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County Employment and Wages in Georgia – Fourth Quarter 2019

Employment increased in each of Georgia's 11 large counties from December 2018 to December 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more in 2018.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that employment increases ranged from 2.2 percent in Gwinnett County to 0.3 percent in Bibb County. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment increased 1.2 percent over the year with 285 of the 355 largest U.S. counties reporting increases. Cleveland, OK, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.8 percent. Ector, TX, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 4.2 percent.

Among the 11 largest counties in Georgia, employment was highest in Fulton County (914,100) in December 2019, while Forsyth County had the smallest employment level (78,400). Together, the 11 largest Georgia counties accounted for 59.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Each of Georgia's 11 large counties reported average weekly wage gains from the fourth quarter of 2018 to the fourth quarter of 2019, with the largest gain in Chatham County, up 5.2 percent. Fulton County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties (\$1,517). Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.5 percent over the year to \$1,185.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 148 counties in Georgia with employment below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from \$1,725 to \$573. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

Among Georgia's 11 largest counties, average weekly wage increases in Chatham (5.2 percent, 33rd), Forsyth (4.4 percent, 71st), and Clayton (4.1 percent, 98th) were in the top 100 of the national ranking in the fourth quarter of 2019. Average weekly wage growth in Georgia's other eight large counties ranged from 3.9 percent to 1.6 percent.

Nationally, 341 of the 355 largest counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Santa Cruz, CA, had the largest over-the-year wage gain (20.7 percent). The remaining 14 large counties had wage declines during the period. Linn, IA, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-7.1 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in three of Georgia's large counties placed in the top third of the national ranking in the fourth quarter of 2019. Fulton County (\$1,517, 19th) and Cobb County (\$1,195, 88th) had average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,185. The average weekly wage in DeKalb County (\$1,167) ranked 101st among the 355 largest U.S. counties

Nationally, 93 large counties reported average weekly wages at or above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2019. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$2,825. Average weekly wages were below the national average in 262 counties. At \$701 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

Average weekly wages in Georgia's smaller counties

Among the 148 smaller counties in Georgia – those with employment below 75,000 – only Burke County (\$1,725) had an average weekly wage above the national average of \$1,185. Glascock County had the lowest average weekly wage in the state, averaging \$573 per week in the fourth quarter of 2019.

When all 159 counties in Georgia were considered, 45 reported average weekly wages below \$700, 60 had wages from \$700 to \$799, 30 had wages from \$800 to \$899, 16 had wages from \$900 to \$999, and 8 had wages of \$1,000 or more. (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 2018 edition of this publication, which was published in September 2019, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2019 version of this news release. Tables and additional content from the 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2018/home.htm. The 2019 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2020.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 19, 2020. The County Employment and Wages full data update for first quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 2, 2020.

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 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 11 largest counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2019

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	149,857.1	1.2	--	\$1,185	--	3.5	--
Georgia.....	4,576.1	1.7	--	1,090	21	3.6	14
Bibb	83.6	0.3	251	889	324	2.2	272
Chatham.....	159.5	1.0	175	977	256	5.2	33
Clayton	125.1	0.7	204	1,093	157	4.1	98
Cobb	379.8	2.0	73	1,195	88	3.7	133
DeKalb.....	306.9	1.5	114	1,167	101	3.5	149
Forsyth	78.4	0.9	184	1,046	193	4.4	71
Fulton	914.1	1.5	114	1,517	19	3.1	196
Gwinnett	367.6	2.2	59	1,088	163	1.6	310
Hall	91.3	1.5	114	1,031	204	3.9	117
Muscogee.....	95.6	0.5	231	857	337	1.8	296
Richmond	105.9	0.6	220	936	295	3.2	181

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. 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 Georgia, fourth quarter 2019

