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County Employment and Wages in Alabama – Second Quarter 2017

Employment increased in 5 of Alabama's 6 largest counties from June 2016 to June 2017, 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 2016 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that employment increases ranged from 2.7 percent in Madison County to 0.6 percent in Shelby County. Employment in Mobile County declined 0.1 percent over the year. (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment rose 1.7 percent from June 2016 to June 2017 as 318 of the 346 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase, up 7.3 percent over the year. Lucas, Ohio, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 1.9 percent.

Among the six largest counties in Alabama, employment was highest in Jefferson (345,100) in June 2017, while Shelby had the smallest employment (85,200). Together, Alabama's large counties accounted for 52.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 72.7 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 145.2 million in June 2017.

Each of Alabama's six large counties had over-the-year wage increases with the largest gain in Tuscaloosa County (4.8 percent). Madison County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's six largest counties at $1,072. Nationally, the average weekly wage was $1,020, a 3.2 percent increase from a year ago. (See table 1.)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 61 counties in Alabama with employment below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from $1,119 to $602. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages increased in all of Alabama's large counties from the second quarter of 2016 to the second quarter of 2017. Tuscaloosa (4.8 percent, 48th) and Jefferson (4.3 percent, 71st) were in the top third of the national ranking. Average weekly wage growth in Alabama's four other large counties ranged from 2.6 to 0.2 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 325 of the 346 largest counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. New Hanover, N.C., had the largest wage increase among the largest U.S. counties (11.9 percent). San Mateo, Calif., and Midland, Texas were second with wage increases of 11.4 percent each. Rounding out the top five were Kitsap, Wash. (11.0 percent) and Clackamas, Ore. (10.0 percent).

Of the 346 largest U.S. counties, 19 had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-20.4 percent), followed by Union, N.J. (-3.7 percent); Warren, Ohio (-3.6 percent); Somerset, N.J. (-3.4 percent); Fairfield, Conn. (-1.9 percent); and Washington, Ore. (-1.9 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 3 of Alabama's 6 largest counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 346 largest counties in the second quarter of 2017. Madison County's average weekly wage of $1,072 was above the U.S. average of $1,020, and ranked 73rd nationwide. Jefferson County ($1,008) and Shelby County ($948) ranked 108th and 163rd, respectively.

Nationwide, average weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 97 of the 346 largest counties. Santa Clara, Calif., was the highest-paid large county with an average weekly wage of $2,392. San Mateo, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of $2,093, followed by San Francisco, Calif. ($1,941) and New York, N.Y. ($1,907).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 249 reported average weekly wages below the national average in the second quarter of 2017. Cameron, Texas ($615) had the lowest weekly wage, followed by Horry, S.C. ($622); and the Texas counties of Hidalgo ($632) and Webb ($667).

Average weekly wages in Alabama's smaller counties

Among the 61 counties in Alabama with employment below 75,000, Washington ($1,119) was the only county with a weekly wage above the national average of $1,020. Perry County had the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging $602 in the second quarter of 2017. (See table 2.)

When all 67 counties in Alabama were considered, 37 had average weekly wages below $699, 14 had wages from $700-$799, 11 had wages from $800-$899, 5 had wages $900 or above. (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 2016 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 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2016* are now available online at https://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2016/home.htm. The 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2018.

The County Employment and Wages release for third quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, March 8, 2018.

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 145.2 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 6 largest counties in Alabama, second quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	June 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2016-17 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, second quarter 2016-17 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	145,186.4	1.7	--	$1,020	--	3.2	--
Alabama	1,946.4	1.2	--	858	38	2.8	31
Jefferson, Ala.	345.1	1.2	212	1,008	108	4.3	71
Madison, Ala.	197.0	2.7	70	1,072	73	2.3	220
Mobile, Ala.	170.3	-0.1	324	857	255	1.4	273
Montgomery, Ala.	133.2	1.1	222	840	272	0.2	322
Shelby, Ala.	85.2	0.6	274	948	163	2.6	196
Tuscaloosa, Ala.	91.7	0.7	264	850	263	4.8	48

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 Alabama, second quarter 2017

