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SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

Technical information: (404) 893-4222 • BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov • [www.bls.gov/regions/southeast](http://www.bls.gov/regions/southeast)

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

## **County Employment and Wages in Tennessee – First Quarter 2016**

Employment rose in each of the six large counties in Tennessee from March 2015 to March 2016, 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 2015 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that Williamson County had the largest employment gain in the country, up 7.9 percent over the previous year. Employment gains in Tennessee's remaining large counties ranged from 5.5 percent in Rutherford County to 1.6 percent in Shelby County. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 2.0 percent from March 2015 to March 2016 as 318 of the 344 largest U.S. counties had increases. As noted, Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase with a gain of 7.9 percent. Midland, Texas, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest U.S. counties, with a loss of 9.0 percent.

Among the largest counties in Tennessee, employment was highest in Shelby (487,200) in March 2016, followed by Davidson (462,000). Together, Tennessee's six large counties accounted for 56.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.6 percent of total U.S. employment.

Of Tennessee's six large counties, three had average weekly wage gains from the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016—Knox (2.0 percent); Davidson (1.8 percent); and Hamilton (0.8 percent). Williamson County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,198. Nationally, the average weekly wage decreased 0.5 percent over the year to \$1,043 in the first quarter of 2016. (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 \$1,146 to \$465. (See [table 2.](#))

### **Large county wage changes**

As noted, average weekly wages rose in three of Tennessee's large counties from the first quarter of 2015 to the first quarter of 2016. Knox's 2.0-percent wage increase ranked 38<sup>th</sup> among the nation's 344 largest counties while Davidson's 1.8-percent gain ranked 47<sup>th</sup> and Hamilton's 0.8-percent growth ranked 108<sup>th</sup>. (See [table 1.](#)) Wages declined in Tennessee's three other large counties over the previous year. Williamson (-4.9 percent) had the highest rate of wage decrease and ranked 330<sup>th</sup> in the nation, followed by Shelby (-1.7 percent, 254<sup>th</sup>) and Rutherford (-1.1 percent, 224<sup>th</sup>).

Of the 344 largest counties, 167 had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage wage decrease nationwide (-13.3 percent). Washington, Pa., was second with a wage decrease of 12.0 percent, followed by the counties of Lafayette, La. (-10.3percent); Mercer, N.J. (-8.5 percent); and Williamson, Texas (-7.8 percent).

Nationally, 164 large U.S. counties had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest percentage increase in average weekly wages (15.5 percent), followed by King, Wash. (5.1 percent); San Mateo, Calif. (4.8 percent); Ventura, Calif. (4.4 percent); and Merrimack, N.H. (4.3 percent).

### **Large county average weekly wages**

Average weekly wages in 3 of Tennessee's 6 largest counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 344 largest counties in the first quarter of 2016. Williamson and Davidson Counties had average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,043 and ranked in the top 100 nationwide at 49<sup>th</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup>, respectively. Shelby County (\$991), ranked 125<sup>th</sup>. Average weekly wages in the remaining three large counties placed in the bottom half of the national ranking.

Nationwide, 91 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,043 in the first quarter of 2016. New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,783, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., at \$2,210. Rounding out the top five were San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,195); San Francisco, Calif. (\$2,054); and Somerset, N.J. (\$2,022).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 253 had average weekly wages below the national average in the first quarter of 2016. Horry, S.C. (\$587), had the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$592); Hidalgo, Texas (\$614); Webb, Texas (\$650); and Lake, Fl. (\$653).

### **Average weekly wages in Tennessee's smaller counties**

Among the 89 counties in Tennessee with employment below 75,000, only Roane County (\$1,146) had an average weekly wage above the national average of \$1,043. Hancock County reported the lowest average weekly in the state, averaging \$465 in the first quarter of 2016. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 95 counties in Tennessee were considered, 28 reported average weekly wages under \$600, 35 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 18 had wages from \$700 to \$799, and 14 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](http://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 2014 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 2015 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2014* are now available online at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn14.htm>. The 2015 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2016.

