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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

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

Media contact: (972) 850-4800

Parish Employment and Wages in Louisiana – First Quarter 2018

Employment rose in 4 of the 7 largest parishes in Louisiana from March 2017 to March 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties/parishes are those with 2017 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rate of job growth in Calcasieu Parish, 5.0 percent, ranked fifth highest among the 349 large U.S. counties. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.6 percent from March 2017 to March 2018 as 314 of the 349 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase, up 12.6 percent over the year. Kanawha, W.Va., had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with a loss of 1.4 percent.

Among the seven largest parishes in Louisiana, employment was highest in East Baton Rouge (267,800) in March 2018, followed by Orleans (194,800) and Jefferson (188,300). Together, Louisiana's seven large parishes accounted for 56.6 percent of the state's total employment. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 73.1 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the first quarter of 2017 to the first quarter of 2018, Calcasieu recorded the biggest increase in average weekly wages among the large Louisiana parishes, with a gain of 4.1 percent. (See [table 1.](#)) Orleans had the highest average wage among the largest parishes at \$1,059 per week. Nationally, average weekly wages increased 3.7 percent over the year to \$1,152.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 57 parishes in Louisiana with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in six of these smaller parishes were above the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large parish wage changes

Average weekly wages rose in all seven large Louisiana parishes from the first quarter of 2017 to the first quarter of 2018. Calcasieu Parish's 4.1-percent rise in average weekly wages ranked 78th among the nation's 349 largest counties. (See [table 1.](#)) Orleans Parish's 4.0-percent weekly wage increase ranked 85th in the nation. The smallest increase among the large Louisiana parishes was in Jefferson (1.0 percent, 319th). Over-the-year wage gains in the remaining four large parishes ranged from 2.9 percent to 2.2 percent.

Among the 349 largest U.S. counties, 336 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Peoria, Ill., had the largest percentage wage increase, up 23.8 percent from the first quarter of 2017. Over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages occurred in 13 large U.S. counties. Forsyth, N.C., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-4.8 percent).

Large parish average weekly wages

Weekly wages in the seven large parishes were below the national average of \$1,152 in the first quarter of 2018. However, average weekly wage levels in two of these Louisiana parishes placed in the top half of the national ranking. Orleans (\$1,059) had the highest average weekly wage among the state's large parishes and ranked 137th in the country, followed by East Baton Rouge (\$1,024, 161st). Average weekly wages in the five remaining large parishes ranged from \$969 to \$833 and placed in bottom half of the national ranking.

In the first quarter of 2018, nearly three-fourths of the largest U.S. counties (259) reported wages below the national weekly average of \$1,152. Cameron, Texas, reported the lowest wage (\$628), followed by Horry County, S.C. (\$631), and the Texas counties of Hidalgo (\$657) and Webb (\$690).

Among the nation's 349 largest counties, 90 registered weekly wages at or above the U.S. average. New York, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$3,087. Santa Clara, Calif., was second at \$2,651, followed by San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,606), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$2,485). Average wages in the highest-ranked county, New York, N.Y., were nearly five times the average wage in the lowest-ranked county, Cameron, Texas (\$628).

Average weekly wages in Louisiana's smaller parishes

For smaller parishes in Louisiana – those with employment below 75,000 – 51 of 57 reported weekly wages below the national average (\$1,152) in the first quarter of 2018. In the six remaining smaller parishes, wages not only exceeded the national average, but were also the highest in the state, ranging from \$1,796 in Cameron to \$1,218 in St. John the Baptist. Catahoula Parish had the lowest weekly wages in the state at \$570. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 64 parishes were considered, 3 reported average weekly wages of \$599 or less, 27 registered wages from \$600 to \$749, 14 had wages from \$750 to \$899, 11 had wages from \$900 to \$1,049, and 9 had wages of \$1,050 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying parishes were concentrated in the southern half of the state around the metropolitan areas of Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and New Orleans. The lowest-paid parishes, those with weekly wages under \$600, were located in the northeastern quadrant 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 2017 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 2018 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/cewbultn17.htm.

The County Employment and Wages release for second quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, November 21, 2018.

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 10.0 million employer reports cover 144.6 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 7 largest parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	144,562.9	1.6	--	\$1,152	--	3.7	--
Louisiana	1,914.7	0.5	--	932	34	3.0	30
Caddo, La.....	111.6	-0.9	344	833	312	2.2	253
Calcasieu, La.....	101.9	5.0	5	969	202	4.1	78
East Baton Rouge, La.....	267.8	0.4	282	1,024	161	2.4	228
Jefferson, La.....	188.3	-0.8	342	935	229	1.0	319
Lafayette, La.....	129.3	0.0	315	889	273	2.2	253
Orleans, La.....	194.8	0.7	247	1,059	137	4.0	85
St. Tammany, La.....	87.3	1.1	200	901	266	2.9	180

Footnotes:

(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 parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2018

