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County Employment and Wages in South Carolina – Third Quarter 2019

Employment increased in each of South Carolina's seven large counties from September 2018 to September 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 York County's employment increased 4.4 percent over the year, the fourth-largest employment gain among the 355 largest U.S. counties. During this same period, employment increases in South Carolina's other six large counties ranged from 3.2 percent to 1.3 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment increased 1.1 percent over the year with 283 of the 355 largest U.S. counties reporting increases. New Hanover, NC, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.8 percent over the year. Bay, FL, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.9 percent.

Among the seven largest counties in South Carolina, employment was highest in Greenville County (279,000) in September 2019. Two other counties, Charleston (258,900) and Richland (225,600), had employment levels above 200,000. Together, South Carolina's large counties accounted for 59.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.4 percent of total U.S. employment.

All seven large counties in South Carolina reported average weekly wage gains from the third quarter of 2018 to the third quarter of 2019. Lexington County had the highest over-the-year increase in average weekly wages, up 5.1 percent. Charleston County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's large counties at \$965. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.6 percent from a year ago to \$1,093 in the third quarter of 2019.

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 \$969 to \$563. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

In the third quarter of 2019, average weekly wage gains in three of South Carolina's large counties placed in the top 100 of the national ranking—Lexington (5.1 percent, 31st); Charleston (4.8 percent, 47th); and Horry (4.3 percent, 85th).

Nationally, 350 of the 355 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. Boulder, CO, had the largest third quarter over-the-year wage gain at 18.4 percent. The remaining five large counties registered wage declines during the period. Linn, IA, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-2.6 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Each of South Carolina's seven large counties had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,093 in the third quarter of 2019. Charleston County, with an average weekly wage of \$965, placed in the middle third of the national ranking among the 355 largest U.S. counties. Average weekly wages in South Carolina's six other large counties placed in the bottom third of the national ranking.

Nationally, 98 large counties reported average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2019. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$2,447. Average weekly wages were below the national average in 257 counties. At \$659 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

Average weekly wages in South Carolina's smaller counties

All 39 smaller counties in South Carolina—those with employment below 75,000—had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,093. Among these smaller counties, Berkeley had the highest average weekly wage at \$969. Clarendon County had the lowest average wage in the state at \$563 per week.

When all 46 counties in South Carolina were considered, 10 had wages at or below \$699, 20 had wages from \$700-\$799, 9 had wages from \$800-\$899, and 7 had wages at or 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 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 fourth quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, May 20, 2020. The County Employment and Wages full data update for fourth quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 3, 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 7 largest counties in South Carolina, third quarter 2019

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	148,556.5	1.1	--	\$1,093	--	3.6	--
South Carolina.....	2,132.4	2.2	--	866	46	3.7	21
Charleston.....	258.9	3.0	25	965	195	4.8	47
Greenville.....	279.0	1.7	93	910	261	2.1	292
Horry.....	135.2	3.2	17	660	354	4.3	85
Lexington.....	122.0	2.7	37	841	323	5.1	31
Richland.....	225.6	1.3	132	923	243	3.5	168
Spartanburg.....	147.0	2.7	37	889	287	2.9	238
York.....	100.6	4.4	4	876	298	3.8	132

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 2019

Area	Employment September 2019	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	148,556,525	\$1,093
South Carolina.....	2,132,383	\$866
Abbeville.....	5,415	\$781
Aiken.....	61,805	\$959
Allendale.....	2,697	\$813
Anderson.....	66,796	\$789
Bamberg.....	3,644	\$652
Barnwell.....	5,368	\$680
Beaufort.....	68,809	\$747
Berkeley.....	55,555	\$969
Calhoun.....	4,766	\$815
Charleston.....	258,859	\$965
Cherokee.....	21,159	\$695
Chester.....	9,897	\$823
Chesterfield.....	15,129	\$741
Clarendon.....	6,968	\$563
Colleton.....	10,743	\$677
Darlington.....	20,644	\$864
Dillon.....	9,294	\$647
Dorchester.....	36,256	\$746
Edgefield.....	5,627	\$766
Fairfield.....	5,422	\$924
Florence.....	66,355	\$756
Georgetown.....	24,498	\$776
Greenville.....	278,994	\$910
Greenwood.....	28,842	\$786
Hampton.....	4,690	\$739
Horry.....	135,157	\$660
Jasper.....	9,976	\$725
Kershaw.....	17,785	\$707
Lancaster.....	26,013	\$926
Laurens.....	21,000	\$778
Lee.....	3,730	\$708
Lexington.....	122,020	\$841
McCormick.....	1,701	\$678
Marion.....	6,975	\$596
Marlboro.....	6,942	\$755
Newberry.....	14,485	\$749
Oconee.....	24,656	\$839
Orangeburg.....	28,647	\$752
Pickens.....	37,659	\$817
Richland.....	225,601	\$923
Saluda.....	4,829	\$645
Spartanburg.....	147,009	\$889
Sumter.....	37,427	\$762
Union.....	8,233	\$764
Williamsburg.....	8,933	\$736
York.....	100,604	\$876

