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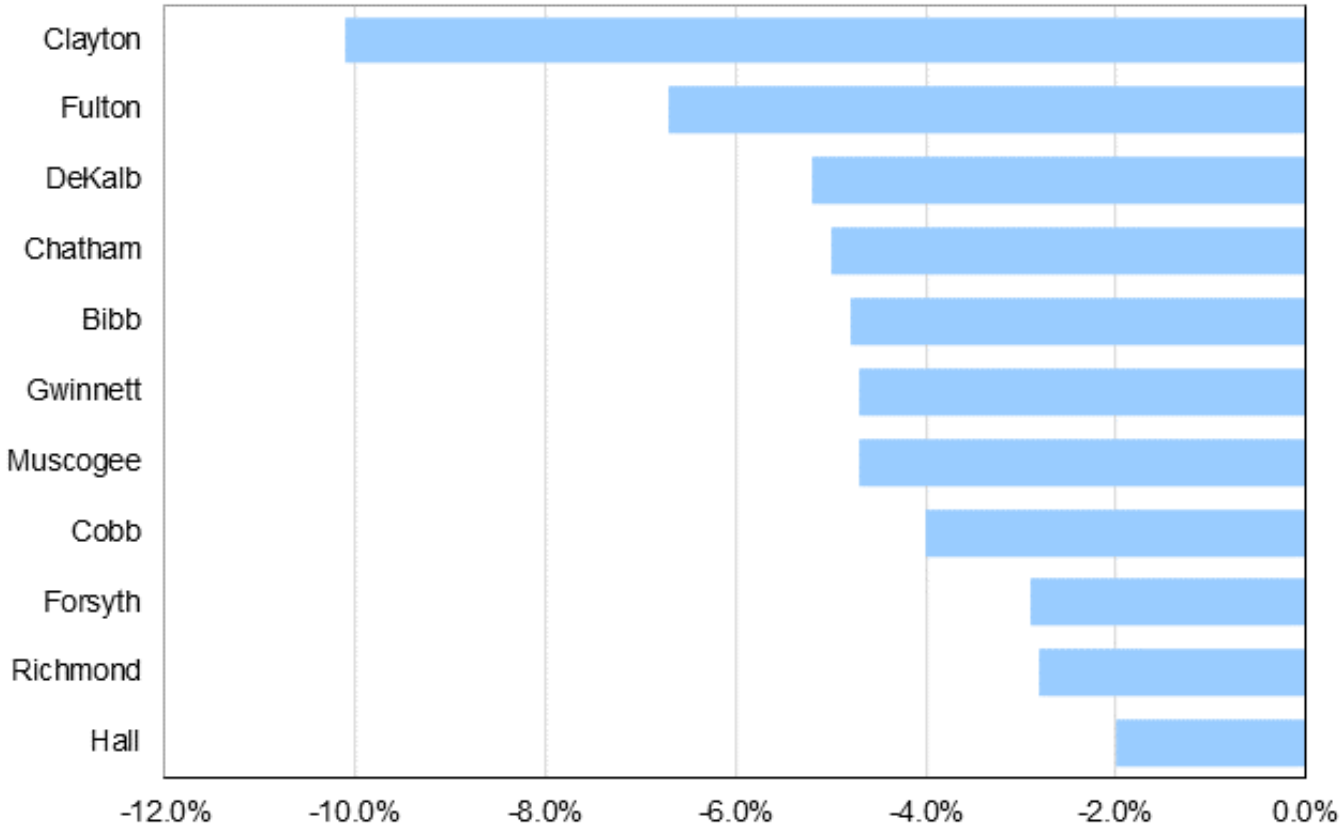
# County Employment and Wages in Georgia — Fourth Quarter 2020

Employment declined in all of Georgia's 11 largest counties from December 2019 to December 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more in 2019.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that employment decreases ranged from 10.1 percent in Clayton County to 2.0 percent in Hall County. (See chart 1 and table 1.)

**Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in covered employment among the largest counties in Georgia, December 2020**




Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

National employment decreased 6.1 percent over the year, with 352 of the 357 largest U.S. counties reporting declines. Maui + Kalawao, HI, had the largest over-the-year decrease in employment with a loss of 22.8 percent. Utah, UT, experienced the largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment with a gain of 3.8 percent.

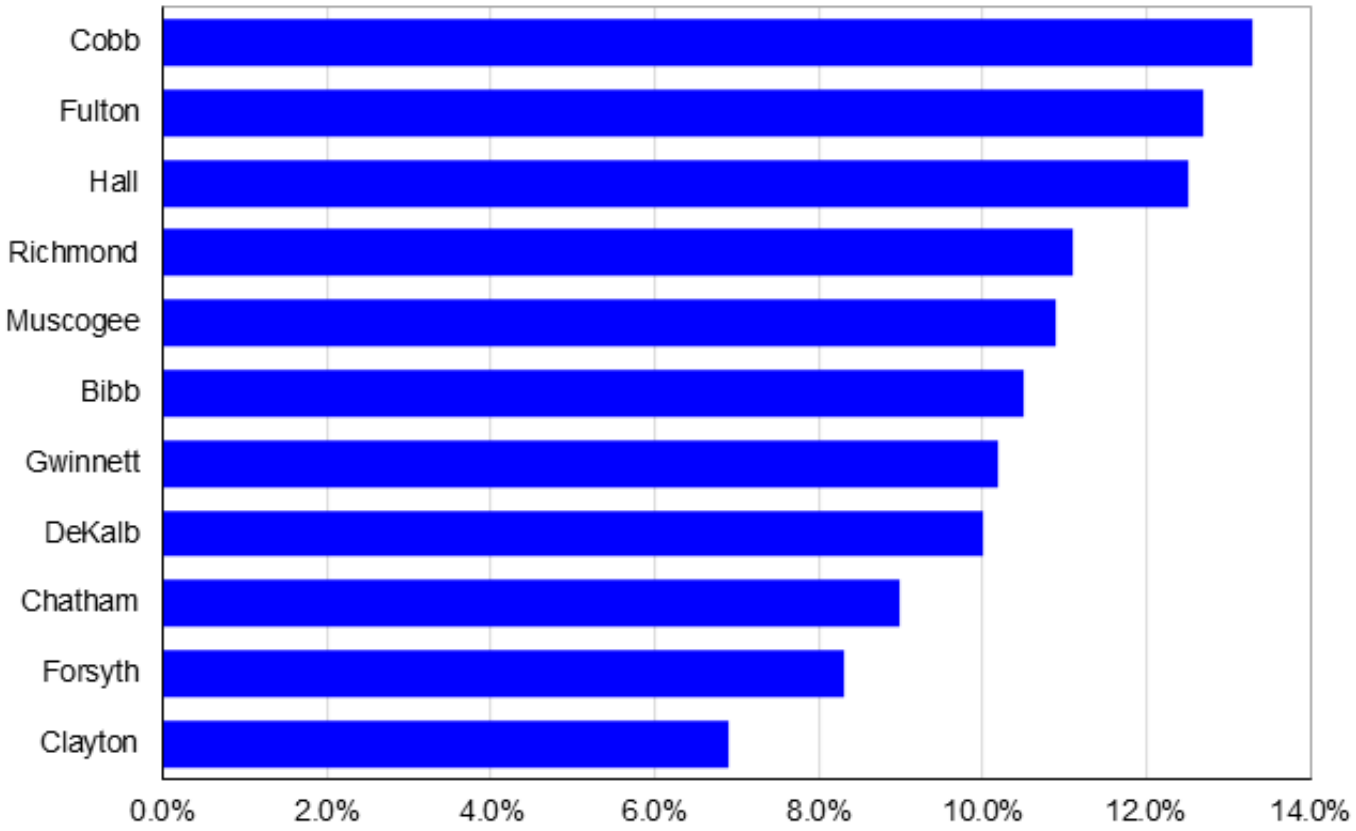
Among the 11 largest counties in Georgia, employment was highest in Fulton County (858,500) in December 2020. Within Fulton County's private industry, professional and technical services accounted for the largest employment. Together, the 11 largest Georgia counties accounted for 58.6 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 357 largest counties made up 73.1 percent of total U.S. employment.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 148 counties in Georgia with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in 147 of the 148 smaller counties were below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2020. (See table 2.)

