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County Employment and Wages in South Carolina – Third Quarter 2017

Employment increased in six of South Carolina's seven large counties from September 2016 to September 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2016 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that York and Spartanburg Counties had the largest employment growth among South Carolina's largest counties, increasing 3.6 and 3.5 percent, respectively. (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.0 percent from September 2016 to September 2017 as 283 of the 346 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 10.4 percent over the year. Collier, Fla., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with a loss of 5.2 percent.

Among the seven largest counties in South Carolina, employment was highest in Greenville County (266,100) in September 2017. Two other counties, Charleston and Richland, had employment levels above 200,000. Together, South Carolina's large counties accounted for 59.6 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 144.5 million in September 2017.

From the third quarter of 2016 to the third quarter of 2017, five large South Carolina counties had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. (See table 1.) Richland County was the only large county to register an increase in average weekly wages, up 0.8 percent. Charleston County recorded the highest average weekly wage among the state's large counties at $902. Nationally, the average weekly wage declined 0.6 percent to $1,021 during the year ending in the third quarter of 2017.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 39 counties in South Carolina with employment levels below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from $1,191 to $556. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Five of South Carolina's seven large counties had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Greenville and Lexington Counties had the largest decreases in average weekly wages (-1.6 percent each). Average weekly wages in Horry County were unchanged for the year, while average weekly wages in Richland County were up 0.8 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 265 of the 346 largest counties registered over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Mercer, N.J., had the largest wage decline, down 8.8 percent from the third quarter of 2016, followed by Wyandotte, Kan. (-6.0 percent).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 71 experienced an over-the-year increase in average weekly wages. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase in average weekly wages (8.4 percent), followed by Union, N.J (8.2 percent); Elkhart, Ind. (6.5 percent); Forsyth, N.C. (5.3 percent); and Maui + Kalawao, Hawaii (4.6 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Each of South Carolina's seven large counties had average weekly wages below the national average of $1,021 in September 2017. Charleston, Richland, and Greenville Counties, with average weekly wages of $902, $893, and $877, respectively, placed in the middle third of the national ranking among the 346 largest U.S. counties in the third quarter of 2017. Average weekly wages in South Carolina's four other large counties placed in the bottom third of the national ranking. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 96 large counties had average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,021 in the third quarter of 2017. Santa Clara, Calif., had the highest average weekly wage at $2,320, followed by San Mateo, Calif. ($2,123); and San Francisco, Calif. ($1,954).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 250 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2017. Cameron, Texas, had the lowest wage ($612), followed by Horry, S.C. ($633); and Hidalgo, Texas ($649).

Average weekly wages in South Carolina's smaller counties

Among the 39 smaller counties in South Carolina with employment below 75,000, Fairfield ($1,191) was the only county with an average weekly wage above the $1,021 national average. Clarendon County had the lowest weekly wage among all the counties in the state, averaging $556 in the third quarter of 2017. (See table 2.)

When all 46 counties in South Carolina were considered, 14 had wages below $699, 19 had wages from $700-$799, 9 had wages from $800-$899, and 4 had average weekly 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 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/cewbultn16.htm. The 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2018.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 23, 2018.

QCEW Publication Acceleration and Conversion to Two Data Releases

The national QCEW publication process is accelerating for a more timely release. Beginning with the fourth quarter 2017 release, QCEW data will be published in two parts. The current County Employment and Wages news release and associated data will be accelerated and published first. The full QCEW data release will occur two weeks later, accompanied by a data release notice.

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 144.5 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 7 largest counties in South Carolina, third quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2016-17 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, third quarter 2016-17 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	144,464.4	1.0	--	$1,021	--	-0.6	--
South Carolina	2,027.2	0.8	--	828	43	-0.5	16
Charleston, S.C.	244.7	0.4	233	902	197	-1.4	195
Greenville, S.C.	266.1	1.4	104	877	230	-1.6	217
Horry, S.C.	127.8	1.3	114	633	345	0.0	72
Lexington, S.C.	118.5	2.2	52	778	323	-1.6	217
Richland, S.C.	218.1	-0.6	311	893	209	0.8	38
Spartanburg, S.C.	138.4	3.5	13	856	254	-1.0	156
York, S.C.	93.7	3.6	11	825	283	-0.5	111

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 South Carolina, third quarter 2017

