



For Release: Wednesday, July 01, 2015

15-1144-DAL

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County Employment and Wages in New Mexico – Fourth Quarter 2014

New Mexico's only large county, Bernalillo, reported an employment increase of 0.7 percent from December 2013 to December 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table 1](#). Large counties are those with 2013 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rate of employment growth in Bernalillo County was below the national average. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 2.2 percent from December 2013 to December 2014 as 319 of the 339 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Weld, Colo., and Midland, Texas, recorded the largest percentage increases in the country, each up 8.0 percent over the year. Atlantic, N.J., registered the largest percentage employment decline among large counties, down 5.0 percent.

Employment in Bernalillo County stood at 317,600 in December 2014, accounting for 39.3 percent of total employment in New Mexico. Nationwide, the largest 339 counties made up 72.1 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 139.2 million in December 2014, up 3.0 million from December 2013. These large counties had a net gain of 2.2 million jobs over the year, accounting for 73.4 percent of the overall U.S. employment increase.

The average weekly wage in Bernalillo County stood at \$873 in the fourth quarter of 2014, ranking it 239th among the 339 large U.S. counties. (See [table 1](#).) Seventy-two percent of the large U.S. counties (244) reported weekly wages below the national average of \$1,035. Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$610), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$621) and Hidalgo (\$641).

Nationally, 95 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2014. San Mateo, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,166. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,138, followed by Santa Clara, Calif., at \$2,114. Average wages in the highest-ranked county, San Mateo, Calif., were more than three times the average wage in the lowest-ranked county, Horry, S.C. (\$610).

The average weekly wage in Bernalillo County increased 4.4 percent between the fourth quarter of 2013 and the fourth quarter of 2014. Bernalillo's percentage change ranked 81st among the largest U.S. counties. The national average weekly wage increased 3.5 percent from a year ago, as 332 of the 339 largest counties registered increases over the year. Benton, Ark., had the largest wage gain, up 9.9 percent from the fourth quarter of 2013. Washington, Pa., was second with a wage increase of 9.2 percent, followed by the counties of Midland, Texas (9.0 percent), Brazoria, Texas (8.9 percent), and Douglas, Colo. (8.8 percent).

Among the large U.S. counties, seven experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. San Mateo, Calif., experienced the largest percentage decline in average weekly wages with a loss of 20.4 percent over the year. Olmsted, Minn., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 5.5 percent from the fourth quarter of 2013, followed by Morris, N.J. (-2.9 percent), and Rockland, N.Y. (-1.3 percent).

Average weekly wages in New Mexico's smaller counties

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 32 counties in New Mexico with employment levels below 75,000. Three of these smaller counties had average weekly wages above the \$1,035 national average in the fourth quarter of 2014: Los Alamos (\$1,566); Eddy and Lea (both at \$1,088). Two small counties, Santa Fe (\$975) and San Juan (\$908), registered average weekly wages that were higher than those in the single large county, Bernalillo (\$873). The lowest average weekly wages in New Mexico were reported in Sierra and Catron, at \$530 and \$546, respectively. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 33 counties in New Mexico were considered, 7 had weekly wages averaging \$599 or less. Sixteen counties averaged from \$600 to \$699 per week, four reported wages from \$700 to \$799, and six had wages exceeding \$800. (See [chart 1.](#)) The counties with the highest average wages were concentrated around the metropolitan areas of Albuquerque, Carlsbad, Farmington, Hobbs, Los Alamos, and Santa Fe.

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 2013 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 2014 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2013* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2013/home.htm. The 2014 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2015.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

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 9.2 million employer reports cover 134.0 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 (see Technical Note below) 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 largest county in New Mexico, fourth quarter 2014

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2013-14 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	139,204.8	2.2	--	\$1,035	--	3.5	--
New Mexico.....	808.4	1.3	--	850	40	4.4	10
Bernalillo, N.M.	317.6	0.7	272	873	239	4.4	81

(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 New Mexico, fourth quarter 2014

