



For Release: Friday, December 16, 2016

16-2308-DAL

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County Employment and Wages in Oklahoma – Second Quarter 2016

Employment fell in Oklahoma's three large counties from June 2015 to June 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.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that employment declined at a 1.0-percent pace in the counties of Oklahoma and Tulsa, while Cleveland County employment decreased 0.2 percent from a year ago. (See [table 1](#).)

Employment nationwide advanced 1.5 percent during the 12-month period as 291 of the 344 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Williamson, Tenn., recorded the fastest rate of employment gain in the country, up 6.7 percent. Midland, Texas, experienced the largest over-the-year decrease among the large counties with a loss of 8.3 percent.

Among the three largest counties in Oklahoma, employment was highest in Oklahoma County (447,300) in June 2016. The counties of Tulsa and Cleveland had employment levels of 348,800 and 79,400, respectively. Together, the three largest Oklahoma counties accounted for 55.7 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

All three large Oklahoma counties experienced average weekly wage gains from the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter of 2016. Cleveland County had the fastest rate of increase in average weekly wages, up 3.2 percent. (See [table 1](#).) Oklahoma County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$917. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 2.2 percent from a year ago to \$989 in the second quarter of 2016.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 74 counties in Oklahoma with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average in June 2016. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Cleveland County's 3.2-percent gain in average weekly wages from the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter of 2016 ranked 87th among the nation's 344 largest counties. Wages in Oklahoma and Tulsa Counties rose by 2.0 and 0.3 percent, respectively. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, 304 of the 344 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. McLean, Ill., experienced the largest wage gain in the nation, up 21.0 percent. Elkhart, Ind., had the second largest increase (8.5 percent), followed by King, Wash. (8.1 percent).

Nationwide, 36 of the largest counties registered wage declines during the period. Ventura, Calif., experienced the largest decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 8.4 percent over the year. Forsyth, N.C., had the second largest wage decline (-6.5 percent), followed by Lafayette, La. (-6.2 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Weekly wages in the state's three large counties were below the national average of \$989 in the second quarter of 2016. Average weekly wages in Oklahoma County (\$917) and Tulsa County (\$892) ranked 164th and 185th, respectively, near the middle of the national ranking. In contrast, weekly wages in Cleveland County (\$743) ranked among the lowest at 327th. (See [table 1](#).)

More than two-thirds of the largest U.S. counties (241) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the second quarter of 2016. Horry, S.C. (\$598) had the lowest weekly wage, followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$602), Hidalgo (\$626), and Webb (\$659).

Nationwide, average weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 102 of the 344 largest counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,252. San Mateo, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,871, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$1,866). Average wages in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif., were more than three times the average wage in the lowest-ranked county, Horry, S.C. (\$598).

Average weekly wages in Oklahoma's smaller counties

All 74 smaller counties in Oklahoma – those with employment below 75,000 – reported average weekly wages below the national average of \$989. Among these counties, Washington (\$895) and Grant (\$864) posted the highest weekly wages, while Sequoyah reported the lowest (\$531). (See [table 2](#).)

When all 77 counties in Oklahoma were considered, 11 reported average wages under \$600 per week, 29 registered wages from \$600 to \$699, 28 had wages from \$700 to \$799, and 9 had wages of \$800 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying counties were concentrated around the larger metropolitan areas of Oklahoma City and Tulsa, as well as some smaller cities including Elk City, Enid, and Woodward. The lower-paying counties, those with weekly wages under \$600, were generally located in the eastern third of the state.

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 2015 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 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm.

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.

The County Employment and Wages release for third quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.

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 9.7 million employer reports cover 142.7 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.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 3 largest counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, second quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	142,717.2	1.5	--	\$989	--	2.2	--
Oklahoma	1,570.5	-1.4	--	823	41	0.6	45
Cleveland, Okla.	79.4	-0.2	303	743	327	3.2	87
Oklahoma, Okla.....	447.3	-1.0	324	917	164	2.0	201
Tulsa, Okla.	348.8	-1.0	324	892	185	0.3	300

(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 Oklahoma, second quarter 2016

Area	Employment June 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	142,717,157	\$989
Oklahoma	1,570,510	823
Adair	4,343	638
Alfalfa	1,421	784
Atoka	3,203	576
Beaver	1,454	774
Beckham	8,987	806
Blaine	2,882	715
Bryan	16,273	686
Caddo	7,024	707
Canadian	31,835	760
Carter	24,187	770
Cherokee	15,405	633
Choctaw	4,088	591
Cimarron	737	606
Cleveland	79,443	743
Coal	1,081	630
Comanche	42,952	721
Cotton	1,427	611
Craig	5,562	647
Creek	18,213	775
Custer	12,128	709
Delaware	8,926	583
Dewey	1,530	742
Ellis	1,212	708
Garfield	26,480	845
Garvin	9,469	791
Grady	11,902	694
Grant	1,491	864
Greer	1,288	555
Harmon	705	619
Harper	1,106	670
Haskell	3,398	551
Hughes	2,835	556
Jackson	9,628	700
Jefferson	1,085	709
Johnston	3,455	571
Kay	17,722	738
Kingfisher	6,211	795
Kiowa	2,162	635
Latimer	2,853	799
Le Flore	12,570	653
Lincoln	6,477	665
Logan	7,396	632
Love	6,185	620
Major	2,376	722
Marshall	4,142	686
Mayes	12,530	788
McClain	8,593	684
McCurtain	11,275	648
McIntosh	4,027	564
Murray	5,682	644
Muskogee	29,761	733
Noble	4,743	811
Nowata	1,687	598
Okfuskee	2,375	582