Area	Employment September 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	144,464,425	$1,021
South Carolina	2,027,228	828
Abbeville	5,402	707
Aiken	59,210	920
Allendale	2,843	794
Anderson	64,455	747
Bamberg	3,772	636
Barnwell	5,119	640
Beaufort	63,644	719
Berkeley	49,632	924
Calhoun	4,538	794
Charleston	244,703	902
Cherokee	19,792	682
Chester	8,589	814
Chesterfield	14,730	715
Clarendon	6,819	556
Colleton	10,506	625
Darlington	20,071	815
Dillon	8,627	596
Dorchester	34,448	695
Edgefield	5,220	733
Fairfield	6,528	1,191
Florence	62,738	725
Georgetown	23,151	773
Greenville	266,107	877
Greenwood	27,697	824
Hampton	4,609	712
Horry	127,800	633
Jasper	8,954	700
Kershaw	17,400	732
Lancaster	23,846	879
Laurens	22,404	767
Lee	3,464	709
Lexington	118,454	778
McCormick	1,745	669
Marion	6,437	626
Marlboro	6,779	793
Newberry	13,692	691
Oconee	23,470	844
Orangeburg	28,668	711
Pickens	35,648	761
Richland	218,058	893
Saluda	4,586	608
Spartanburg	138,409	856
Sumter	36,809	712
Union	7,682	666
Williamsburg	9,182	694
York	93,724	825

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.

