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County Employment and Wages in Arizona – Second Quarter 2016

Employment increased in both of Arizona's 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 Richard Holden noted that the over-the-year employment gains were 2.9 percent in Maricopa County and 1.1 percent in Pima County. (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 these counties with a loss of 8.3 percent.

In Arizona's largest county, Maricopa, the employment level was 1,827,400 in June 2016. The other large county, Pima, had an employment level of 351,900. Together, these two largest Arizona counties accounted for 83.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

Maricopa County had average weekly wage gains from the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter of 2016 (2.2 percent), while wages in Pima County were unchanged. (See [table 1](#).) Maricopa County also had the highest average weekly wage at \$970. 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 13 counties in Arizona with employment below 75,000. Twelve of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average in June 2016. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Maricopa County's 2.2-percent rise in average weekly wages from the second quarter of 2015 to the second quarter of 2016 ranked 181st among the nation's 344 largest counties. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, 304 of the 344 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. McLean, Ill., had 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 had wage declines from the previous year. 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).

Large county average weekly wages

Weekly wages in the state's two large counties were below the national average of \$989 per week. In the second quarter of 2016, average wages in Maricopa County (\$970) ranked 120th and Pima County (\$827) ranked 259th, both near the middle of the national rankings of the 344 large counties. (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 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.

Average weekly wages in Arizona's smaller counties

Among the 13 smaller counties in Arizona – those with employment below 75,000 – 12 reported average weekly wages below the national average of \$989. The exception was Greenlee County with an average weekly wage of \$1,125. Among the remaining counties, Cochise (\$824) had the highest weekly wages, while La Paz had the lowest (\$668). (See [table 2](#).)

When all 15 counties in Arizona were considered, 2 had average wages under \$700 per week, 8 registered wages from \$700 to \$799, 3 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 2 had above \$900. (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.

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.

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.

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 2 largest counties in Arizona, 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 | -- |
| Arizona | 2,619.6 | 2.6 | -- | 921 | 22 | 1.9 | 33 |
| Maricopa, Ariz..... | 1,827.4 | 2.9 | 66 | 970 | 120 | 2.2 | 181 |
| Pima, Ariz. | 351.9 | 1.1 | 204 | 827 | 259 | 0.0 | 305 |

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 Arizona, second quarter 2016

| Area | Employment June 2016 | Average Weekly Wage(1) |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| United States(2) | 142,717,157 | \$989 |
| Arizona | 2,619,632 | 921 |
| Apache | 17,481 | 795 |
| Cochise | 33,496 | 824 |
| Coconino | 61,444 | 791 |
| Gila | 14,604 | 738 |
| Graham | 8,553 | 747 |
| Greenlee..... | 4,470 | 1,125 |
| La Paz | 5,789 | 668 |
| Maricopa..... | 1,827,438 | 970 |
| Mohave..... | 46,656 | 689 |
| Navajo | 28,358 | 716 |
| Pima | 351,915 | 827 |
| Pinal | 59,678 | 759 |
| Santa Cruz | 13,374 | 812 |
| Yavapai..... | 61,346 | 710 |
| Yuma | 58,472 | 708 |

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 ⁽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) |

Footnotes:

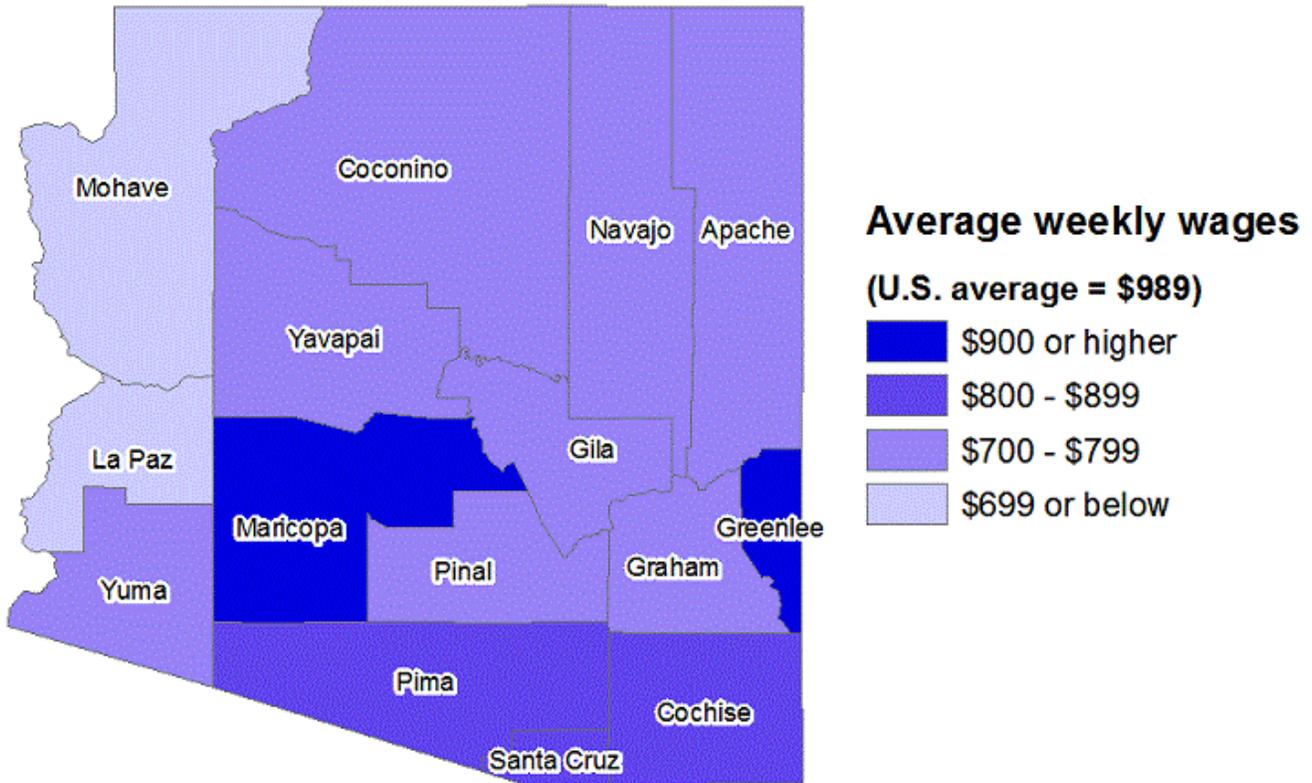
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 Arizona, second quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.