**Large county wage changes**

All 11 large Georgia counties reported average weekly wage gains from the fourth quarter of 2019 to the fourth quarter of 2020. (See chart 2.) Gwinnett County had the largest wage gain at 13.3 percent, followed by Fulton County (+12.7 percent) and Hall County (+12.5 percent). Over-the-year wage gains among Georgia's other eight large counties ranged from 11.1 percent to 6.9 percent.

**Chart 2. Over-the-year percent change in covered average weekly wages among the largest counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2020**




Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Among the 357 largest counties in the United States, 356 had over-the-year wage increases. Nationally, across most industries, increases in average weekly wages reflect substantial employment declines combined with wage increases. The lowest paying industry, leisure and hospitality, had the largest employment loss, which results in higher average weekly wages for the industry and the nation. San Francisco, CA, had the largest percentage wage increase (+44.3 percent). Ector, TX, had the only over-the-year percentage decrease (-7.5 percent).

**Large county average weekly wages**
Weekly wages in the 2 of the 11 largest counties in Georgia were above the national average of $1,339 in the fourth quarter of 2020. Average weekly wages in these two counties ranked among the top 100 nationwide: Fulton ($1,707, 18th) and Cobb ($1,357, 85th).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 89 reported average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2020. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at $3,690. Average weekly wages were below the national average in the remaining 268 counties. At $760 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—Burke County ($1,851) had an average weekly wage above the national average of $1,339. Montgomery County ($626) had the lowest average weekly wage in the state.

When all 159 counties in Georgia were considered, 56 reported average weekly wages of $799 or lower, 54 had wages from $800 to $899, 30 had wages from $900 to $999, 11 had wages from $1,000 to $1,099, and 8 had wages of $1,100 or higher. (See chart 3.)

**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 2019 edition of this publication was published in September 2020. Tables and additional content from the 2019 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2019/home.htm. The 2020 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2021.

**The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2021 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 18, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. (ET). The County Employment and Wages full data update for first quarter 2021 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).**

## QCEW Imputation Issue Caused by Pandemic-Related Challenges

In the spring of 2020, BLS modified its imputation process for QCEW to be more responsive to current economic conditions. While continuing work to improve this process, BLS made an unintended data processing error. This error affected data for the second, third, and fourth quarters of 2020. BLS has analyzed this issue and has determined that the impact on QCEW employment was negligible at the statewide level. In smaller areas and industries, revisions may be larger than usual. Wage data were not affected. Following the usual QCEW practice, these data will be revised and corrected with the full data update on September 1, 2021.

For more information on QCEW imputation methodology, see www.bls.gov/cew/additional-resources/imputation-methodology.htm.

## 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 individuals with sensory impairments 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 2020**

