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## **County Employment and Wages in Alaska – Second Quarter 2016**

Employment decreased 2.1 percent in Alaska's only large county, Anchorage Borough, 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 Richard Holden noted that in June 2016, Anchorage Borough's employment totaled 152,300 and accounted for 45 percent of total employment within the state.

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

The average weekly wage in Anchorage Borough was \$1,050 in the second quarter of 2016, a decrease of 1.8 percent from the second quarter of 2015. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 2.2 percent over the year to \$989 in the second quarter of 2016. (See [table 1.](#))

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 28 boroughs in Alaska with employment below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from \$1,809 to \$542 during the second quarter of 2016. (See [table 2.](#))

### **Large county wage changes**

Anchorage Borough's 1.8-percent wage decline from the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter 2016 placed 333<sup>rd</sup> among the nation's 344 largest counties. (See [table 1.](#)) Nationwide, 36 of the largest counties had wage declines during the period. Ventura, Calif., had 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).

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).

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

Anchorage Borough's \$1,050 average weekly wage placed in the top 25 percent in the nation, ranking 70<sup>th</sup> in the second quarter of 2016.

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.

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 wage, followed by the Texas counties of Cameron (\$602), Hidalgo (\$626), and Webb (\$659).

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

Alaska consists of 16 smaller boroughs, 11 census areas, and 1 municipality, each of which is considered a county level equivalent. Twenty-two of the 28 counties in Alaska with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$989. The exceptions were North Slope Borough (\$1,809), Northwest Arctic Borough (\$1,226), Southeast Fairbanks Census Area (\$1,171), Aleutian East Borough (\$1,029), Aleutian West Census Area (\$1,009), and Fairbanks North Star Borough (\$999). The Kuskokwim Census Area had the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, averaging \$542. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 29 counties in Alaska were considered, 4 had wages below \$700. Eight counties had average weekly wages ranging from \$700 to \$799, 6 had wages from \$800 to \$899, 5 had wages from \$900 to \$999, and 6 had wages above \$1,000. (See [chart 1.](#))

### **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 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 2015* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbuln15.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbuln15.htm). The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

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**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/](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: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in Alaska, second quarter 2016**

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage <sup>(1)</sup>			
	June 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2015-16 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level <sup>(3)</sup>	Percent change, second quarter 2015-16 <sup>(2)</sup>	National ranking by percent change <sup>(3)</sup>
United States <sup>(4)</sup> .....	142,717.2	1.5	--	\$989	--	2.2	--
Alaska.....	338.7	-2.4	--	1,011	10	-1.7	49
Anchorage Borough, Alaska.....	152.3	-2.1	335	1,050	70	-1.8	333

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 counties in Alaska, second quarter 2016**

Area	Employment June 2016	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2) .....	142,717,157	\$989
Alaska.....	338,704	1,011
Aleutian East Borough.....	2,530	1,029
Aleutian West Census Area.....	3,639	1,009
Anchorage Borough .....	152,292	1,050
Bethel Census Area.....	7,181	794
Bristol Bay Borough.....	1,747	927
Denali Borough.....	3,582	754
Dillingham Census Area .....	3,396	791
Fairbanks North Star Borough.....	36,827	999
Haines Borough.....	1,197	628
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area.....	1,052	677
Juneau Borough .....	18,245	978
Kenai Peninsula Borough.....	21,707	893
Ketchikan Gateway Borough.....	8,297	835
Kodiak Island Borough .....	6,294	824
Kusilvak Census Area .....	2,200	542
Lake and Peninsula Borough .....	938	720
Mantanuska-Susitna Borough.....	23,799	816
Nome Census Area .....	3,746	946
North Slope Borough.....	13,363	1,809
Northwest Arctic Borough.....	2,937	1,226
Petersburg Census Area .....	1,402	741
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area.....	2,282	800
Sitka Borough.....	4,448	832
Skagway Municipality .....	1,459	649
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area.....	2,682	1,171
Valdez-Cordova Census Area .....	5,937	972
Wrangell City and Borough .....	872	753
Yakutat Borough.....	315	734
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area.....	2,133	765