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 2019

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2018-19	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2018-19	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	148,556.5	1.1	\$1,093	--	3.6	--
Alabama	1,989.5	1.1	919	36	3.8	18
Alaska	338.0	1.2	1,105	14	3.7	21
Arizona	2,913.4	2.6	1,018	22	4.5	4
Arkansas	1,222.8	0.0	841	49	3.8	18
California	17,713.1	1.4	1,309	5	3.8	18
Colorado	2,749.0	2.4	1,170	8	6.1	1
Connecticut	1,676.6	-0.3	1,236	6	2.3	50
Delaware	453.2	1.1	1,078	15	3.3	32
District of Columbia	776.4	0.6	1,851	1	2.5	49
Florida	8,838.2	1.7	955	29	3.4	27
Georgia	4,509.7	1.4	1,026	20	3.4	27
Hawaii	654.1	-0.3	1,012	23	3.9	15
Idaho	765.2	2.9	838	50	4.1	10
Illinois	6,023.1	0.0	1,125	10	3.6	23
Indiana	3,083.5	0.3	914	37	3.5	26
Iowa	1,556.9	0.1	914	37	3.0	39
Kansas	1,395.9	0.4	893	43	2.9	43
Kentucky	1,910.8	0.7	884	45	3.4	27
Louisiana	1,913.5	-0.3	923	35	2.6	47
Maine	632.6	0.9	887	44	4.2	7
Maryland	2,696.9	0.2	1,169	9	3.6	23
Massachusetts	3,642.5	0.9	1,359	2	4.2	7
Michigan	4,375.8	0.2	1,021	21	3.0	39
Minnesota	2,917.8	0.4	1,107	13	3.0	39
Mississippi	1,135.8	0.1	768	51	2.7	46
Missouri	2,826.5	0.6	942	31	3.9	15
Montana	478.9	1.2	848	48	3.9	15
Nebraska	984.7	0.3	908	39	4.0	13
Nevada	1,412.2	2.1	973	26	4.1	10
New Hampshire	667.9	0.8	1,075	16	3.4	27
New Jersey	4,104.0	0.9	1,217	7	3.0	39
New Mexico	842.1	1.7	899	40	5.1	2
New York	9,575.4	1.1	1,314	4	3.3	32
North Carolina	4,501.3	2.2	972	27	3.6	23
North Dakota	428.4	0.9	1,028	19	3.3	32
Ohio	5,443.3	0.3	976	25	3.1	37
Oklahoma	1,628.8	0.5	897	41	2.6	47
Oregon	1,970.7	1.4	1,037	18	3.2	35
Pennsylvania	5,947.9	0.8	1,064	17	3.2	35
Rhode Island	491.3	0.6	991	24	2.8	44
South Carolina	2,132.4	2.2	866	46	3.7	21
South Dakota	433.4	0.4	855	47	3.4	27
Tennessee	3,060.8	1.9	966	28	2.8	44
Texas	12,603.2	2.1	1,109	12	4.1	10
Utah	1,535.2	2.8	954	30	4.8	3
Vermont	311.0	0.0	927	34	4.3	5
Virginia	3,931.4	1.0	1,125	10	4.0	13
Washington	3,489.8	2.1	1,335	3	4.3	5
West Virginia	694.4	-1.8	897	41	0.3	51
Wisconsin	2,893.8	0.1	929	33	3.1	37
Wyoming	283.1	1.5	942	31	4.2	7
Puerto Rico	878.9	1.9	528	(3)	-0.8	(3)
Virgin Islands	37.8	9.6	1,012	(3)	12.8	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