Area	Employment March 2018	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
United States ⁽²⁾	144,562,926	\$1,152
Louisiana	1,914,709	932
Acadia	14,786	673
Allen	7,693	755
Ascension.....	45,961	1,114
Assumption.....	3,939	810
Avoyelles	10,619	602
Beauregard.....	7,871	838
Bienville	4,423	761
Bossier	44,218	771
Caddo.....	111,569	833
Calcasieu.....	101,874	969
Caldwell.....	2,355	617
Cameron.....	12,118	1,796
Catahoula	1,979	570
Claiborne	3,360	694
Concordia	5,180	646
De Soto	6,839	1,038
East Baton Rouge	267,822	1,024
East Carroll.....	1,728	616
East Feliciana.....	4,973	816
Evangeline.....	7,786	670
Franklin.....	4,692	571
Grant	3,325	741
Iberia	26,214	901
Iberville	18,051	1,423
Jackson	3,458	725
Jefferson.....	188,333	935
Jefferson Davis.....	8,296	686
La Salle	4,266	713
Lafayette.....	129,298	889
Lafourche	34,299	960
Lincoln.....	19,124	700
Livingston	27,634	720
Madison.....	3,213	579
Morehouse	6,631	634
Natchitoches.....	13,148	684
Orleans.....	194,780	1,059
Ouachita	71,089	795
Plaquemines.....	12,282	1,354
Pointe Coupee.....	5,303	818
Rapides	56,654	776
Red River	2,733	771
Richland	6,392	615
Sabine	5,216	681
St. Bernard	10,210	1,009
St. Charles.....	23,415	1,494
St. Helena.....	1,459	708
St. James	8,227	1,443
St. John the Baptist	15,033	1,218
St. Landry	23,591	685
St. Martin	12,071	777
St. Mary	21,184	946
St. Tammany.....	87,346	901
Tangipahoa.....	43,205	667
Tensas.....	896	616

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2018 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2018	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Terrebonne	49,472	954
Union	5,103	608
Vermilion.....	12,740	785
Vernon	12,648	722
Washington.....	10,354	660
Webster	11,556	741
West Baton Rouge	12,170	1,018
West Carroll.....	2,252	719
West Feliciana	5,408	1,118
Winn	4,590	687

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: 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, first quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	144,562.9	1.6	\$1,152	--	3.7	--
Alabama	1,948.9	1.1	919	36	2.9	34
Alaska	311.2	-0.5	1,074	20	2.3	44
Arizona	2,822.5	2.8	1,025	22	3.5	19
Arkansas	1,211.4	0.9	879	44	2.4	40
California	17,152.5	2.1	1,352	6	4.4	6
Colorado	2,639.5	2.5	1,175	11	3.4	22
Connecticut	1,651.9	0.1	1,447	4	2.4	40
Delaware	438.7	1.2	1,202	10	1.3	51
District of Columbia	770.2	1.2	1,917	1	1.9	49
Florida	8,716.8	2.2	988	25	4.1	9
Georgia.....	4,409.1	2.3	1,095	17	2.3	44
Hawaii.....	658.4	0.3	974	29	2.3	44
Idaho	712.6	3.5	809	50	4.3	7
Illinois	5,909.3	1.0	1,241	8	3.9	10
Indiana.....	3,018.8	1.2	954	32	3.9	10
Iowa	1,525.8	0.5	921	35	2.4	40
Kansas	1,370.6	0.2	912	40	2.7	38
Kentucky.....	1,873.7	0.5	901	41	2.5	39
Louisiana	1,914.7	0.5	932	34	3.0	30
Maine.....	592.1	0.9	891	43	3.6	16
Maryland.....	2,646.9	0.9	1,209	9	3.2	26
Massachusetts	3,509.9	1.1	1,510	3	5.6	2
Michigan	4,289.0	1.4	1,078	19	3.4	22
Minnesota.....	2,823.6	0.7	1,175	11	2.1	47
Mississippi.....	1,125.9	0.1	765	51	2.1	47
Missouri.....	2,777.6	0.5	960	31	3.1	28
Montana	455.5	1.0	819	49	2.4	40
Nebraska	966.0	0.4	898	42	3.6	16
Nevada	1,351.6	3.0	977	28	4.8	5
New Hampshire.....	648.2	0.8	1,122	15	4.9	3
New Jersey.....	3,997.6	1.3	1,373	5	3.0	30
New Mexico.....	813.3	1.0	862	47	2.9	34
New York	9,318.9	1.8	1,597	2	3.4	22
North Carolina	4,370.6	1.8	1,022	23	3.0	30
North Dakota	408.2	0.6	988	25	3.7	15
Ohio	5,328.5	0.9	1,005	24	2.9	34
Oklahoma.....	1,600.9	1.8	914	38	3.5	19
Oregon	1,894.3	2.0	1,026	21	4.3	7
Pennsylvania.....	5,787.2	1.4	1,115	16	3.4	22
Rhode Island.....	469.9	1.1	1,086	18	3.2	26
South Carolina.....	2,067.4	2.2	877	45	1.7	50
South Dakota.....	417.5	1.0	842	48	2.8	37
Tennessee.....	2,950.0	1.6	978	27	3.5	19
Texas	12,179.2	2.0	1,168	13	3.9	10
Utah	1,458.8	3.3	949	33	4.9	3
Vermont.....	307.1	0.4	917	37	3.1	28
Virginia.....	3,854.4	1.5	1,162	14	3.0	30
Washington.....	3,316.1	2.8	1,306	7	7.7	1
West Virginia	684.8	0.6	868	46	3.6	16
Wisconsin.....	2,831.7	1.0	968	30	3.8	14
Wyoming	263.7	0.3	914	38	3.9	10
Puerto Rico.....	856.7	-3.8	563	(3)	7.0	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	33.3	-15.5	969	(3)	24.4	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

