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County Employment and Wages in Tennessee – First Quarter 2017

Employment rose in all six large counties in Tennessee from March 2016 to March 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 Williamson County had the third largest employment gain in the country, up 4.6 percent over the previous year. Employment gains in Tennessee's remaining large counties ranged from 3.7 percent in Rutherford County to 0.7 percent in Shelby County. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.6 percent from March 2016 to March 2017 as 299 of the 346 largest U.S. counties registered increases. York, S.C., had the largest percentage increase with a gain of 6.8 percent over the year. Kanawha, W.Va., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with a loss of 2.7 percent.

Among the largest counties in Tennessee, employment was highest in Shelby County (488,200) in March 2017, followed by Davidson County (474,500). Together, Tennessee's six large counties accounted for 56.7 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 142.3 million in March 2017.

Each of Tennessee's six large counties posted over-the-year wage increases in the first quarter of 2017. Knox County (7.9 percent) had the largest over-the-year wage gain, followed by Rutherford County (7.7 percent). Williamson County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,287, followed by Davidson County at \$1,150. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 6.6 percent over the year to \$1,111 in the first quarter of 2017. (See [table 1.](#))

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 89 counties with employment levels below 75,000 in Tennessee. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from \$1,256 to \$490. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages rose in all of Tennessee's large counties from the first quarter of 2016 to the first quarter of 2017. Wage gains in three of the state's large counties placed in the top 100 of the national ranking—Knox (7.9 percent, 63rd), Rutherford (7.7 percent, 73rd), and Hamilton (7.4 percent, 92nd). (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, 345 of the 346 largest counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest wage gain, up 27.8 percent from the first quarter of 2016. Peoria, Ill., had the only percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-1.1 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Williamson and Davidson Counties, with average weekly wages of \$1,287 and \$1,150, respectively, placed in the top quarter among the 346 largest U.S. counties in the first quarter of 2017. With the exception of Shelby County (\$1,059, 124th), average weekly wages in the remaining large counties in Tennessee placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, 94 large counties had average weekly wages at or above the U.S. average of \$1,111 in the first quarter of 2017. New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,954, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., at \$2,450. Rounding out the top five were San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,385); San Francisco, Calif. (\$2,264); and Somerset, N.J. (\$2,026).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 252 had average weekly wages below the national average in the first quarter of 2017. Cameron, Texas (\$614), had the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Horry, S.C (\$628); Hidalgo, Texas (\$642); Webb, Texas (\$675); and Lake, Fla. (\$681).

Average weekly wages in Tennessee's smaller counties

Among the 89 counties in Tennessee with employment below 75,000, only Roane County (\$1,256) had an average weekly wage above the national average of \$1,111. Grundy County reported the lowest average weekly in the state, averaging \$490 in the first quarter of 2017. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 95 counties in Tennessee were considered, 15 reported average weekly wages below \$600, 26 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 34 had wages from \$700 to \$799, and 20 had wages above \$800. (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 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 second quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, December 5, 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 142.3 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 Tennessee, first quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	142,309.2	1.6	--	\$1,111	--	6.6	--
Tennessee.....	2,906.2	1.8	--	945	28	6.7	25
Davidson, Tenn.....	474.5	3.0	50	1,150	74	4.9	274
Hamilton, Tenn.	198.6	1.7	157	944	196	7.4	92
Knox, Tenn.....	235.0	0.8	237	941	199	7.9	63
Rutherford, Tenn.....	123.1	3.7	10	907	228	7.7	73
Shelby, Tenn.	488.2	0.7	248	1,059	124	7.1	118
Williamson, Tenn.	127.0	4.6	3	1,287	46	7.1	118

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 Tennessee, first quarter 2017

Area	Employment March 2017	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	142,309,185	\$1,111
Tennessee	2,906,192	945
Anderson	39,597	1,068
Bedford	17,254	724
Benton	3,999	605
Bledsoe	2,186	622
Blount	47,558	895
Bradley	40,933	776
Campbell	9,017	658
Cannon	2,219	588
Carroll	7,366	714
Carter	10,921	650
Cheatham	8,133	839
Chester	3,745	600
Claiborne	8,902	651
Clay	1,561	595
Cocke	7,509	614
Coffee	25,753	821
Crockett	3,652	727
Cumberland	17,441	628
Davidson	474,540	1,150
Decatur	3,557	702
De Kalb	5,372	702
Dickson	16,915	710
Dyer	15,128	728
Fayette	7,778	810
Fentress	4,790	579
Franklin	11,990	663
Gibson	13,715	677
Giles	11,189	714
Grainger	3,733	674
Greene	25,726	708
Grundy	2,029	490
Hamblen	30,966	727
Hamilton	198,633	944
Hancock	854	494
Hardeman	6,667	744
Hardin	7,819	795
Hawkins	13,205	801
Haywood	5,007	727
Henderson	7,829	711
Henry	11,287	720
Hickman	3,659	665
Houston	1,524	565
Humphreys	5,874	969
Jackson	1,403	592
Jefferson	13,263	738
Johnson	4,359	762
Knox	234,976	941
Lake	1,807	594
Lauderdale	6,143	676
Lawrence	10,068	650
Lewis	2,595	565
Lincoln	10,033	677
Loudon	14,714	755
McMinn	17,846	811
McNairy	5,713	602