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**The County Employment and Wages release for second quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, December 7, 2016.**

### **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 9.5 million employer reports cover 137.4 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/](http://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 2016**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	March 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2015-16 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, first quarter 2015-16 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	140,070.8	2.0	--	\$1,043	--	-0.5	--
Tennessee.....	2,859.2	3.3	--	887	27	0.3	16
Davidson, Tenn.....	462.0	3.9	31	1,097	71	1.8	47
Hamilton, Tenn.....	194.7	2.8	99	882	198	0.8	108
Knox, Tenn.....	233.4	2.6	116	875	205	2.0	38
Rutherford, Tenn.....	117.8	5.5	4	848	235	-1.1	224
Shelby, Tenn.....	487.2	1.6	211	991	125	-1.7	254
Williamson, Tenn.....	121.3	7.9	1	1,198	49	-4.9	330

<sup>(1)</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>(2)</sup> Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

<sup>(4)</sup> 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, 1st quarter 2016**

Area	Employment March 2016	Average weekly wage ( <sup>1</sup> )
United States ( <sup>2</sup> ) .....	140,070,814	\$1,043
Tennessee.....	2,859,161	887
Anderson.....	38,930	999
Bedford.....	18,384	688
Benton.....	4,096	558
Bledsoe.....	2,186	578
Blount.....	46,681	857
Bradley.....	41,760	725
Campbell.....	8,819	604
Cannon.....	2,056	569
Carroll.....	7,363	613
Carter.....	10,904	585
Cheatham.....	7,836	799
Chester.....	3,820	590
Claiborne.....	8,911	610
Clay.....	1,570	567
Cocke.....	7,566	596
Coffee.....	25,325	761
Crockett.....	3,549	743
Cumberland.....	17,420	591
Davidson.....	462,026	1,097
Decatur.....	3,556	651
De Kalb.....	5,303	632
Dickson.....	16,540	670
Dyer.....	15,292	675
Fayette.....	7,788	781
Fentress.....	4,771	546
Franklin.....	12,110	625
Gibson.....	13,774	629
Giles.....	10,756	683
Grainger.....	3,711	602
Greene.....	25,581	693
Grundy.....	2,008	475
Hamblen.....	30,656	679
Hamilton.....	194,732	882
Hancock.....	860	465
Hardeman.....	6,611	720
Hardin.....	7,867	753
Hawkins.....	12,600	689
Haywood.....	4,904	697
Henderson.....	7,772	656
Henry.....	11,226	660
Hickman.....	3,753	635
Houston.....	1,475	526
Humphreys.....	5,722	858
Jackson.....	1,448	587
Jefferson.....	13,092	689
Johnson.....	4,186	706
Knox.....	233,369	875
Lake.....	1,796	564
Lauderdale.....	5,979	642
Lawrence.....	10,272	602
Lewis.....	2,585	523
Lincoln.....	9,548	651

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Tennessee, 1st quarter 2016 - Continued**

Area	Employment March 2016	Average weekly wage ( <sup>1</sup> )
Loudon.....	14,975	724
McMinn.....	17,730	748
McNairy.....	5,971	581
Macon.....	4,655	575
Madison.....	57,178	746
Marion.....	7,478	660
Marshall.....	8,674	686
Maury.....	31,330	827
Meigs.....	1,913	627
Monroe.....	13,665	726
Montgomery.....	51,599	652
Moore.....	1,980	763
Morgan.....	2,904	586
Obion.....	9,662	642
Overton.....	4,560	646
Perry.....	1,986	531
Pickett.....	1,057	568
Polk.....	2,160	664
Putnam.....	34,874	674
Rhea.....	10,765	794
Roane.....	18,313	1,146
Robertson.....	21,787	681
Rutherford.....	117,779	848
Scott.....	5,453	545
Sequatchie.....	2,889	549
Sevier.....	43,433	523
Shelby.....	487,150	991
Smith.....	4,781	705
Stewart.....	2,626	820
Sullivan.....	68,410	881
Sumner.....	51,153	725
Tipton.....	10,970	659
Trousdale.....	1,534	589
Unicoi.....	4,850	833
Union.....	2,357	559
Van Buren.....	788	571
Warren.....	14,040	663
Washington.....	60,764	715
Wayne.....	3,609	566
Weakley.....	10,996	587
White.....	6,830	618
Williamson.....	121,298	1,198
Wilson.....	39,395	741