Area	Employment December 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	149,857,130	\$1,185
Georgia	4,576,090	1,090
Appling	6,775	939
Atkinson	2,461	908
Bacon	3,707	739
Baker	457	699
Baldwin	15,546	693
Banks	4,720	683
Barrow	20,839	854
Bartow	41,256	896
Ben Hill	5,449	672
Berrien	3,649	640
Bibb	83,574	889
Bleckley	2,606	653
Brantley	2,469	711
Brooks	3,414	740
Bryan	9,098	749
Bulloch	26,218	708
Burke	14,913	1,725
Butts	7,358	741
Calhoun	1,143	684
Camden	14,710	896
Candler	3,412	594
Carroll	41,981	895
Catoosa	15,666	710
Charlton	1,953	761
Chatham	159,483	977
Chattahoochee	2,249	900
Chattooga	5,736	680
Cherokee	66,775	884
Clarke	71,785	993
Clay	675	596
Clayton	125,083	1,093
Clinch	2,321	691
Cobb	379,817	1,195
Coffee	17,851	733
Colquitt	15,080	733
Columbia	37,841	796
Cook	4,512	684
Coweta	41,485	848
Crawford	1,266	684
Crisp	8,326	755
Dade	3,848	699
Dawson	9,945	654
Decatur	9,169	676
De Kalb	306,902	1,167
Dodge	5,008	669
Dooly	3,751	712
Dougherty	48,360	870
Douglas	46,174	818
Early	4,303	953
Echols	617	771
Effingham	11,073	838
Elbert	5,780	720
Emanuel	6,789	699
Evans	4,578	677
Fannin	6,544	680

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2019
- Continued**

Area	Employment December 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
Fayette	46,808	942
Floyd.....	39,829	869
Forsyth	78,364	1,046
Franklin.....	7,974	735
Fulton	914,140	1,517
Gilmer	7,087	646
Glascok.....	417	573
Glynn	39,205	869
Gordon	23,784	865
Grady.....	6,011	762
Greene	6,447	785
Gwinnett	367,619	1,088
Habersham.....	14,365	758
Hall	91,276	1,031
Hancock	1,505	722
Haralson	7,047	844
Harris	5,715	711
Hart.....	6,109	721
Heard.....	2,025	928
Henry	68,962	784
Houston	63,647	943
Irwin	1,974	709
Jackson	29,323	786
Jasper.....	2,331	670
Jeff Davis.....	4,275	722
Jefferson.....	4,857	815
Jenkins	1,365	677
Johnson.....	1,500	626
Jones	4,351	766
Lamar	3,777	776
Lanier	1,406	684
Laurens	18,701	826
Lee	6,931	737
Liberty.....	19,244	821
Lincoln	1,260	659
Long	1,068	655
Lowndes	50,459	789
Lumpkin.....	8,020	746
McDuffie.....	6,888	733
McIntosh.....	1,693	659
Macon.....	2,757	830
Madison.....	3,568	711
Marion	1,129	645
Meriwether.....	4,409	753
Miller.....	1,723	745
Mitchell	6,883	695
Monroe	7,956	803
Montgomery	1,509	644
Morgan	7,474	775
Murray	7,872	736
Muscogee.....	95,632	857
Newton	26,371	875
Oconee.....	13,691	831
Oglethorpe.....	1,791	783
Paulding	25,695	750
Peach	10,383	843

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2019 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2019	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Pickens	8,013	916
Pierce	4,200	714
Pike	2,940	778
Polk	11,354	786
Pulaski	2,818	768
Putnam	5,788	688
Quitman	345	657
Rabun	5,516	637
Randolph	1,930	713
Richmond	105,868	936
Rockdale	32,864	960
Schley	995	757
Screven	3,190	670
Seminole	2,267	753
Spalding	23,383	761
Stephens	9,088	823
Stewart	1,440	937
Sumter	10,893	763
Talbot	765	676
Taliaferro	233	673
Tattnall	5,938	781
Taylor	1,541	837
Telfair	2,348	670
Terrell	2,154	726
Thomas	19,900	901
Tift	20,978	822
Toombs	12,110	696
Towns	3,379	693
Treutlen	1,030	642
Troup	40,761	909
Turner	1,847	695
Twiggs	2,577	774
Union	7,045	797
Upson	6,809	747
Walker	13,590	709
Walton	23,454	909
Ware	15,738	711
Warren	1,744	823
Washington	6,455	774
Wayne	8,114	841
Webster	550	738
Wheeler	1,079	706
White	9,177	690
Whitfield	56,253	892
Wilcox	1,103	672
Wilkes	2,693	745
Wilkinson	3,659	813
Worth	3,109	741