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

Area	Employment March 2017	Average Weekly Wage(1)
Macon.....	4,917	609
Madison.....	58,333	781
Marion.....	7,431	715
Marshall.....	10,079	764
Maury.....	34,680	937
Meigs.....	1,922	755
Monroe.....	13,662	721
Montgomery.....	52,641	704
Moore.....	2,019	803
Morgan.....	2,939	645
Obion.....	9,617	709
Overton.....	4,828	682
Perry.....	1,941	564
Pickett.....	1,132	572
Polk.....	2,182	578
Putnam.....	36,424	704
Rhea.....	10,765	765
Roane.....	18,334	1,256
Robertson.....	22,214	738
Rutherford.....	123,118	907
Scott.....	5,411	577
Sequatchie.....	3,016	592
Sevier.....	44,563	559
Shelby.....	488,164	1,059
Smith.....	4,992	719
Stewart.....	2,659	877
Sullivan.....	67,936	915
Sumner.....	52,650	791
Tipton.....	11,169	670
Trousdale.....	1,575	624
Unicoi.....	4,775	858
Union.....	2,397	621
Van Buren.....	818	625
Warren.....	13,333	730
Washington.....	61,118	756
Wayne.....	3,605	611
Weakley.....	11,172	614
White.....	7,035	639
Williamson.....	127,041	1,287
Wilson.....	41,139	772

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 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	142,309.2	1.6	\$1,111	--	6.6	--
Alabama	1,928.9	1.4	893	36	6.2	35
Alaska	312.8	-1.8	1,061	18	3.9	50
Arizona	2,743.0	2.4	991	21	8.1	4
Arkansas	1,199.9	0.7	859	45	8.5	3
California	16,831.4	2.3	1,295	6	7.6	7
Colorado	2,573.2	2.3	1,136	12	7.5	10
Connecticut	1,651.5	0.1	1,417	4	4.0	49
Delaware	433.2	0.8	1,185	9	10.7	1
District of Columbia	760.7	1.2	1,885	1	7.0	16
Florida	8,532.6	2.8	949	27	7.2	13
Georgia	4,317.1	2.7	1,068	17	6.1	37
Hawaii	653.6	0.9	954	25	6.8	22
Idaho	690.4	3.0	775	50	7.0	16
Illinois	5,842.0	0.5	1,195	8	6.3	34
Indiana	2,985.8	1.2	918	32	7.6	7
Iowa	1,518.3	0.0	899	35	6.5	30
Kansas	1,368.0	0.4	888	38	6.7	25
Kentucky	1,864.1	1.1	879	41	6.9	18
Louisiana	1,901.3	-0.5	906	33	5.5	43
Maine	586.7	1.0	860	44	7.2	13
Maryland	2,626.0	1.2	1,171	10	5.8	42
Massachusetts	3,464.0	1.1	1,428	3	7.7	6
Michigan	4,230.6	1.7	1,041	20	6.8	22
Minnesota	2,806.4	2.1	1,149	11	7.9	5
Mississippi	1,122.9	0.1	750	51	5.3	46
Missouri	2,767.0	1.4	930	31	5.9	38
Montana	451.5	1.4	800	49	6.5	30
Nebraska	960.7	0.4	868	42	6.4	33
Nevada	1,311.6	3.8	932	30	6.9	18
New Hampshire	643.2	1.2	1,070	16	7.3	11
New Jersey	3,955.1	1.5	1,333	5	5.0	47
New Mexico	803.3	0.2	838	46	5.9	38
New York	9,159.3	1.3	1,541	2	5.9	38
North Carolina	4,287.0	1.8	991	21	6.9	18
North Dakota	405.7	-1.0	953	26	5.0	47
Ohio	5,278.3	0.8	976	24	6.7	25
Oklahoma	1,563.9	-1.0	883	39	5.9	38
Oregon	1,855.0	2.5	984	23	5.4	45
Pennsylvania	5,712.3	0.8	1,078	15	6.5	30
Rhode Island	465.4	0.3	1,055	19	7.2	13
South Carolina	2,017.9	2.2	864	43	7.3	11
South Dakota	413.4	0.7	819	48	6.2	35
Tennessee	2,906.2	1.8	945	28	6.7	25
Texas	11,924.5	1.7	1,124	14	5.5	43
Utah	1,411.3	3.1	905	34	6.6	29
Vermont	305.6	0.2	889	37	6.7	25
Virginia	3,796.3	1.4	1,129	13	6.9	18
Washington	3,225.9	2.6	1,215	7	8.6	2
West Virginia	678.2	-0.8	837	47	7.6	7
Wisconsin	2,803.7	1.1	933	29	6.8	22
Wyoming	262.4	-2.3	880	40	3.3	51
Puerto Rico	887.7	-0.9	526	(3)	1.2	(3)
Virgin Islands	38.7	0.0	797	(3)	3.1	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

