1	2.6	1057	13	-1.2	34
Washington	3,147.7	3.1	1121	8	3	1
West Virginia	683.9	-1.2	782	47	-1.3	36
Wisconsin	2,771.4	1.3	875	30	-0.2	22
Wyoming	267.9	-3.7	850	34	-4.7	50
Puerto Rico	895.2	-1.2	520	[3]	-0.4	[3]
Virgin Islands	38.6	0.4	769	[3]	2.9	[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.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Kentucky, first quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.