



For Release: Monday, March 21, 2016

16-440-DAL

SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest

Media contact: (972) 850-4800

County Employment and Wages in Texas – Third Quarter 2015

Employment rose in 24 of the 27 largest counties in Texas from September 2014 to September 2015, 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 2014 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that one Texas county ranked among the top 10 nationwide for job growth. The 6.1-percent employment gain in Denton County was the fastest in the state and ranked third nationwide. In contrast, employment fell in Ector, Midland, and Gregg; annual percentage job losses were evident in most industry sectors, but were led by natural resources and mining. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationwide, employment advanced 1.9 percent from September 2014 to September 2015 as 312 of the 342 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Williamson, Tenn., recorded the fastest employment gain in the country, up 6.5 percent. Ector, Texas, experienced the largest over-the-year decrease with a loss of 8.3 percent; employment in Ector's natural resources and mining sector fell 28.4 percent.

Among the largest counties in Texas, employment was highest in Harris County (2,287,600) in September 2015, followed by Dallas County (1,616,800). Three other counties, Tarrant, Bexar, and Travis, had employment levels exceeding 600,000. Together, the 27 largest Texas counties accounted for 81.1 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 342 largest counties made up 72.2 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the third quarter of 2014 to the third quarter of 2015, average weekly wages nationwide increased 2.6 percent to \$974. Among large counties in Texas, Travis registered the largest increase in average weekly wages with a gain of 3.9 percent, while Midland recorded the largest decrease, down 6.7 percent. (See [table 1.](#)) In the third quarter of 2015, Harris had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,240 and Cameron had the lowest at \$615.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 227 counties in Texas with employment levels below 75,000 in 2014. Among these smaller counties, 204 had average weekly wages below the national average in September 2015. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

Five of Texas's 27 large counties recorded wage growth above the 2.6-percent national increase from the third quarter of 2014 to the third quarter of 2015. Travis County's 3.9-percent wage increase was the highest in the state and placed 47th in the national ranking, followed by Galveston (3.5 percent, 72nd), Denton (3.0 percent, 117th), Brazoria (2.8 percent, 138th), and Jefferson (2.7 percent, 147th). (See [table 1.](#)) In contrast, six Texas counties recorded wage decreases from the third quarter of 2014. Midland, Texas, experienced the largest

percentage decrease in the nation, with average weekly wages declining 6.7 percent over the year; the natural resources and mining sector had the largest impact on the county's average weekly wage decline with a decrease of 8.1 percent over the year.

Nationally, 319 of the 342 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. Rockland, N.Y., experienced the largest wage gain in the nation, up 24.9 percent. Lake, Ill., had the second largest increase (11.7 percent), followed by Onondaga, N.Y. (6.5 percent), and Washington, Ore. (6.4 percent).

Nationwide, 20 of the largest counties registered wage declines during the period. As noted, Midland, Texas, experienced the largest decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 6.7 percent over the year. Ector, Texas, had the second largest wage decline (-4.9 percent), followed by Lafayette, La. (-3.2 percent), and Stark, Ohio (-2.1 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 5 of the 27 large Texas counties were at least 10 percent above the national average of \$974 per week in the third quarter of 2015. Harris County led at \$1,240 per week and ranked 21st among the 342 large counties nationwide. Harris was followed by Midland (\$1,177, 31st), Dallas (\$1,157, 38th), Collin (\$1,126, 43rd), and Travis (\$1,122, 45th). Three additional Texas counties reported average weekly wages above the national average: Ector (\$1,037, 74th), Jefferson (\$1,003, 85th), and Brazoria (\$992, 89th).

Texas had four of the lowest-paying large counties in the United States, all located along the border with Mexico: Cameron (\$615, 341st), Hidalgo (\$624, 340th), Webb (\$658, 338th), and El Paso (\$698, 331st). Other Texas counties with low national rankings included Brazos (\$734, 326th), Lubbock (\$779, 294th), and McLennan (\$792, 284th).

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 100 of the largest counties in the country. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,090. San Mateo, Calif., was second at \$1,894, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$1,829), San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,712), and Washington, D.C. (\$1,667).

Of the largest counties in the United States, 242, or more than two-thirds, reported average weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2014. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C., at \$598 per week, followed by the Texas counties of Cameron and Hidalgo. Wages in these three lowest-ranked counties were less than 30 percent of the average weekly wage in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif.

