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## **AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT IN OKLAHOMA SECOND QUARTER 2007**

In the second quarter of 2007, weekly wages averaged \$742 in Tulsa County and \$729 in Oklahoma County according to data released by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the weekly wage levels in both of Oklahoma's large counties were above the statewide wage of \$665, but below the national average of \$820. Tulsa and Oklahoma are the only large counties in the State that had 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2006 annual average employment. (See table A.)

### Wage levels

Tulsa County's average weekly wage ranked 189<sup>th</sup> and Oklahoma County's, 206<sup>th</sup>, among the 328 large counties in the United States in the second quarter of 2007, placing them in the bottom half of the national ranking. However, across the country, there were about twice as many large counties (218) with an average weekly wage below the national average compared to those counties (110) with a higher-than-average wage during this period. (See table A.)

**Table A. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 2 largest counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2007 (2)**

Area	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	June 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2006-2007 (4)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, second quarter 2006-07 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	137,018.2	1.2	\$820	--	4.6	--
Oklahoma	1,538.5	1.6	665	40	4.1	31
Oklahoma, Okla.	421.3	0.7	729	206	2.5	265
Tulsa, Okla.	347.4	2.3	742	189	2.9	244

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

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

(4) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(5) Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

(6) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Among the 328 large counties in the United States, New York County, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$1,540. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,504, followed by Clayton, Ga. (\$1,358), Washington, D.C. (\$1,357), and Arlington, Va. (\$1,352). Three of the 10 counties with the highest wages in the nation were located in the greater New York metropolitan area (New York, N.Y.; Fairfield, Conn.; and Somerset, N.J.), 3 were located in or around the San Francisco area (San Francisco, Santa Clara, and San Mateo, all in California), 2 were located in or around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Va.), while Clayton, Ga., was part of the Atlanta metropolitan area. Rounding out the top 10 was Suffolk County, Mass., part of the Boston metropolitan area.

At the other end of the spectrum, the lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron, Texas (\$515), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$518), Webb, Texas, and Horry, S.C. (\$545 each), and Yakima, Wash. (\$555). The wage levels in the five lowest-ranked counties were less than 40 percent of the wage level reported for the highest-ranked county in the nation, New York.

On a statewide level, Oklahoma's weekly wage averaged \$665 in the second quarter of 2007, ranking it 40<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Oklahoma's weekly wage was above those of neighboring Arkansas (\$639, 46<sup>th</sup>) and the Plains states of North Dakota (\$619, 48<sup>th</sup>) and South Dakota (\$590, 51<sup>st</sup>). However, the average weekly wage in Oklahoma was below the wage levels in the bordering states of Texas (\$827, 15<sup>th</sup>) and Kansas (\$702, 33<sup>rd</sup>). (See table 1.)

Nationally, the four highest average weekly wages at the state level were in the District of Columbia (\$1,357), Connecticut (\$1,033), New York (\$1,020), and Massachusetts (\$1,008). Wages in this group were more than 20 percent above the national average of \$820 per week. At the other end of the rankings, four states reported wage levels 75 percent or less of national earnings: South Dakota (\$590), Mississippi (\$609), Montana (\$611), and North Dakota (\$619).

#### Over-the-year wage and employment changes

Tulsa County recorded wage growth of 2.9 percent from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007, placing it 244<sup>th</sup> among large counties nationwide. Oklahoma County, with a 2.5-percent wage gain, ranked 265<sup>th</sup>. The county wage increases in Tulsa and Oklahoma lagged behind both the national (4.6 percent) and State (4.1 percent) rates. (See table A.)

The State's 4.1-percent increase in average weekly wages from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007, ranked 31<sup>st</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Wyoming ranked first with an 8.0-percent wage gain, followed by Utah (6.6 percent) and Georgia (6.5 percent). The slowest rates of wage growth were registered in Delaware (2.2 percent), Idaho (2.3 percent), and Rhode Island (2.5 percent). No state recorded an over-the-year decline in average weekly wages during the period. (See table 1.)

Nationally, Clayton, Ga., led the large counties in over-the-year wage growth with an increase of 87.3 percent from the second quarter of 2006. Queens, N.Y., was second with growth of 12.7 percent, followed by the counties of Rockingham, N.H. (10.1 percent), Ventura, Calif. (9.2 Percent), and Lake, Ill. (9.1 percent). The high average weekly wage growth rate for the county of Clayton, Ga., was related to increases in wage disbursements in the trade, transportation, and utilities supersector. Six counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Among the five largest decreases in wages, Saginaw, Mich., had the largest decline (-5.2 percent), followed by the counties of Orleans, La. (-2.9 percent), Lake, Fla. (-1.1 percent), Genesee, Mich. (-1.0 percent), and Lorain, Ohio (-0.9 percent).

While the wage gain in Tulsa County was below average, employment rose 2.3 percent from June 2006 to June 2007, nearly twice the national average of 1.2 percent, and the 62<sup>nd</sup> fastest gain in the United States. With an increase of 0.7 percent, employment in Oklahoma County rose less than the U.S. average and ranked 176<sup>th</sup> among the large counties. Combined, the number of employed in these two counties accounted for one-half of the State's employment total, which rose 1.6 percent from the second quarter of 2006, above the U.S. gain of 1.2 percent. (See table A.)

