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## **County Employment and Wages in California – Fourth Quarter 2013**

Employment increased in all 26 large California counties from December 2012 to December 2013, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with 2012 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that Sonoma County had the largest increase, up 5.2 percent, followed by Placer at 4.7 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.8 percent from December 2012 to December 2013 as 292 of the 334 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Weld, Colo., recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 6.0 percent over the year. St. Clair, Ill., registered the largest percentage employment decline, down 3.1 percent.

Among the large counties in California, Los Angeles County had the highest employment, 4,176,800. Orange and San Diego were the only other counties with employment above one million. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the fourth quarter of 2012 to the fourth quarter of 2013, Santa Cruz County recorded the fastest rate of increase in average weekly wages among the 26 large counties in California, registering a gain of 6.5 percent. (See [table 1](#).) San Mateo County recorded the highest average weekly wage among these large counties at \$2,724 per week. Nationally, the average weekly wage was unchanged from a year ago, remaining at \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 32 counties in California with employment levels below 75,000. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average in December 2013. (See [table 2](#).)

### **Large county wage changes**

Santa Cruz County's 6.5-percent rise in average weekly wages from the fourth quarter of 2012 to the fourth quarter of 2013 ranked first among the nation's 334 largest counties. (See [table 1](#).) Advancing at a slower pace, but ranking within the top 20 nationwide, were Santa Clara (3.4 percent) and San Francisco (3.0 percent). Over-the-year wage increases in 11 other counties ranged from 2.9 to 0.4 percent, while wages were unchanged in 2 counties. In contrast, 10 counties reported wage decreases, with San Mateo (-15.8 percent) recording the largest decline, followed by Santa Barbara (-3.0 percent).

Nationally, 185 of the 334 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. As mentioned, Santa Cruz (6.5 percent) had the largest wage gain nationwide from the fourth quarter of 2012. Ada, Idaho, was second with a wage increase of 6.4 percent, followed by the counties of Washington, Ore. (5.9 percent), and Union, N.J. (5.2 percent).

Among the large U.S. counties, 140 experienced over-the-year wage decreases. Douglas, Colo., had the largest wage decrease with a loss of 29.7 percent. San Mateo's 15.8-percent wage decrease was the second-largest decline nationwide, followed by Virginia Beach City, Va. (-10.0 percent), McHenry, Ill. (-8.8 percent), and Shawnee, Kan. (-5.1 percent).

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

Weekly wages in 12 of the state's 26 large counties were above the national average of \$1,000 per week. In the fourth quarter of 2013, average weekly wages in San Mateo County (\$2,724), Santa Clara, (\$1,972), and San Francisco (\$1,753) ranked within the top four nationally. In contrast, at \$696 per week, wages in Tulare ranked 324th among the nation's 334 largest counties.

Nationally, 98 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013. As noted, San Mateo, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,041, followed by Santa Clara, Calif.

Seventy percent of the largest U.S. counties (235) reported weekly wages below the national average. Horry, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$587), followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$598) and Hidalgo (\$620). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than a quarter of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, San Mateo, Calif.

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

All 32 of California's smaller counties – those with employment below 75,000 – reported weekly wages below the national average of \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2013. Among these counties, Alpine (\$998), posted the highest weekly wages, followed by Placer and Ventura (\$978 each). Mariposa reported the lowest average weekly wage in the state (\$624). (See [table 2](#).)

When all 58 counties in California were considered, 11 reported average weekly wages below \$700, 16 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 12 had wages from \$800 to \$899, 7 had wages from \$900 to \$999, and 12 averaged \$1,000 or more per week. (See [chart 1](#).) The six highest-paying counties were located in the San Francisco Bay Area.

### **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 2012 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 2013 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at <https://www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2013/home.htm>. The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2014.

## 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 9.3 million employer reports cover 136.1 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 (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: 1-800-877-8339.

**Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 26 largest counties in California, fourth quarter 2013**

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	136,129.4	1.8	--	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
California .....	15,650.3	2.8	--	1,175	6	-0.9	43
Alameda, Calif. ....	687.3	2.5	90	1,267	25	0.8	120
Contra Costa, Calif. ....	339.6	2.4	98	1,191	37	1.9	54
Fresno, Calif. ....	348.0	3.7	34	771	302	-1.0	253
Kern, Calif. ....	303.9	2.6	88	849	231	0.4	150
Los Angeles, Calif. ....	4,176.8	1.9	130	1,161	47	-1.9	302
Marin, Calif. ....	112.0	3.0	61	1,213	32	-0.7	238
Monterey, Calif. ....	155.6	1.9	130	828	250	2.1	43
Santa Barbara, Calif. ....	182.4	2.5	90	936	150	-3.0	321
Santa Clara, Calif. ....	965.7	4.1	24	1,972	3	3.4	17
Santa Cruz, Calif. ....	92.1	2.0	122	907	169	6.5	1
Solano, Calif. ....	127.4	2.0	122	1,015	88	2.9	22
Sonoma, Calif. ....	189.5	5.2	3	913	161	-0.7	238
Stanislaus, Calif. ....	165.7	2.4	98	801	278	1.1	95
Tulare, Calif. ....	145.7	3.5	42	696	324	0.0	186
Ventura, Calif. ....	314.0	1.2	188	978	115	-0.6	232
Yolo, Calif. ....	91.3	2.4	98	1,021	84	2.3	36

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: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in California, fourth quarter 2013**

Area	Employment December 2013	Average Weekly Wage (1)
United States (2) .....	136,129,407	\$1,000
California .....	15,650,283	1,175
Alameda .....	687,327	1,267
Alpine .....	566	998
Amador .....	11,164	800
Butte .....	75,496	737
Calaveras .....	7,987	690
Colusa .....	8,066	770
Contra Costa .....	339,626	1,191
Del Norte .....	7,878	686
El Dorado .....	50,089	844
Fresno .....	347,958	771
Glenn .....	8,337	701
Humboldt .....	46,506	700
Imperial .....	63,916	677
Inyo .....	7,515	757
Kern .....	303,943	849
Kings .....	41,488	763
Lake .....	14,784	643
Lassen .....	10,251	832
Los Angeles .....	4,176,840	1,161
Madera .....	46,875	757
Marin .....	111,990	1,213
Mariposa .....	4,742	624
Mendocino .....	30,637	687
Merced .....	70,859	716
Modoc .....	2,454	668
Mono .....	6,748	687
Monterey .....	155,593	828
Napa .....	68,467	971
Nevada .....	29,161	808
Orange .....	1,463,052	1,114
Placer .....	139,626	978
Plumas .....	5,593	765
Riverside .....	613,241	773
Sacramento .....	610,706	1,069
San Benito .....	14,835	800
San Bernardino .....	653,236	824
San Diego .....	1,330,230	1,107
San Francisco .....	630,472	1,753
San Joaquin .....	212,033	815
San Luis Obispo .....	107,630	805
San Mateo .....	366,078	2,724
Santa Barbara .....	182,433	936
Santa Clara .....	965,742	1,972
Santa Cruz .....	92,068	907
Shasta .....	60,592	750
Sierra .....	556	714
Siskiyou .....	12,351	662
Solano .....	127,413	1,015
Sonoma .....	189,470	913
Stanislaus .....	165,723	801
Sutter .....	26,540	719
Tehama .....	15,862	719
Trinity .....	2,563	643
Tulare .....	145,655	696
Tuolumne .....	16,135	753

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in California, fourth quarter 2013 - Continued**

Area	Employment December 2013	Average Weekly Wage (1)
Ventura .....	314,013	978
Yolo.....	91,343	1,021
Yuba .....	16,489	820
<b>1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.</b>		
<b>2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.</b>		