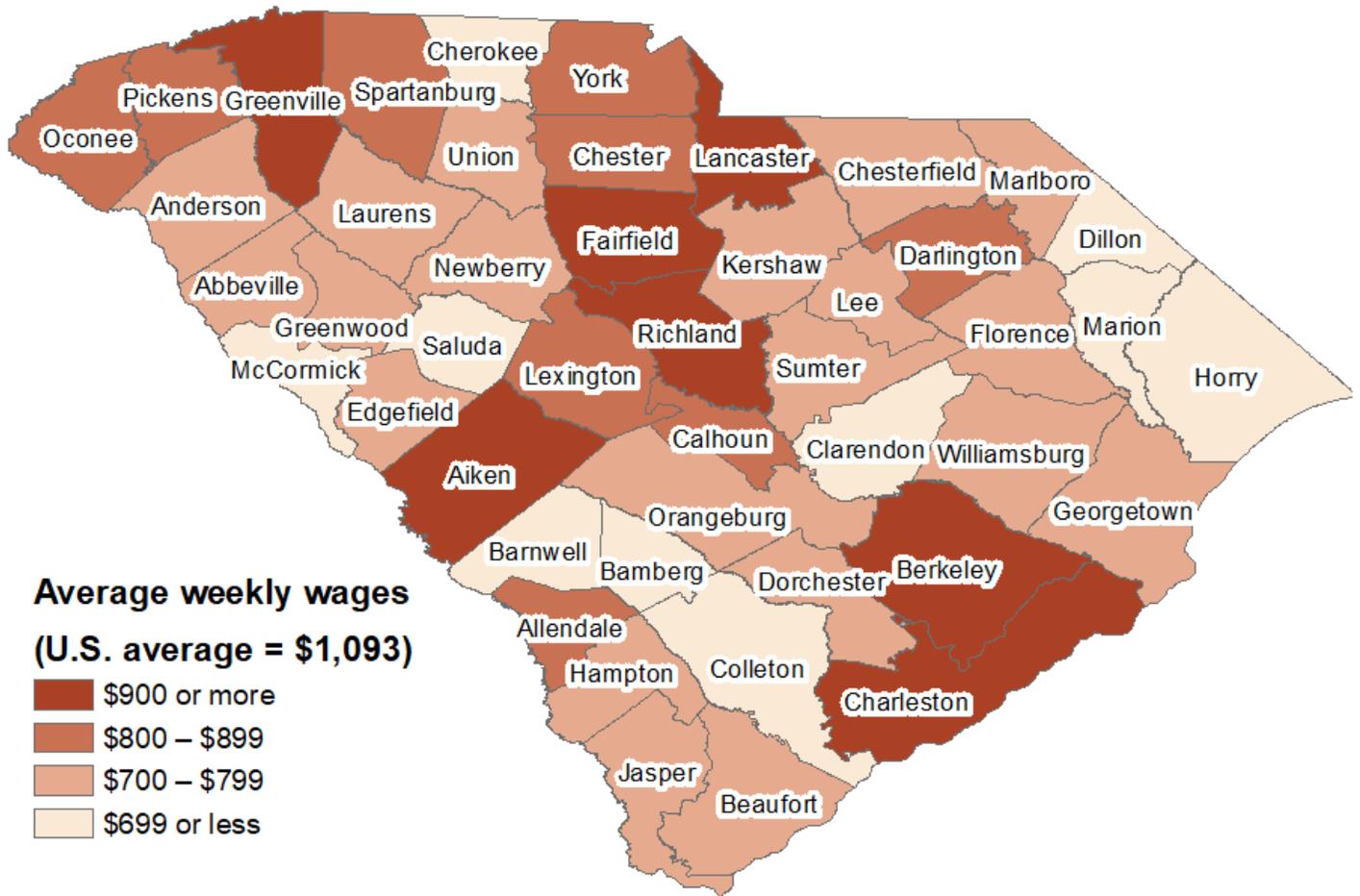
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.