| Area | Establishments, fourth quarter 2020 (thousands) | Employment | | | Average weekly wage [1] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | December 2020 (thousands) | Percent change, December 2019–20 [2] | National ranking by percent change [3] | Fourth quarter 2020 | National ranking by level [3] | Percent change, fourth quarter 2019–20 [2] | National ranking by percent change [3] |
| United States [4] | 10,675.8 | 140,881.3 | -6.1 | -- | $1,339 | -- | 13.0 | -- |
| Georgia | 319.7 | 4,405.9 | -4.0 | -- | 1,208 | 23 | 10.9 | 42 |
| Bibb | 4.6 | 80.2 | -4.8 | 120 | 980 | 331 | 10.5 | 266 |
| Chatham | 9.0 | 157.7 | -5.0 | 127 | 1,043 | 297 | 9.0 | 319 |
| Clayton | 4.5 | 113.4 | -10.1 | 330 | 1,169 | 195 | 6.9 | 341 |
| Cobb | 24.6 | 365.4 | -4.0 | 83 | 1,357 | 85 | 13.3 | 127 |
| DeKalb | 20.0 | 291.9 | -5.2 | 138 | 1,285 | 118 | 10.0 | 291 |
| Forsyth | 6.6 | 76.2 | -2.9 | 54 | 1,135 | 219 | 8.3 | 327 |
| Fulton | 49.7 | 858.5 | -6.7 | 212 | 1,707 | 18 | 12.7 | 161 |
| Gwinnett | 28.4 | 352.8 | -4.7 | 114 | 1,204 | 169 | 10.2 | 282 |
| Hall | 5.0 | 90.2 | -2.0 | 25 | 1,157 | 204 | 12.5 | 174 |
| Muscogee | 4.8 | 91.9 | -4.7 | 114 | 967 | 337 | 10.9 | 255 |
| Richmond | 4.8 | 102.2 | -2.8 | 49 | 1,047 | 292 | 11.1 | 242 |

Footnotes:
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Percent changes were computed from 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 Georgia, fourth quarter 2020

| Area | Employment December 2020 | Average weekly wage(1) |
|---|---|---|
| United States(2) | 140,881,253 | $1,339 |
| Georgia | 4,405,924 | 1,208 |
| Appling | 6,755 | 1,068 |
| Atkinson | 2,329 | 807 |
| Bacon | 3,608 | 832 |
| Baker | 445 | 731 |
| Baldwin | 14,848 | 746 |
| Banks | 4,203 | 750 |
| Barrow | 20,420 | 933 |
| Bartow | 40,760 | 977 |
| Ben Hill | 5,341 | 756 |
| Berrien | 3,599 | 748 |
| Bibb | 80,213 | 980 |
| Bleckley | 2,516 | 723 |
| Brantley | 2,608 | 767 |
| Brooks | 3,265 | 838 |
| Bryan | 9,003 | 824 |
| Bulloch | 25,584 | 824 |
| Burke | 13,916 | 1,851 |
| Butts | 7,229 | 874 |
| Calhoun | 1,097 | 724 |
| Camden | 14,491 | 976 |
| Candler | 3,185 | 665 |
| Carroll | 41,097 | 984 |
| Catoosa | 15,220 | 814 |
| Charlton | 1,946 | 846 |
| Chatham | 157,697 | 1,043 |
| Chattahoochee | 2,314 | 989 |
| Chattooga | 4,958 | 737 |
| Cherokee | 66,737 | 975 |
| Clarke | 67,465 | 1,049 |
| Clay | 672 | 680 |
| Clayton | 113,417 | 1,169 |
| Clinch | 2,381 | 819 |
| Cobb | 365,402 | 1,357 |
| Coffee | 17,119 | 798 |
| Colquitt | 14,836 | 820 |
| Columbia | 36,668 | 900 |
| Cook | 4,327 | 766 |
| Coweta | 41,329 | 937 |
| Crawford | 1,215 | 709 |
| Crisp | 8,353 | 809 |
| Dade | 3,851 | 783 |
| Dawson | 9,083 | 749 |
| Decatur | 8,066 | 804 |
| De Kalb | 291,852 | 1,285 |
| Dodge | 4,679 | 683 |
| Dooly | 3,263 | 825 |
| Dougherty | 46,272 | 954 |
| Douglas | 43,139 | 949 |
| Early | 3,996 | 989 |
| Echols | 673 | 823 |
| Effingham | 10,700 | 917 |
| Elbert | 5,604 | 815 |
| Emanuel | 6,793 | 822 |
| Evans | 4,584 | 682 |
| Fannin | 6,359 | 772 |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2020 - Continued**