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, fourth quarter 2013**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
United States <sup>(2)</sup> .....	136,129.4	1.8	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Alabama .....	1,866.5	1.0	851	34	-0.5	39
Alaska .....	315.1	0.0	1,022	14	1.6	7
Arizona .....	2,571.0	2.4	906	23	-0.5	39
Arkansas .....	1,154.3	-0.5	771	47	0.4	22
California .....	15,650.3	2.8	1,175	6	-0.9	43
Colorado .....	2,383.9	3.1	1,023	13	-0.9	43
Connecticut .....	1,661.2	0.3	1,238	4	-1.3	49
Delaware .....	419.6	1.8	1,035	9	-0.6	41
District of Columbia .....	727.3	0.6	1,638	1	-3.9	51
Florida .....	7,739.5	2.7	883	29	0.2	27
Georgia.....	3,986.9	2.5	924	21	-0.1	32
Hawaii.....	632.9	1.7	871	30	0.3	25
Idaho .....	634.5	2.6	754	50	3.0	2
Illinois .....	5,758.9	1.0	1,060	8	0.2	27
Indiana.....	2,896.9	1.6	814	40	-0.2	35
Iowa .....	1,510.9	1.4	834	38	1.6	7
Kansas .....	1,359.5	1.6	832	39	-0.4	38
Kentucky.....	1,818.0	1.2	804	42	0.2	27
Louisiana .....	1,911.6	0.9	889	26	0.5	20
Maine.....	586.8	0.8	786	46	1.7	5
Maryland.....	2,555.1	0.4	1,076	7	-0.9	43
Massachusetts .....	3,332.9	1.5	1,258	3	0.8	17
Michigan .....	4,072.4	2.0	952	20	-0.2	35
Minnesota.....	2,720.6	1.7	988	16	0.3	25
Mississippi.....	1,108.1	1.1	729	51	1.3	11
Missouri .....	2,670.4	1.1	861	32	-0.2	35
Montana .....	440.0	1.3	760	48	0.4	22
Nebraska .....	944.3	1.4	796	43	-0.1	32
Nevada .....	1,180.5	3.0	884	28	0.7	18
New Hampshire.....	629.3	1.4	1,017	15	-0.8	42
New Jersey.....	3,887.5	1.2	1,186	5	1.1	14
New Mexico .....	796.2	-0.1	814	40	1.4	10
New York .....	8,888.6	1.7	1,266	2	-1.1	48
North Carolina .....	4,045.5	1.9	860	33	0.7	18
North Dakota .....	435.0	3.3	980	17	3.8	1
Ohio .....	5,175.4	1.4	887	27	0.0	30
Oklahoma .....	1,581.3	0.6	851	34	-0.1	32
Oregon .....	1,699.6	2.5	894	25	2.6	3
Pennsylvania .....	5,650.3	0.4	976	18	0.4	22
Rhode Island .....	462.7	1.4	960	19	1.5	9
South Carolina.....	1,875.8	2.3	793	44	1.0	15
South Dakota.....	407.1	1.3	759	49	1.3	11
Tennessee .....	2,758.3	1.8	895	24	-0.9	43
Texas .....	11,246.3	2.6	1,027	12	0.0	30
Utah .....	1,284.7	3.1	836	37	-0.9	43
Vermont.....	308.5	0.6	848	36	2.3	4
Virginia.....	3,670.0	0.1	1,028	11	-1.3	49
Washington.....	2,976.0	2.5	1,034	10	1.7	5
West Virginia .....	710.1	-0.6	792	45	0.5	20
Wisconsin .....	2,751.8	1.0	865	31	1.2	13
Wyoming .....	279.2	0.6	917	22	1.0	15
Puerto Rico.....	958.3	-2.3	551	(3)	0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	-3.6	754	(3)	2.4	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.



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.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

NOTE: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in California, fourth quarter 2013