Area	Employment June 2017	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	145,186,369	$1,020
Alabama	1,946,409	858
Autauga	10,975	687
Baldwin	74,905	666
Barbour	8,029	683
Bibb	4,155	757
Blount	8,388	649
Bullock	2,987	634
Butler	6,815	635
Calhoun	44,252	733
Chambers	8,310	693
Cherokee	5,084	643
Chilton	9,415	683
Choctaw	3,460	864
Clarke	8,144	721
Clay	4,041	632
Cleburne	2,161	825
Coffee	15,859	637
Colbert	23,938	826
Conecuh	3,454	676
Coosa	1,345	639
Covington	12,580	668
Crenshaw	3,764	680
Cullman	28,990	715
Dale	16,849	970
Dallas	12,389	678
DeKalb	21,073	671
Elmore	20,138	646
Escambia	12,967	729
Etowah	36,544	686
Fayette	4,086	648
Franklin	10,637	665
Geneva	4,936	615
Greene	1,762	683
Hale	2,732	676
Henry	3,252	696
Houston	47,778	754
Jackson	15,860	673
Jefferson	345,146	1,008
Lamar	3,495	707
Lauderdale	29,577	648
Lawrence	4,794	631
Lee	58,252	728
Limestone	22,843	896
Lowndes	2,322	862
Macon	4,750	801
Madison	197,040	1,072
Marengo	7,169	720
Marion	9,986	655
Marshall	37,021	667
Mobile	170,288	857
Monroe	6,194	782
Montgomery	133,212	840
Morgan	48,026	831
Perry	2,055	602
Pickens	3,837	692

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Alabama, second quarter 2017 - Continued

Area	Employment June 2017	Average Weekly Wage(1)
Pike	14,314	762
Randolph	4,837	622
Russell	14,138	681
St. Clair	19,856	692
Shelby	85,247	948
Sumter	2,996	745
Talladega	29,325	861
Tallapoosa	13,585	700
Tuscaloosa	91,715	850
Walker	18,228	687
Washington	3,568	1,119
Wilcox	2,881	783
Winston	7,837	662

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, second quarter 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	June 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	145,186.4	1.7	$1,020	--	3.2	--
Alabama	1,946.4	1.2	858	38	2.8	31
Alaska	338.4	-0.7	1,005	16	-0.5	51
Arizona	2,699.6	2.9	943	23	2.5	35
Arkansas	1,206.0	0.7	810	47	3.2	22
California	17,150.9	2.2	1,210	5	4.7	3
Colorado	2,638.8	2.5	1,042	11	4.2	5
Connecticut	1,701.2	0.6	1,216	4	0.4	50
Delaware	446.6	0.6	1,012	15	2.2	43
District of Columbia	766.5	1.0	1,675	1	3.3	19
Florida	8,390.6	2.8	905	27	2.5	35
Georgia	4,357.8	2.1	956	21	2.9	27
Hawaii	653.0	1.0	935	24	3.5	13
Idaho	723.5	3.4	765	50	3.4	16
Illinois	6,006.6	0.9	1,062	9	2.4	39
Indiana	3,041.0	1.5	859	37	3.7	9
Iowa	1,571.4	0.4	853	39	3.3	19
Kansas	1,377.8	-0.1	849	40	2.4	39
Kentucky	1,889.4	0.8	862	35	2.9	27
Louisiana	1,907.7	0.0	869	34	2.0	46
Maine	629.1	0.9	814	46	2.5	35
Maryland	2,694.8	1.4	1,103	8	3.1	23
Massachusetts	3,604.5	1.6	1,278	2	3.6	11
Michigan	4,365.3	1.6	969	19	2.9	27
Minnesota	2,902.1	2.0	1,037	12	3.9	6
Mississippi	1,128.9	0.7	732	51	0.8	49
Missouri	2,818.7	1.2	889	30	3.0	25
Montana	473.6	1.3	797	48	3.9	6
Nebraska	984.0	0.4	833	43	3.5	13
Nevada	1,333.5	3.4	900	29	2.9	27
New Hampshire	665.4	1.6	1,015	14	1.2	48
New Jersey	4,123.5	1.8	1,173	6	2.3	41
New Mexico	815.4	0.7	823	45	1.5	47
New York	9,417.4	1.6	1,237	3	2.2	43
North Carolina	4,361.4	1.8	902	28	4.3	4
North Dakota	422.7	-0.2	953	22	5.0	2
Ohio	5,422.8	1.2	912	25	3.3	19
Oklahoma	1,583.8	0.8	845	41	2.5	35
Oregon	1,912.6	2.2	967	20	3.8	8
Pennsylvania	5,859.4	1.3	1,000	17	3.0	25
Rhode Island	487.3	1.0	980	18	2.6	33
South Carolina	2,053.9	2.0	834	42	3.6	11
South Dakota	435.5	0.6	785	49	3.4	16
Tennessee	2,948.1	1.8	906	26	3.5	13
Texas	12,059.6	2.1	1,027	13	2.7	32
Utah	1,440.3	3.4	862	35	2.6	33
Vermont	314.2	1.0	870	33	2.1	45
Virginia	3,886.6	1.5	1,047	10	3.7	9
Washington	3,352.5	2.2	1,141	7	5.6	1
West Virginia	690.9	-0.3	828	44	3.4	16
Wisconsin	2,905.3	1.1	876	31	2.3	41
Wyoming	280.2	-0.7	875	32	3.1	23
Puerto Rico	873.6	-1.0	515	[3]	1.2	[3]