| Area | Employment December 2020 | Average weekly wage(1) |
|---|---|---|
| Fayette | 44,916 | 1,014 |
| Floyd | 38,516 | 960 |
| Forsyth | 76,168 | 1,135 |
| Franklin | 8,027 | 790 |
| Fulton | 858,525 | 1,707 |
| Gilmer | 6,989 | 721 |
| Glascock | 401 | 634 |
| Glynn | 36,734 | 969 |
| Gordon | 23,397 | 965 |
| Grady | 6,015 | 854 |
| Greene | 6,187 | 886 |
| Gwinnett | 352,835 | 1,204 |
| Habersham | 13,180 | 834 |
| Hall | 90,226 | 1,157 |
| Hancock | 1,372 | 749 |
| Haralson | 7,339 | 915 |
| Harris | 5,281 | 822 |
| Hart | 6,527 | 808 |
| Heard | 2,065 | 1,028 |
| Henry | 68,994 | 895 |
| Houston | 62,412 | 1,033 |
| Irwin | 1,981 | 798 |
| Jackson | 35,983 | 832 |
| Jasper | 2,305 | 771 |
| Jeff Davis | 4,206 | 792 |
| Jefferson | 4,704 | 868 |
| Jenkins | 1,418 | 738 |
| Johnson | 1,399 | 688 |
| Jones | 3,975 | 842 |
| Lamar | 3,674 | 866 |
| Lanier | 1,347 | 712 |
| Laurens | 18,996 | 889 |
| Lee | 6,923 | 825 |
| Liberty | 18,291 | 937 |
| Lincoln | 1,298 | 726 |
| Long | 1,054 | 690 |
| Lowndes | 48,787 | 842 |
| Lumpkin | 7,368 | 843 |
| McDuffie | 6,809 | 823 |
| McIntosh | 1,616 | 717 |
| Macon | 2,691 | 894 |
| Madison | 3,560 | 740 |
| Marion | 1,113 | 684 |
| Meriwether | 4,283 | 841 |
| Miller | 1,713 | 919 |
| Mitchell | 6,493 | 786 |
| Monroe | 7,575 | 852 |
| Montgomery | 1,679 | 626 |
| Morgan | 7,728 | 861 |
| Murray | 7,569 | 830 |
| Muscogee | 91,865 | 967 |
| Newton | 26,274 | 964 |
| Oconee | 13,468 | 1,017 |
| Oglethorpe | 1,813 | 793 |
| Paulding | 25,872 | 842 |
| Peach | 9,817 | 845 |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Georgia, fourth quarter 2020 - Continued**

| Area | Employment December 2020 | Average weekly wage(1) |
|---|---|---|
| Pickens | 7,584 | 1,047 |
| Pierce | 4,298 | 757 |
| Pike | 3,020 | 815 |
| Polk | 10,996 | 856 |
| Pulaski | 2,655 | 849 |
| Putnam | 5,711 | 805 |
| Quitman | 335 | 679 |
| Rabun | 5,210 | 724 |
| Randolph | 1,707 | 784 |
| Richmond | 102,161 | 1,047 |
| Rockdale | 32,556 | 1,086 |
| Schley | 981 | 766 |
| Screven | 2,970 | 721 |
| Seminole | 2,323 | 912 |
| Spalding | 22,026 | 836 |
| Stephens | 8,313 | 870 |
| Stewart | 1,434 | 991 |
| Sumter | 10,210 | 848 |
| Talbot | 713 | 799 |
| Taliaferro | 191 | 684 |
| Tattnall | 5,650 | 834 |
| Taylor | 1,480 | 902 |
| Telfair | 2,228 | 700 |
| Terrell | 1,779 | 845 |
| Thomas | 19,718 | 989 |
| Tift | 20,941 | 901 |
| Toombs | 11,925 | 770 |
| Towns | 3,310 | 744 |
| Treutlen | 1,031 | 747 |
| Troup | 38,773 | 995 |
| Turner | 1,895 | 771 |
| Twiggs | 1,815 | 811 |
| Union | 6,975 | 829 |
| Upson | 6,467 | 825 |
| Walker | 13,364 | 821 |
| Walton | 23,209 | 1,000 |
| Ware | 15,131 | 768 |
| Warren | 1,434 | 918 |
| Washington | 6,034 | 842 |
| Wayne | 8,112 | 929 |
| Webster | 523 | 777 |
| Wheeler | 1,032 | 787 |
| White | 8,892 | 739 |
| Whitfield | 54,760 | 974 |
| Wilcox | 1,099 | 736 |
| Wilkes | 2,495 | 807 |
| Wilkinson | 3,528 | 873 |
| Worth | 2,833 | 781 |