Average weekly wages in smaller Texas counties

Twenty-three of the 227 smaller Texas counties – those with employment below 75,000 – reported average weekly wages above the national average of \$974. Two of these smaller counties had wages that were also the highest in the state: Carson (\$1,347) and King (\$1,331). Delta County registered the lowest weekly wage, averaging \$399 in the third quarter of 2015. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 254 counties in Texas were considered, all but 31 had wages below the national average. Forty-seven reported average weekly wages under \$650, 88 registered wages from \$650 to \$749, 58 had wages from \$750 to \$849, 26 had wages from \$850 to \$949, and 35 had wages of \$950 or more per week. (See [chart 1](#).) The counties with the highest average weekly wages were located around the large metropolitan areas of Dallas,

Houston, and Austin, as well as the smaller areas of Midland, Odessa, and Amarillo. Lower-paying counties were concentrated in the agricultural areas of central Texas, the Texas Panhandle, and along the Texas-Mexico border.

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 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 news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2014* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2014/home.htm. The 2015 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2016.

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 fourth quarter 2015 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 8, 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 9.6 million employer reports cover 140.4 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/; 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 27 largest counties in Texas, third quarter 2015

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, third quarter 2014-15 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	140,442.2	1.9	--	\$974	--	2.6	--
Texas.....	11,681.0	2.1	--	999	13	1.1	45
Bell, Texas.....	116.2	4.2	22	823	249	2.6	154
Bexar, Texas.....	821.4	3.3	71	874	193	2.2	204
Brazoria, Texas.....	103.4	4.0	32	992	89	2.8	138
Brazos, Texas.....	99.8	4.5	16	734	326	-0.4	326
Cameron, Texas.....	135.7	1.2	221	615	341	2.2	204
Collin, Texas.....	366.9	4.9	11	1,126	43	2.5	165
Dallas, Texas.....	1,616.8	4.0	32	1,157	38	1.4	274
Denton, Texas.....	221.4	6.1	3	885	180	3.0	117
Ector, Texas.....	72.0	-8.3	340	1,037	74	-4.9	340
El Paso, Texas.....	292.0	3.1	89	698	331	2.6	154
Fort Bend, Texas.....	170.6	3.6	49	949	117	-0.3	323
Galveston, Texas.....	102.8	3.5	58	853	213	3.5	72
Gregg, Texas.....	76.1	-4.2	338	846	218	-1.5	337
Harris, Texas.....	2,287.6	0.8	252	1,240	21	0.1	319
Hidalgo, Texas.....	243.9	2.5	124	624	340	1.0	300
Jefferson, Texas.....	123.1	0.4	292	1,003	85	2.7	147
Lubbock, Texas.....	135.0	2.4	128	779	294	2.1	215
McLennan, Texas.....	108.1	1.9	162	792	284	2.2	204
Midland, Texas.....	86.8	-7.3	339	1,177	31	-6.7	341
Montgomery, Texas.....	165.3	3.2	81	957	112	0.0	320
Nueces, Texas.....	163.0	0.8	252	861	201	1.2	286
Potter, Texas.....	79.1	1.6	192	804	272	0.2	318
Smith, Texas.....	100.2	4.1	25	810	265	-0.6	329
Tarrant, Texas.....	844.9	2.6	117	967	104	2.5	165
Travis, Texas.....	692.4	4.6	15	1,122	45	3.9	47
Webb, Texas.....	97.7	2.6	117	658	338	0.9	305
Williamson, Texas.....	150.8	4.5	16	937	130	1.7	253

(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 Texas, third quarter 2015

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	140,442,224	\$974
Texas	11,680,983	999
Anderson	19,994	773
Andrews	7,338	1,125
Angelina	36,262	742
Aransas	6,368	709
Archer	1,861	722
Armstrong	436	629
Atascosa	12,198	830
Austin	10,055	845
Bailey	2,454	732
Bandera	3,113	629
Bastrop	16,117	690
Baylor	1,226	676
Bee	9,329	742
Bell	116,176	823
Bexar	821,361	874
Blanco	2,922	800
Borden	257	570
Bosque	3,680	666
Bowie	41,508	713
Brazoria	103,414	992
Brazos	99,783	734
Brewster	3,784	721
Briscoe	319	584
Brooks	2,479	777
Brown	15,858	666
Burleson	3,990	819
Burnet	13,167	739
Caldwell	8,186	688
Calhoun	12,678	1,165
Callahan	2,201	717
Cameron	135,659	615
Camp	3,896	716
Carson	4,572	1,347
Cass	7,377	651
Castro	2,618	678
Chambers	13,072	1,027
Cherokee	14,519	640
Childress	2,445	691
Clay	1,384	679
Cochran	756	729
Coke	665	612
Coleman	2,046	560
Collin	366,863	1,126
Collingsworth	867	702
Colorado	7,004	711
Comal	49,449	766
Comanche	3,709	606
Concho	864	719
Cooke	15,533	834
Coryell	15,677	685
Cottle	366	595
Crane	1,410	1,101
Crockett	1,831	827
Crosby	1,485	628