A total of 235 large counties in the United States experienced employment increases from June 2006 to June 2007, but only 126 of these had over-the-year gains above the national average of 1.2 percent. Orleans County, La., had the largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment with a 10.8-percent gain. Harrison, Miss., had the next largest increase, 10.3 percent, followed by the counties of Utah, Utah (6.7 percent), Williamson, Tenn. (6.4 percent), and Wake, N.C. (5.9 percent). The large employment gains in Orleans and Harrison Counties reflected the continued recovery from the substantial job losses that occurred in 2005 and 2006, which were related to Hurricane Katrina. Employment declined in 77 counties across the country, with the largest percentage decline occurring in Trumbull County, Ohio (-6.3 percent).

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 reports submitted by employers subject to unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 8.9 million employer reports cover 137.0 million full- and part-time jobs. The average weekly wage is computed by dividing the total quarterly payroll of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. This number then is 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, counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>; however, data in QCEW press releases have been adjusted (see Note below) and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

### Additional statistics and other information

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2006 edition of this bulletin will contain selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2007 version of this news release. The 2006 edition will include the data on a CD for enhanced access and usability with the printed booklet containing selected graphic representations of QCEW data; the data tables themselves will be published exclusively in electronic formats as PDFs.

*Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2006* will be available for sale in early 2008 from the United States Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250, telephone 866-512-1800, outside Washington, D.C. Within Washington, D.C., the telephone number is 202-512-1800. The fax number is 202-512-2104.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient BLS Web site location, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.htm>.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Covered Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Dallas Information Office at 214-767-6970 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT. This release is available in text and PDF format on the Dallas BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/ro6/home.htm>.

### **TECHNICAL NOTE**

QCEW data are the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. For this reason, county and industry data are not designed to be used as a time series.

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. The potential differences result from several causes. Differences between BLS and State published data may be due to the 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 (1) employment and wages by state, second quarter 2007 (2)

State	Employment	Average weekly wage (3)			
	June 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	137,018.2	\$820	-	4.6	-
Alabama	1,965.4	697	38	3.6	38
Alaska	325.8	832	13	5.6	9
Arizona	2,612.4	786	20	4.4	23
Arkansas	1,186.5	639	46	4.2	28
California	15,832.5	935	6	5.4	11
Colorado	2,326.9	832	13	4.8	15
Connecticut	1,714.2	1,033	2	6.4	4
Delaware	430.2	870	9	2.2	51
District of Columbia	683.2	1,357	1	4.3	26
Florida	7,894.2	743	23	3.2	45
Georgia	4,091.5	792	19	6.5	3
Hawaii	631.2	736	27	4.2	28
Idaho	679.1	626	47	2.3	50
Illinois	5,956.3	874	8	4.4	23
Indiana	2,933.4	702	33	2.6	48
Iowa	1,518.6	664	42	3.9	35
Kansas	1,370.7	702	33	4.8	15
Kentucky	1,828.2	700	35	4.2	28
Louisiana	1,880.2	711	31	4.1	31
Maine	619.6	658	44	4.1	31
Maryland	2,584.9	899	7	5.3	12
Massachusetts	3,300.7	1,008	4	4.8	15
Michigan	4,252.9	807	17	2.9	46
Minnesota	2,730.9	834	12	5.6	9
Mississippi	1,137.4	609	50	3.6	38
Missouri	2,764.6	727	29	3.4	43
Montana	449.8	611	49	6.3	5
Nebraska	930.9	654	45	3.5	42
Nevada	1,297.9	776	21	3.7	36
New Hampshire	643.7	823	16	6.3	5
New Jersey	4,066.7	989	5	4.3	26
New Mexico	833.3	686	39	5.2	13
New York	8,688.8	1,020	3	5.9	7
North Carolina	4,090.5	718	30	4.1	31
North Dakota	347.7	619	48	4.7	19
Ohio	5,384.6	740	25	3.4	43
Oklahoma	1,538.5	665	40	4.1	31
Oregon	1,761.6	742	24	4.5	22
Pennsylvania	5,740.3	802	18	4.6	20
Rhode Island	492.9	774	22	2.5	49
South Carolina	1,917.4	665	40	2.9	46
South Dakota	404.3	590	51	4.8	15
Tennessee	2,768.7	729	28	3.6	38
Texas	10,296.1	827	15	5.9	7
Utah	1,233.7	698	36	6.6	2
Vermont	306.6	698	36	5.0	14
Virginia	3,731.5	859	10	4.4	23
Washington	2,989.8	835	11	4.6	20
West Virginia	717.1	659	43	3.6	38
Wisconsin	2,845.8	709	32	3.7	36
Wyoming	288.3	739	26	8.0	1
Puerto Rico	1,020.7	460	(5)	6.0	(5)
Virgin Islands	46.9	707	(5)	4.1	(5)

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

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

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(5) Data not included in the national ranking.