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 2020

| State | Establishments, fourth quarter 2020 (thousands) | Employment | | Average weekly wage [1] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | December 2020 (thousands) | Percent change, December 2019–20 | Fourth quarter 2020 | National ranking by level | Percent change, fourth quarter 2019–20 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States [2] | 10,675.8 | 140,881.3 | -6.1 | $1,339 | -- | 13.0 | -- |
| Alabama | 134.6 | 1,951.2 | -2.9 | 1,096 | 35 | 11.4 | 36 |
| Alaska | 23.1 | 290.1 | -6.4 | 1,260 | 17 | 10.6 | 44 |
| Arizona | 173.9 | 2,908.7 | -3.3 | 1,214 | 22 | 14.6 | 9 |
| Arkansas | 94.6 | 1,194.8 | -3.2 | 999 | 49 | 11.4 | 36 |
| California | 1,660.2 | 16,380.1 | -8.3 | 1,724 | 3 | 18.5 | 1 |
| Colorado | 219.6 | 2,613.7 | -5.7 | 1,378 | 10 | 12.3 | 25 |
| Connecticut | 126.8 | 1,578.4 | -6.5 | 1,551 | 6 | 12.2 | 27 |
| Delaware | 35.1 | 432.9 | -5.2 | 1,262 | 16 | 11.3 | 38 |
| District of Columbia | 43.8 | 713.0 | -8.9 | 2,293 | 1 | 15.2 | 6 |
| Florida | 765.4 | 8,642.8 | -5.0 | 1,180 | 24 | 13.1 | 17 |
| Georgia | 319.7 | 4,405.9 | -4.0 | 1,208 | 23 | 10.9 | 42 |
| Hawaii | 47.3 | 561.1 | -16.1 | 1,219 | 21 | 16.0 | 4 |
| Idaho | 71.8 | 763.5 | 0.8 | 1,034 | 47 | 12.8 | 21 |
| Illinois | 386.3 | 5,573.8 | -7.8 | 1,378 | 10 | 13.0 | 18 |
| Indiana | 173.1 | 2,985.1 | -4.0 | 1,076 | 39 | 11.2 | 39 |
| Iowa | 105.6 | 1,494.3 | -4.3 | 1,099 | 34 | 11.6 | 32 |
| Kansas | 89.9 | 1,346.9 | -4.5 | 1,070 | 40 | 11.5 | 34 |
| Kentucky | 130.4 | 1,839.6 | -4.8 | 1,057 | 42 | 10.8 | 43 |
| Louisiana | 140.8 | 1,796.9 | -7.0 | 1,078 | 38 | 8.6 | 48 |
| Maine | 55.4 | 594.3 | -4.3 | 1,092 | 36 | 14.5 | 10 |
| Maryland | 174.5 | 2,546.1 | -6.7 | 1,445 | 8 | 13.6 | 16 |
| Massachusetts | 266.7 | 3,365.8 | -8.3 | 1,766 | 2 | 17.0 | 3 |