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, fourth quarter 2019

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2018-19	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2018-19	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	149,857.1	1.2	\$1,185	--	3.5	--
Alabama	2,007.9	1.0	985	36	2.6	39
Alaska	309.9	0.6	1,139	16	3.2	27
Arizona	2,999.8	2.7	1,059	23	4.1	7
Arkansas	1,232.9	0.5	898	50	3.2	27
California	17,836.3	1.5	1,457	4	4.7	4
Colorado	2,772.6	2.2	1,227	9	4.0	8
Connecticut	1,687.4	-0.7	1,383	5	3.8	11
Delaware	455.3	0.8	1,136	17	2.6	39
District of Columbia	782.5	0.8	1,992	1	2.5	42
Florida	9,085.5	2.0	1,044	26	3.6	14
Georgia	4,576.1	1.7	1,090	21	3.6	14
Hawaii	665.1	-0.8	1,053	24	3.5	17
Idaho	756.9	3.1	918	46	3.1	32
Illinois	6,043.5	0.2	1,221	10	2.7	38
Indiana	3,106.0	0.6	969	38	3.0	34
Iowa	1,560.4	0.1	984	37	1.9	47
Kansas	1,410.7	0.6	959	40	3.5	17
Kentucky	1,928.3	0.8	955	41	3.2	27
Louisiana	1,927.7	-0.5	993	34	2.5	42
Maine	620.2	0.7	955	41	5.3	2
Maryland	2,728.1	0.9	1,271	8	3.5	17
Massachusetts	3,660.8	0.9	1,511	2	3.8	11
Michigan	4,385.3	0.4	1,115	18	3.4	22
Minnesota	2,912.8	0.4	1,177	14	3.2	27
Mississippi	1,145.0	0.0	818	51	3.2	27
Missouri	2,846.2	0.9	1,010	32	3.0	34
Montana	474.1	1.1	918	46	3.4	22
Nebraska	990.9	0.7	969	38	4.2	6
Nevada	1,435.5	2.7	1,030	29	2.4	45
New Hampshire	671.3	0.8	1,192	12	2.9	37
New Jersey	4,157.4	0.8	1,332	7	2.5	42
New Mexico	844.0	1.5	942	44	4.0	8
New York	9,691.0	0.8	1,499	3	3.7	13
North Carolina	4,546.9	1.9	1,036	28	2.4	45
North Dakota	424.6	0.5	1,085	22	2.6	39
Ohio	5,477.2	0.5	1,037	27	3.1	32
Oklahoma	1,639.4	0.3	945	43	1.4	49
Oregon	1,969.3	1.6	1,100	19	4.6	5
Pennsylvania	5,985.9	0.8	1,143	15	3.6	14
Rhode Island	489.8	0.6	1,099	20	1.1	50
South Carolina	2,144.8	1.2	931	45	4.0	8
South Dakota	430.7	0.6	916	48	3.5	17
Tennessee	3,085.4	1.6	1,047	25	1.6	48
Texas	12,793.0	2.0	1,187	13	3.4	22
Utah	1,547.8	2.5	1,022	30	5.0	3
Vermont	314.0	-0.4	987	35	3.5	17
Virginia	3,978.7	1.2	1,204	11	3.4	22
Washington	3,457.7	2.2	1,370	6	6.4	1
West Virginia	690.3	-2.0	904	49	-1.4	51
Wisconsin	2,898.0	0.2	1,022	30	3.3	26
Wyoming	276.3	1.4	1,007	33	3.0	34
Puerto Rico	910.7	1.5	575	(3)	-0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands	39.2	10.8	1,065	(3)	13.5	(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. Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Georgia, fourth quarter 2019