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment June 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Oklahoma	447,283	917
Okmulgee	9,438	667
Osage	6,633	676
Ottawa	12,287	607
Pawnee	3,365	670
Payne	32,902	673
Pittsburg	15,850	786
Pontotoc	17,726	785
Pottawatomie.....	22,657	645
Pushmataha	2,658	603
Roger Mills	719	766
Rogers	26,168	836
Seminole	6,867	681
Sequoyah	8,850	531
Stephens	13,568	795
Texas	9,688	691
Tillman	1,742	700
Tulsa.....	348,815	892
Wagoner	8,927	733
Washington.....	20,539	895
Washita.....	1,761	673
Woods	3,879	756
Woodward	8,730	806

(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, second quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	142,717.2	1.5	\$989	--	2.2	--
Alabama	1,923.5	1.2	835	37	2.0	29
Alaska.....	338.7	-2.4	1,011	10	-1.7	49
Arizona	2,619.6	2.6	921	22	1.9	33
Arkansas	1,197.5	1.1	785	47	3.0	7
California	16,754.1	2.5	1,157	5	2.4	19
Colorado.....	2,574.5	2.3	999	14	1.0	43
Connecticut	1,689.9	-0.1	1,213	3	3.0	7
Delaware	444.0	0.9	990	16	-0.6	48
District of Columbia	756.0	1.7	1,623	1	1.1	42
Florida	8,161.8	3.2	883	25	2.6	14
Georgia.....	4,269.5	2.7	929	21	2.7	11
Hawaii.....	643.4	1.0	906	24	3.5	5
Idaho	699.7	3.3	740	50	3.8	3
Illinois	5,945.0	0.2	1,038	9	2.4	19
Indiana.....	2,995.4	1.0	828	39	2.1	27
Iowa.....	1,566.0	0.3	825	40	2.9	9
Kansas	1,378.4	-0.2	829	38	1.2	39
Kentucky.....	1,877.2	1.5	838	36	1.9	33
Louisiana	1,905.2	-1.4	852	32	0.2	46
Maine.....	622.8	1.0	795	46	3.5	5
Maryland.....	2,656.0	0.9	1,070	8	2.5	15
Massachusetts	3,538.2	1.2	1,233	2	2.0	29
Michigan	4,300.9	1.9	942	19	2.7	11
Minnesota.....	2,846.8	0.7	997	15	2.0	29
Mississippi	1,120.1	0.5	727	51	2.5	15
Missouri	2,785.6	1.4	863	30	2.4	19
Montana	468.6	2.2	767	48	1.7	35
Nebraska	978.3	0.9	805	43	2.4	19
Nevada	1,289.4	3.3	874	27	2.2	26
New Hampshire.....	655.1	1.1	1,003	12	3.7	4
New Jersey.....	4,051.2	1.7	1,147	6	1.7	35
New Mexico.....	808.1	-0.3	812	42	0.9	44
New York	9,264.0	1.5	1,210	4	2.5	15
North Carolina	4,285.3	2.5	865	29	2.1	27
North Dakota	423.3	-4.9	908	23	-3.3	51
Ohio.....	5,353.1	0.8	882	26	2.0	29
Oklahoma	1,570.5	-1.4	823	41	0.6	45
Oregon	1,867.8	2.7	933	20	4.1	2
Pennsylvania.....	5,786.8	0.4	971	17	1.4	37
Rhode Island	482.9	0.6	949	18	2.5	15
South Carolina.....	2,013.7	2.4	804	44	2.8	10
South Dakota.....	432.7	1.0	760	49	2.7	11
Tennessee	2,900.4	2.4	874	27	1.3	38
Texas	11,810.7	1.0	1,000	13	1.2	39
Utah.....	1,395.9	3.8	840	35	2.3	25
Vermont.....	310.6	-0.1	850	33	2.4	19
Virginia.....	3,833.4	1.6	1,011	10	1.2	39
Washington.....	3,281.6	2.8	1,083	7	5.4	1
West Virginia	693.2	-1.9	800	45	-0.4	47
Wisconsin	2,869.1	0.9	856	31	2.4	19
Wyoming	281.7	-3.7	849	34	-2.2	50
Puerto Rico.....	879.5	-0.7	512	(3)	0.2	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

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

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	June 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
Virgin Islands.....	38.4	0.9	743	(3)	-0.4	(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 Oklahoma, second quarter 2016

