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Average Weekly Wages in Mississippi: Second Quarter 2007 Hinds County records 3.6 percent wage growth

The average weekly wage in Hinds County was \$714 in the second quarter of 2007, 3.6 percent higher than it was one year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that Hinds' average weekly wage was \$106 below the national level of \$820 and that its wage growth was lower than the nationwide increase of 4.6 percent. The only other large county in Mississippi—that is, it had 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2006 annual average employment—was Harrison County. Harrison County recorded an average weekly wage of \$653, a 0.9-percent increase from one year earlier.

Nationally, there were 328 large counties of which 218 had average weekly wages below the national average. Hinds County's wage ranked 227th and Harrison County placed 288th, putting both counties in the bottom quartile of the national ranking.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 110 of the 328 largest counties in the U.S. New York County, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$1,540. Santa Clara, Calif., was second highest with an average weekly wage of \$1,504, followed by Clayton County, Ga. (\$1,358), Washington, D.C. (\$1,357), and Arlington, Va. (\$1,352).

At the other end of the spectrum, Cameron County, Texas, reported the lowest average weekly wage, \$515, in the U.S., followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$518), Horry, S.C., and Webb, Texas (\$545, each), and Yakima, Wash. (\$555).

Over the year, the national average weekly wage rose by 4.6 percent. Among the largest counties, Clayton County, Ga., led the nation in wage growth with an increase of 87.3 percent from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007. Queens, N.Y., was second with 12.7-percent growth, followed by the counties of Rockingham, N.H. (10.1 percent), Ventura, Calif. (9.2 percent), and Lake, Ill. (9.1 percent).

Six large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Among the five largest decreases in wages, Saginaw, Mich., had the greatest 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).

State Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wage in Mississippi was \$609 in the second quarter of 2007, \$211 below that for the nation. The five highest wage levels in the U.S. were in the District of Columbia (\$1,357), Connecticut (\$1,033), New York (\$1,020), Massachusetts (\$1,008), and New Jersey (\$989). Average weekly wages in this group were more than 20 percent above that for the nation.

Average weekly wages in Mississippi rose 3.6 percent over the year, placing the State in the bottom third of the national ranking in wage growth at 38th. Wyoming experienced a wage gain of 8.0 percent from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007, higher than any other state. Utah was second with 6.6-percent growth. Rounding out the top five were Georgia (6.5 percent), Connecticut (6.4 percent), and Montana and New Hampshire (6.3 percent, each). The smallest wage gains were in Delaware (2.2 percent) and Idaho (2.3 percent). No state experienced an over-the-year decline in wages.

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 state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 8.9 million employer reports cover 137.0 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 <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.

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 the Business Employment dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2007 version of this news release. As with the 2005 edition, this edition will include the data on a CD for enhanced access and usability with the printed booklet containing selected graphic representation 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 or by calling 1-866-512-1800. Also, the 2006 bulletin will be available in a portable document format (PDF) on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn06.htm>. In addition, the quarterly press release, County Employment and Wages, presents employment and wage data for the largest counties in the U.S. and is available at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>.

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 Census of Employment and Wages data, as well as other Bureau data, contact the Southeast Information Office at 404-893-4222 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient Web site location, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.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 in the United States and the largest counties in Mississippi, second quarter 2007 (2)

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	June 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, second quarter 2006-07 (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (4)	Percent change, second quarter 2006-07 (5)	National ranking by percent change (4)
United States (6)	137,018.2	1.2	\$820	--	4.6	--
Mississippi	1,137.4	0.9	609	50	3.6	38
Harrison, Miss.	86.4	10.3	653	288	0.9	306
Hinds, Miss.	128.1	-0.6	714	227	3.6	194

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

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

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

Table 2. 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.