Area	Employment December 2014	Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	139,204,840	\$1,035
New Mexico.....	808,357	850
Bernalillo.....	317,597	873
Catron.....	643	546
Chaves.....	21,457	693
Cibola.....	7,818	694
Colfax.....	4,853	621
Curry.....	17,305	699
De Baca.....	498	730
Dona Ana.....	71,565	698
Eddy.....	29,006	1,088
Grant.....	9,369	759
Guadalupe.....	1,335	570
Harding.....	190	757
Hidalgo.....	1,596	691
Lea.....	33,764	1,088
Lincoln.....	6,337	598
Los Alamos.....	15,126	1,566
Luna.....	7,274	628
McKinley.....	20,511	636
Mora.....	687	605
Otero.....	17,465	675
Quay.....	2,639	581
Rio Arriba.....	9,671	639
Roosevelt.....	6,159	619
Sandoval.....	28,533	796
San Juan.....	51,328	908
San Miguel.....	8,266	585
Santa Fe.....	61,268	975
Sierra.....	3,416	530
Socorro.....	5,203	691
Taos.....	10,652	582
Torrance.....	3,235	643
Union.....	1,218	620
Valencia.....	13,352	605

(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: Covered employment and wages 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 2014

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2013-14	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2013-14	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	139,204.8	2.2	\$1,035	--	3.5	--
Alabama	1,891.4	1.3	881	35	3.5	31
Alaska	317.6	0.8	1,063	13	4.0	20
Arizona	2,630.8	2.2	926	25	2.3	47
Arkansas	1,180.5	2.2	807	47	4.5	5
California	16,068.5	2.6	1,209	6	2.9	41
Colorado	2,478.0	3.9	1,066	12	4.1	17
Connecticut	1,681.2	1.2	1,278	4	2.7	45
Delaware	433.0	2.9	1,049	16	1.5	51
District of Columbia	736.9	0.9	1,696	1	3.7	28
Florida	8,009.6	3.5	911	28	3.1	40
Georgia	4,131.9	3.7	958	21	3.8	25
Hawaii	638.3	0.7	908	29	4.2	15
Idaho	650.7	2.5	782	50	4.0	20
Illinois	5,844.1	1.4	1,089	8	2.8	42
Indiana	2,946.5	1.7	846	41	3.9	22
Iowa	1,527.6	1.1	870	38	4.3	11
Kansas	1,377.2	1.3	855	39	2.6	46
Kentucky	1,852.2	1.8	836	43	4.1	17
Louisiana	1,954.0	2.1	923	26	3.8	25
Maine	592.7	0.9	826	44	5.1	4
Maryland	2,590.3	1.3	1,113	7	3.5	31
Massachusetts	3,415.6	2.2	1,315	3	4.5	5
Michigan	4,158.9	2.1	984	20	3.3	37
Minnesota	2,762.9	1.4	1,024	17	3.6	30
Mississippi	1,118.6	1.0	747	51	2.3	47
Missouri	2,709.8	1.5	891	32	3.4	34
Montana	442.2	0.5	794	48	4.5	5
Nebraska	958.1	1.4	837	42	5.2	3
Nevada	1,229.6	4.2	899	30	1.6	50
New Hampshire	638.0	1.4	1,081	10	6.3	2
New Jersey	3,933.6	1.3	1,211	5	2.0	49
New Mexico	808.4	1.3	850	40	4.4	10
New York	9,067.6	2.0	1,321	2	4.3	11
North Carolina	4,141.8	2.4	890	33	3.4	34
North Dakota	454.8	4.5	1,050	15	7.1	1
Ohio	5,264.3	1.6	922	27	3.9	22
Oklahoma	1,614.3	2.1	876	36	2.8	42
Oregon	1,755.4	3.2	928	23	3.8	25
Pennsylvania	5,716.5	1.2	1,013	18	3.7	28
Rhode Island	471.5	1.9	1,003	19	4.5	5
South Carolina	1,931.4	2.9	817	46	3.2	39
South Dakota	412.5	1.3	791	49	4.2	15
Tennessee	2,822.1	2.4	927	24	3.5	31
Texas	11,662.7	3.7	1,070	11	4.3	11
Utah	1,324.2	3.0	872	37	4.3	11
Vermont	311.0	0.7	882	34	4.1	17
Virginia	3,691.4	0.6	1,057	14	2.8	42
Washington	3,069.7	3.2	1,082	9	4.5	5
West Virginia	712.0	0.1	818	45	3.3	37
Wisconsin	2,789.3	1.3	894	31	3.4	34
Wyoming	283.6	1.5	952	22	3.9	22
Puerto Rico	944.2	-1.5	556	(3)	0.7	(3)
Virgin Islands	38.5	-0.3	746	(3)	-1.2	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

(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 New Mexico, fourth quarter 2014