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: 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 <sup>(1)</sup>			
	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 <sup>(2)</sup> .....	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 <sup>(1)</sup>			
	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)

Footnotes:

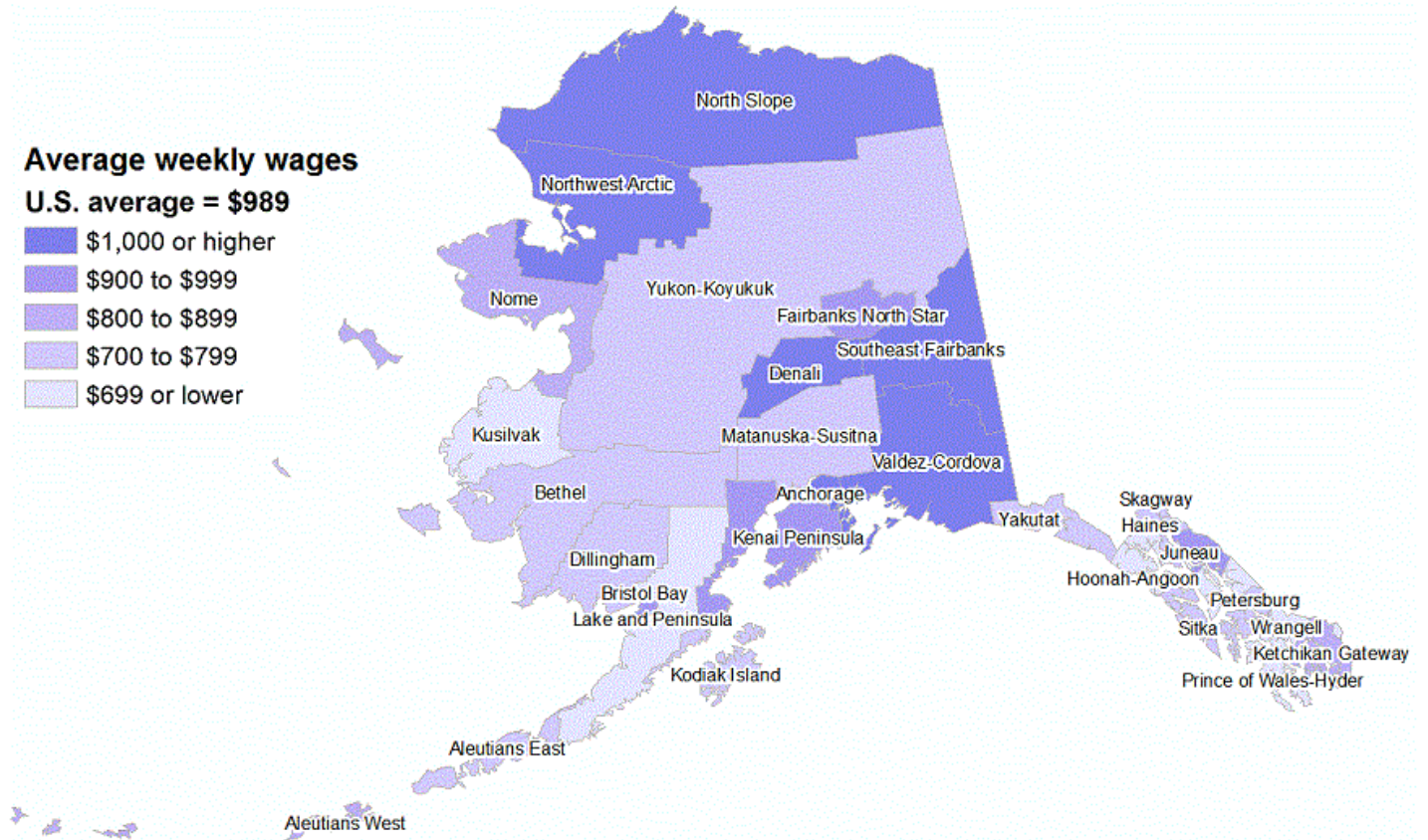
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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: 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 Alaska, second quarter 2016**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.