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, third quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Culberson	1,226	724
Dallam	4,516	780
Dallas	1,616,750	1,157
Dawson	4,346	710
De Witt	8,077	782
Deaf Smith	7,613	717
Delta	1,438	399
Denton	221,444	885
Dickens	438	639
Dimmit	5,896	963
Donley	949	603
Duval	3,321	783
Eastland	7,242	831
Ector	72,015	1,037
Edwards	370	621
El Paso	292,002	698
Ellis	47,127	778
Erath	16,045	631
Falls	3,133	664
Fannin	7,166	726
Fayette	9,230	728
Fisher	875	702
Floyd	1,568	641
Foard	319	492
Fort Bend	170,571	949
Franklin	2,948	730
Freestone	5,466	877
Frio	6,743	881
Gaines	6,520	841
Galveston	102,818	853
Garza	1,815	735
Gillespie	10,004	683
Glasscock	587	824
Goliad	1,246	661
Gonzales	7,166	755
Gray	8,483	858
Grayson	44,640	765
Gregg	76,124	846
Grimes	7,704	837
Guadalupe	34,409	775
Hale	12,106	654
Hall	804	609
Hamilton	2,485	640
Hansford	2,208	913
Hardeman	1,147	622
Hardin	12,981	763
Harris	2,287,613	1,240
Harrison	24,428	903
Hartley	2,532	710
Haskell	1,695	652
Hays	61,062	721
Hemphill	2,132	1,028
Henderson	16,126	637
Hidalgo	243,945	624
Hill	9,504	733

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, third quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Hockley.....	9,901	905
Hood.....	16,049	818
Hopkins.....	12,490	692
Houston.....	6,666	843
Howard.....	12,666	847
Hudspeth.....	1,209	1,086
Hunt.....	27,822	915
Hutchinson.....	8,719	1,070
Irion.....	677	991
Jack.....	3,243	1,053
Jackson.....	5,691	784
Jasper.....	10,290	715
Jeff Davis.....	968	591
Jefferson.....	123,081	1,003
Jim Hogg.....	1,830	714
Jim Wells.....	18,156	790
Johnson.....	44,621	786
Jones.....	3,338	704
Karnes.....	5,675	944
Kaufman.....	29,155	739
Kendall.....	14,188	852
Kenedy.....	578	1,080
Kent.....	294	637
Kerr.....	17,800	763
Kimble.....	1,298	581
King.....	119	1,331
Kinney.....	776	845
Kleberg.....	12,151	698
Knox.....	1,205	791
La Salle.....	3,195	1,117
Lamar.....	20,273	762
Lamb.....	3,789	691
Lampasas.....	4,689	611
Lavaca.....	5,579	687
Lee.....	7,079	842
Leon.....	5,391	901
Liberty.....	16,697	759
Limestone.....	7,861	711
Lipscomb.....	1,255	745
Live Oak.....	4,323	920
Llano.....	4,628	666
Loving.....	53	909
Lubbock.....	135,011	779
Lynn.....	1,307	699
Madison.....	5,392	700
Marion.....	1,985	560
Martin.....	1,848	877
Mason.....	1,069	565
Matagorda.....	11,088	919
Maverick.....	17,403	615
McCulloch.....	2,901	713
McLennan.....	108,057	792
McMullen.....	636	1,040
Medina.....	9,439	664
Menard.....	422	495

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, third quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Midland	86,757	1,177
Milam	5,780	872
Mills	1,379	617
Mitchell	2,205	792
Montague	5,221	739
Montgomery	165,309	957
Moore	10,814	816
Morris	4,139	768
Motley	309	490
Nacogdoches	22,173	685
Navarro	16,554	706
Newton	1,560	578
Nolan	6,117	761
Nueces	162,970	861
Ochiltree	5,136	901
Oldham	1,049	823
Orange	22,749	896
Palo Pinto	8,357	740
Panola	9,421	828
Parker	32,481	831
Parmer	5,676	808
Pecos	5,955	818
Polk	10,496	712
Potter	79,076	804
Presidio	2,197	725
Rains	1,765	582
Randall	29,314	749
Reagan	1,960	1,011
Real	767	498
Red River	2,505	617
Reeves	4,284	768
Refugio	2,405	796
Roberts	287	707
Robertson	3,928	780
Rockwall	26,259	772
Runnels	2,805	652
Rusk	13,503	788
Sabine	2,254	662
San Augustine	1,515	692
San Jacinto	1,972	639
San Patricio	19,049	863
San Saba	1,609	583
Schleicher	932	752
Scurry	7,855	952
Shackelford	1,416	998
Shelby	8,529	704
Sherman	1,053	738
Smith	100,197	810
Somervell	3,996	1,019
Starr	14,882	564
Stephens	3,177	703
Sterling	671	763
Stonewall	529	632
Sutton	2,071	1,167
Swisher	1,914	620