| Michigan | 265.3 | 3,998.2 | -8.9 | 1,257 | 19 | 12.8 | 21 |
| Minnesota | 186.4 | 2,684.1 | -7.9 | 1,322 | 13 | 12.3 | 25 |
| Mississippi | 76.1 | 1,119.1 | -2.4 | 901 | 51 | 10.4 | 45 |
| Missouri | 221.5 | 2,724.4 | -4.3 | 1,127 | 33 | 11.6 | 32 |
| Montana | 54.6 | 467.4 | -1.4 | 1,035 | 45 | 12.7 | 23 |
| Nebraska | 72.5 | 962.7 | -2.9 | 1,079 | 37 | 11.5 | 34 |
| Nevada | 90.2 | 1,283.1 | -10.7 | 1,178 | 25 | 14.4 | 11 |
| New Hampshire | 57.1 | 637.3 | -5.2 | 1,406 | 9 | 17.9 | 2 |
| New Jersey | 291.0 | 3,860.5 | -7.2 | 1,517 | 7 | 13.9 | 15 |
| New Mexico | 64.8 | 767.1 | -9.5 | 1,052 | 43 | 11.8 | 29 |
| New York | 662.4 | 8,693.4 | -10.3 | 1,712 | 4 | 14.2 | 13 |
| North Carolina | 301.7 | 4,431.0 | -2.7 | 1,152 | 29 | 11.2 | 39 |
| North Dakota | 32.6 | 394.4 | -7.1 | 1,136 | 31 | 4.7 | 50 |
| Ohio | 307.3 | 5,199.9 | -5.1 | 1,161 | 27 | 12.0 | 28 |
| Oklahoma | 113.6 | 1,569.1 | -4.4 | 1,013 | 48 | 7.3 | 49 |
| Oregon | 167.3 | 1,824.3 | -7.5 | 1,256 | 20 | 14.2 | 13 |
| Pennsylvania | 370.5 | 5,549.4 | -7.4 | 1,287 | 15 | 12.6 | 24 |
| Rhode Island | 40.7 | 449.6 | -8.3 | 1,259 | 18 | 14.7 | 7 |
| South Carolina | 149.2 | 2,074.4 | -3.5 | 1,035 | 45 | 11.1 | 41 |
| South Dakota | 35.5 | 422.8 | -1.9 | 1,048 | 44 | 14.4 | 11 |
| Tennessee | 176.2 | 3,002.5 | -2.7 | 1,172 | 26 | 11.7 | 30 |
| Texas | 743.1 | 12,251.1 | -4.3 | 1,294 | 14 | 9.0 | 47 |
| Utah | 117.9 | 1,557.8 | 0.6 | 1,154 | 28 | 12.9 | 20 |
| Vermont | 26.6 | 286.1 | -8.9 | 1,133 | 32 | 14.7 | 7 |
| Virginia | 289.8 | 3,796.1 | -4.7 | 1,360 | 12 | 13.0 | 18 |
| Washington | 259.7 | 3,219.7 | -6.8 | 1,589 | 5 | 16.0 | 4 |
| West Virginia | 51.9 | 654.1 | -5.3 | 997 | 50 | 10.3 | 46 |
| Wisconsin | 184.2 | 2,762.5 | -4.8 | 1,140 | 30 | 11.7 | 30 |
| Wyoming | 27.7 | 260.2 | -5.3 | 1,061 | 41 | 4.6 | 51 |
| Puerto Rico | 46.0 | 873.8 | -4.0 | 621 | [3] | 8.0 | [3] |