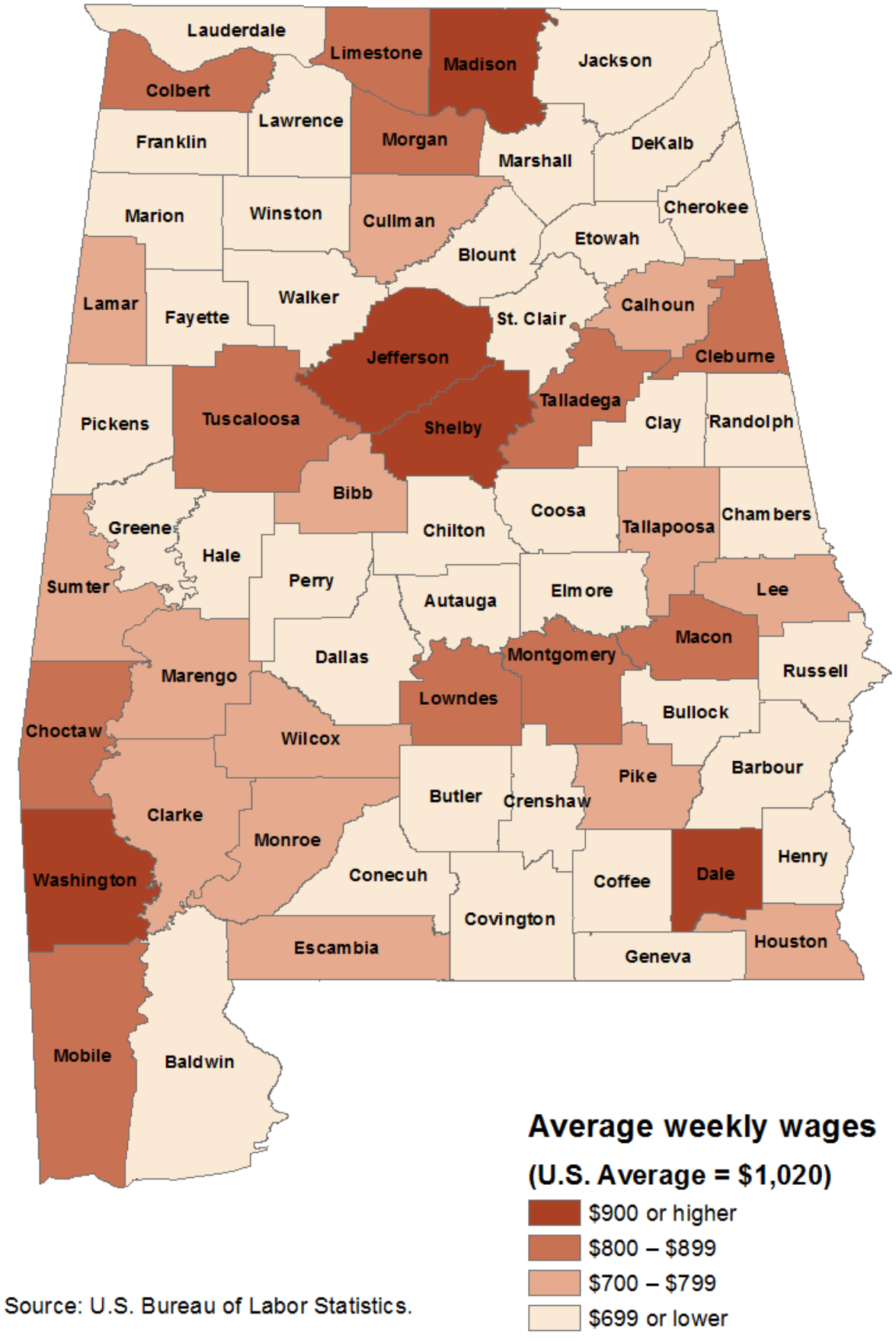
Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, second quarter 2017 - Continued

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	June 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
Virgin Islands	38.6	0.4	762	[3]	2.6	[3]

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 Alabama, second quarter 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.