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, third quarter 2015 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2015	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Tarrant	844,890	967
Taylor	60,372	747
Terrell	416	1,060
Terry	3,705	738
Throckmorton	473	676
Titus	15,422	682
Tom Green	47,442	757
Travis	692,423	1,122
Trinity	2,426	620
Tyler	3,883	654
Upshur	6,915	692
Upton	1,726	1,116
Uvalde	10,066	645
Val Verde	17,114	695
Van Zandt	10,379	634
Victoria	41,643	840
Walker	23,827	734
Waller	15,805	813
Ward	4,799	1,012
Washington	14,849	722
Webb	97,696	658
Wharton	15,705	708
Wheeler	2,515	735
Wichita	53,018	714
Wilbarger	6,046	679
Willacy	3,535	643
Williamson	150,801	937
Wilson	7,642	664
Winkler	2,535	1,026
Wise	20,440	869
Wood	9,676	672
Yoakum	4,219	989
Young	6,874	736
Zapata	3,856	910
Zavala	2,684	535

(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, third quarter 2015

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	September 2015 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2014-15	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2014-15	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	140,442.2	1.9	\$974	--	2.6	--
Alabama	1,893.6	1.2	830	34	1.8	40
Alaska	346.4	0.4	1,041	9	2.2	34
Arizona	2,613.9	2.9	889	24	1.5	42
Arkansas	1,193.4	1.9	756	48	2.6	22
California	16,474.4	3.0	1,134	5	3.4	6
Colorado	2,513.0	2.9	1,006	12	2.4	30
Connecticut	1,668.3	0.2	1,147	4	2.0	38
Delaware	436.3	2.1	963	15	0.3	48
District of Columbia	743.6	1.4	1,667	1	2.3	33
Florida	8,023.2	3.5	852	31	3.1	10
Georgia	4,171.1	2.8	916	22	2.8	19
Hawaii	635.4	1.4	896	23	3.1	10
Idaho	680.3	3.3	736	50	2.1	37
Illinois	5,888.6	1.3	1,020	10	3.9	3
Indiana	2,971.7	1.6	818	39	2.4	30
Iowa	1,535.9	0.4	823	38	3.0	14
Kansas	1,370.9	0.6	809	41	1.8	40
Kentucky	1,852.5	1.4	804	42	2.9	18
Louisiana	1,926.3	-0.2	858	30	0.7	47
Maine	609.7	0.7	779	46	3.3	7
Maryland	2,607.8	1.3	1,067	8	2.4	30
Massachusetts	3,446.9	1.4	1,197	2	3.0	14
Michigan	4,203.0	1.6	921	20	2.7	20
Minnesota	2,800.7	1.4	990	14	2.6	22
Mississippi	1,118.9	1.2	706	51	1.3	43
Missouri	2,737.9	1.9	846	32	2.2	34
Montana	457.9	1.9	759	47	3.7	4
Nebraska	964.0	1.4	811	40	4.2	2
Nevada	1,254.5	3.2	862	29	2.5	27
New Hampshire	642.8	1.5	952	18	2.7	20
New Jersey	3,933.9	1.4	1,116	6	2.6	22
New Mexico	809.2	0.6	798	43	1.3	43
New York	9,065.4	1.8	1,180	3	3.1	10
North Carolina	4,194.1	2.5	863	28	3.0	14
North Dakota	438.0	-3.8	956	17	-2.3	51
Ohio	5,282.7	1.2	878	25	1.9	39
Oklahoma	1,598.0	0.2	825	37	0.0	49
Oregon	1,812.8	3.0	924	19	4.4	1
Pennsylvania	5,722.1	0.8	961	16	2.5	27
Rhode Island	477.4	1.2	919	21	2.6	22
South Carolina	1,959.7	2.9	788	44	2.6	22
South Dakota	419.5	0.9	756	48	3.1	10
Tennessee	2,850.6	2.7	864	27	3.2	8
Texas	11,681.0	2.1	999	13	1.1	45
Utah	1,353.9	3.7	829	35	3.2	8
Vermont	308.2	0.5	829	35	3.0	14
Virginia	3,759.7	2.5	1,014	11	2.5	27
Washington	3,187.6	2.5	1,111	7	2.2	34
West Virginia	702.4	-1.1	785	45	0.9	46
Wisconsin	2,815.7	0.9	834	33	3.5	5
Wyoming	287.4	-1.5	866	26	-1.1	50
Puerto Rico	891.1	-0.7	512	(3)	1.4	(3)
Virgin Islands	36.8	-2.1	738	(3)	2.1	(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 Texas, third quarter 2015