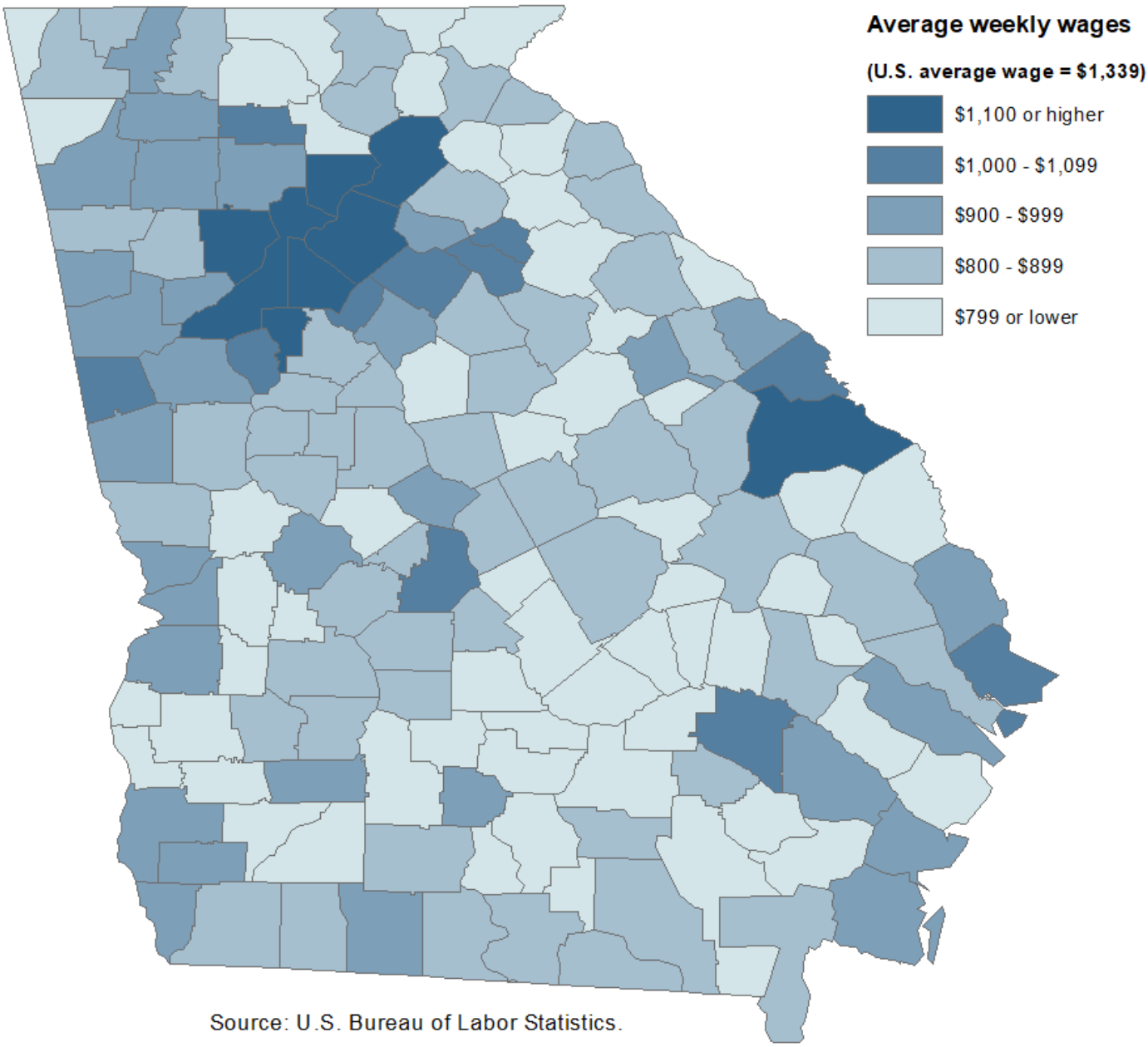
Note: See footnotes at end of table.

## Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2020 - Continued

| State | Establishments, fourth quarter 2020 (thousands) | Employment | | Average weekly wage [1] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | December 2020 (thousands) | Percent change, December 2019–20 | Fourth quarter 2020 | National ranking by level | Percent change, fourth quarter 2019–20 | National ranking by percent change |
| Virgin Islands | 3.5 | 35.3 | -11.5 | 1,057 | [3] | -1.3 | [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 3. Average weekly wages by county in Georgia, fourth quarter 2020




Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.