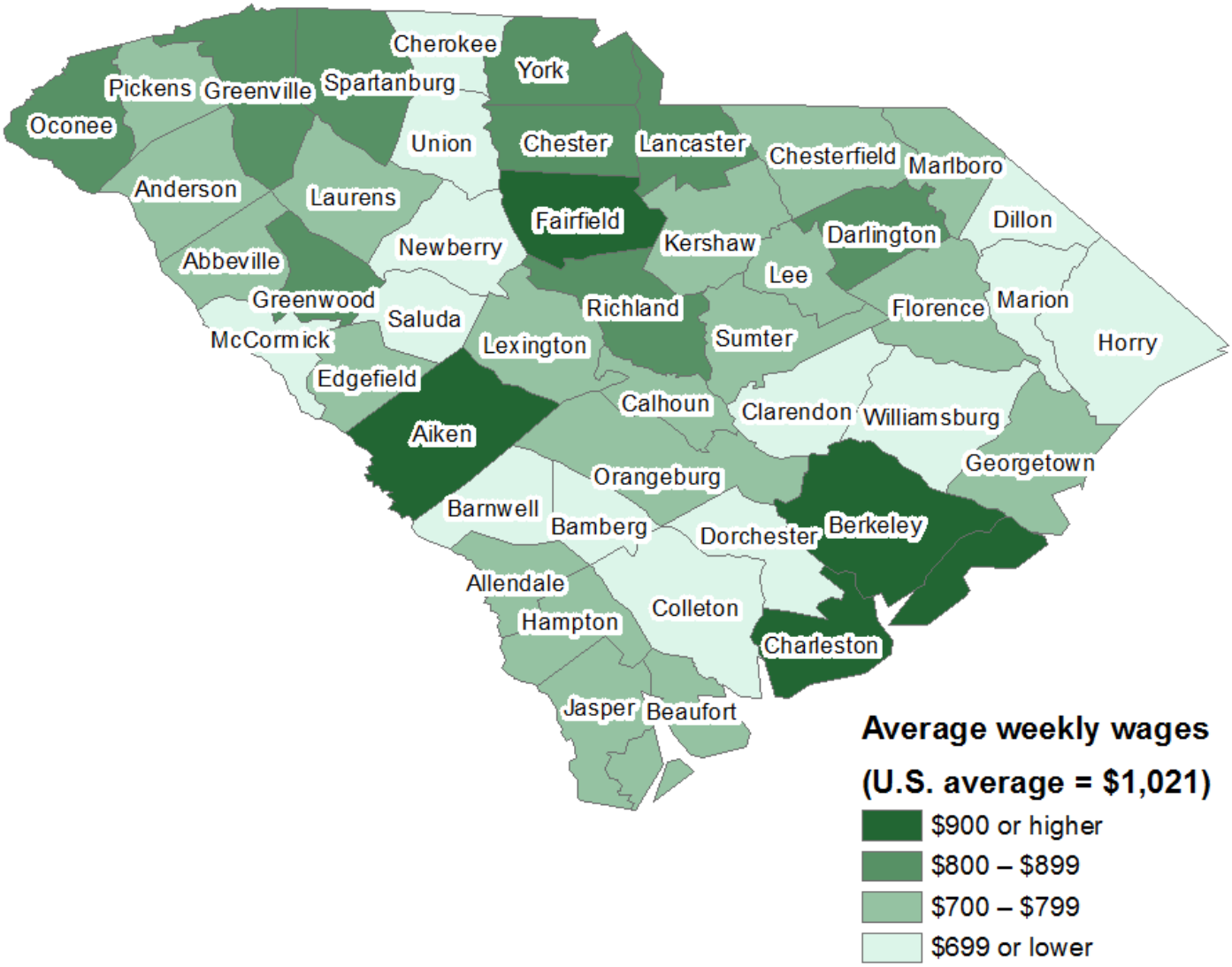
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	144,464.4	1.0	$1,021	--	-0.6	--
Alabama	1,941.1	0.8	859	37	-1.3	38
Alaska	335.4	-0.7	1,025	15	-2.8	50
Arizona	2,760.1	2.4	948	24	-0.2	10
Arkansas	1,213.0	0.6	788	49	-0.6	19
California	17,153.4	1.7	1,215	4	0.5	4
Colorado	2,625.9	1.9	1,067	9	0.5	4
Connecticut	1,676.3	0.1	1,179	6	-2.2	47
Delaware	443.0	0.4	1,026	14	0.4	6
District of Columbia	764.7	0.7	1,759	1	1.3	2
Florida	8,305.8	-0.2	896	29	-1.1	31
Georgia	4,343.5	1.3	961	21	-0.9	27
Hawaii	652.5	0.4	953	22	-0.3	13
Idaho	722.3	2.7	778	50	-0.5	16
Illinois	5,969.6	0.5	1,057	10	-0.3	13
Indiana	3,044.0	0.6	861	36	-0.6	19
Iowa	1,546.1	-0.2	855	38	-2.2	47
Kansas	1,376.4	-0.1	839	41	-2.1	46
Kentucky	1,890.4	0.5	837	42	-2.4	49
Louisiana	1,904.3	-0.1	869	33	-1.7	42
Maine	621.9	0.7	821	46	-0.5	16
Maryland	2,661.8	0.5	1,105	8	-1.7	42
Massachusetts	3,568.0	0.9	1,265	2	-0.9	27
Michigan	4,334.3	0.9	964	20	-1.1	31
Minnesota	2,883.0	1.1	1,030	13	-2.0	45
Mississippi	1,129.1	-0.1	729	51	-1.4	39
Missouri	2,805.8	0.9	878	31	-1.2	34
Montana	468.6	0.9	793	48	0.1	8
Nebraska	973.3	-0.2	850	39	-0.8	23
Nevada	1,337.7	2.9	914	26	-3.8	51
New Hampshire	659.1	0.6	1,022	16	-0.4	15
New Jersey	4,043.6	1.1	1,156	7	-1.5	41
New Mexico	816.0	0.3	823	45	-0.8	23
New York	9,329.8	1.2	1,219	3	-0.2	10
North Carolina	4,348.0	1.3	904	27	-0.7	21
North Dakota	419.2	-1.0	953	22	-1.2	34
Ohio	5,383.6	0.6	920	25	-0.8	23
Oklahoma	1,593.3	0.7	843	40	-1.2	34
Oregon	1,905.3	1.8	969	19	-0.1	9
Pennsylvania	5,836.5	1.0	1,002	17	-1.1	31
Rhode Island	484.5	0.8	973	18	-1.8	44
South Carolina	2,027.2	0.8	828	43	-0.5	16
South Dakota	426.2	0.4	803	47	-0.7	21
Tennessee	2,953.3	1.1	903	28	-1.2	34
Texas	12,008.9	1.4	1,032	12	-1.0	29
Utah	1,444.1	2.6	879	30	-0.2	10
Vermont	310.3	0.1	869	33	-1.4	39
Virginia	3,843.6	1.0	1,053	11	-0.8	23
Washington	3,343.4	2.0	1,208	5	1.7	1
West Virginia	694.0	0.2	826	44	1.1	3
Wisconsin	2,866.9	0.5	876	32	-1.0	29
Wyoming	276.2	0.3	868	35	0.3	7
Puerto Rico	862.8	-3.1	509	[3]	-2.7	[3]
Virgin Islands	36.9	-1.1	763	[3]	-1.9	[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 South Carolina, third quarter 2017



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.