(<sup>1</sup>) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(<sup>2</sup>) 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 2016**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	March 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup> .....	140,070.8	2.0	1043	--	-0.5	--
Alabama.....	1,902.6	1.6	842	37	-0.2	22
Alaska.....	317.6	-1.4	1028	15	-2	43
Arizona.....	2,679.8	2.8	918	23	-0.8	30
Arkansas.....	1,191.1	2.1	793	45	0.5	13
California.....	16,455.5	2.6	1206	6	0	20
Colorado.....	2,514.6	2.4	1057	13	-1.3	36
Connecticut.....	1,650.6	0.6	1362	3	-1.4	38
Delaware.....	429.7	1.5	1072	10	-3	48
District of Columbia.....	749.6	2.0	1766	1	0.4	14
Florida.....	8,301.8	3.5	887	27	0.2	18
Georgia.....	4,215.1	3.0	1008	17	1.9	2
Hawaii.....	645.1	1.4	896	26	1.7	3
Idaho.....	670.4	3.5	725	50	-1.5	39
Illinois.....	5,800.6	1.2	1126	7	-0.5	28
Indiana.....	2,949.5	1.9	853	33	-0.5	28
Iowa.....	1,518.2	0.9	844	36	-0.4	27
Kansas.....	1,362.3	0.4	833	38	-2	43
Kentucky.....	1,843.9	1.9	823	41	0.1	19
Louisiana.....	1,910.5	-0.8	860	32	-2.6	47
Maine.....	580.5	1.8	804	44	1.1	8
Maryland.....	2,591.7	1.9	1103	9	-0.8	30
Massachusetts.....	3,414.8	2.1	1327	4	-1	33
Michigan.....	4,163.7	2.1	976	20	0.7	11
Minnesota.....	2,750.1	1.5	1065	12	-1.2	34
Mississippi.....	1,121.0	1.7	713	51	0.4	14
Missouri.....	2,729.5	1.9	879	29	-0.3	25
Montana.....	447.8	1.8	751	49	0.3	16
Nebraska.....	956.6	1.4	817	42	0	20
Nevada.....	1,264.1	3.0	875	30	1.2	5
New Hampshire.....	635.1	1.9	998	18	1.6	4
New Jersey.....	3,909.7	2.4	1268	5	-1.7	41
New Mexico.....	800.4	0.0	792	46	-1.6	40
New York.....	9,042.2	2.0	1456	2	-0.3	25
North Carolina.....	4,220.3	3.0	928	22	-0.2	22
North Dakota.....	409.4	-6.2	908	25	-7.6	51
Ohio.....	5,236.2	1.8	913	24	-0.8	30
Oklahoma.....	1,578.6	-0.9	833	38	-4.1	49
Oregon.....	1,808.2	3.2	929	21	1.2	5
Pennsylvania.....	5,662.2	1.1	1012	16	-1.9	42
Rhode Island.....	464.6	1.9	985	19	-2.2	46
South Carolina.....	1,974.6	2.7	806	43	0.8	10
South Dakota.....	410.5	0.9	771	48	1.2	5
Tennessee.....	2,859.2	3.3	887	27	0.3	16
Texas.....	11,638.7	0.7	1066	11	-2.1	45
Utah.....	1,369.2	3.8	849	35	0.6	12
Vermont.....	304.6	0.1	832	40	1	9
Virginia.....	3,748.1	2.6	1057	13	-1.2	34
Washington.....	3,147.7	3.1	1121	8	3	1
West Virginia.....	683.9	-1.2	782	47	-1.3	36
Wisconsin.....	2,771.4	1.3	875	30	-0.2	22
Wyoming.....	267.9	-3.7	850	34	-4.7	50

**Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2016 - Continued**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	March 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
Puerto Rico.....	895.2	-1.2	520	(3)	-0.4	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.6	0.4	769	(3)	2.9	(3)

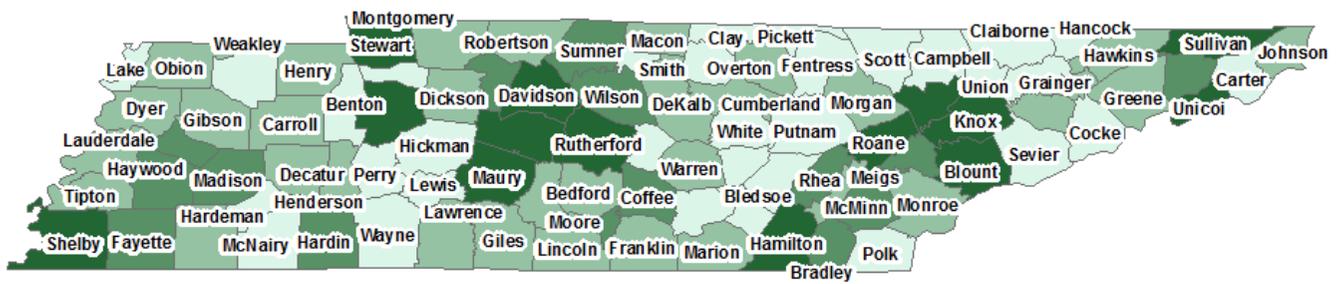
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 Tennessee, first quarter 2016**



Source: U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Average weekly wages**

(U.S. average = \$1,043)

