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FOR RELEASE:
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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN NEW MEXICO FOURTH QUARTER 2007

Employment in Bernalillo County stood at 337,200 in December 2007, a 0.5-percent increase from December 2006, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that this was somewhat slower than the 0.8-percent national increase and well below the statewide average of 1.1 percent. Bernalillo was the only large county in New Mexico—that is, it had 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2006 annual average employment. (See table A.)

The average weekly wage in Bernalillo County was 3.3 percent higher than it was one year earlier. This rate of gain was slower than the increase in average weekly wages for the nation (4.2 percent) and for the State (4.8 percent).

Table A. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States, New Mexico, and Bernalillo County, fourth quarter 2007 (2)

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	December 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2006-07(4)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, fourth quarter 2006-07 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	137,027.3	0.8	\$898	--	4.2	--
New Mexico	831.7	1.1	738	38	4.8	18
Bernalillo, NM	337.2	0.5	785	209	3.3	191

(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.

Wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 32 counties in New Mexico with employment below 75,000. (See table 1.) Los Alamos County had the highest weekly wage in the State at \$1,222, followed by Eddy and Lea Counties, both averaging \$860 in the fourth quarter of 2007. Guadalupe County reported the lowest wage level in the State at \$451 followed by Sierra at \$490.

When all 33 counties in New Mexico were considered, only Los Alamos had an average wage exceeding that for the nation while 6 other counties had weekly wages exceeding \$750 per week. Fifteen counties reported weekly wages between \$550 and \$750, while the remaining 11 counties had wages below \$550.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Among the 328 largest counties in the United States, Bernalillo County's average wage placed in the bottom half of the national rankings, at 209th. Average weekly wages were higher than the \$898 national average in 106 of the 328 largest counties in the United States. New York County, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$1,862. Santa Clara County, Calif., was second with an average wage of \$1,700, followed by Fairfield, Conn. (\$1,575), and Suffolk, Mass. (\$1,546).

At the other end of the wage scale, the lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron, Texas (\$555), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$562), Horry, S.C. (\$582), Webb, Texas (\$590), and Yakima, Wash. (\$596). The wage levels in each of the five lowest-ranked counties was less than one-third of the wage level reported for the highest-ranked county in the nation, New York.

Over the year, the national average weekly wage rose by 4.2 percent. Among the largest counties, Bernalillo County's rate of wage growth placed in the bottom half of the national rankings at 191st. Pulaski County, Ark., led the nation in wage growth with an increase of 26.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007. Ranking second in wage growth nationwide was Williamson County, Texas, with a gain of 16.5 percent, followed by the counties of Lake, Ill. (15.6 percent), Douglas, Colo. (12.6 percent), and Westmoreland, Pa. (9.8 percent). Of the 328 large counties, 8 experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages, with Rockingham, N.H., registering the greatest decline (-12.4 percent), followed by Trumbull, Ohio (-7.2 percent), Sedgwick, Kan. (-4.1 percent), and Lake, Fla. (-3.9 percent).

State Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wage in New Mexico was \$738 in the fourth quarter of 2007, ranking 38th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. New Mexico's wage level was above that in neighboring Oklahoma (\$721, 42nd), close to Utah's (\$758, 34th), but well below wages in other nearby states including Colorado (\$927, 9th), Texas (\$911, 13th), and Arizona (\$827, 22nd). (See table 2.)

Nationwide, average weekly wages exceeded \$1,000 in the District of Columbia (\$1,506), New York (\$1,152), Connecticut (\$1,149), Massachusetts (\$1,133), New Jersey (\$1,092) and California (\$1,035). Average weekly wages in this group were 15 percent or more above the national level. At the other end of the scale, three states reported wages less than 75 percent of the national average: Montana (\$659), Mississippi (\$654), and South Dakota (\$647).

Average weekly wages in New Mexico rose 4.8 percent over the year, as did wages in California, ranking 18th highest in growth in the nation. Arkansas experienced a wage gain of 9.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007, higher than any other state. North Dakota was second with growth of 7.3 percent, followed by Wyoming (7.1 percent), Nevada (6.7 percent), and Oklahoma (6.2 percent). In contrast to the high wage-growth states, wages in New Hampshire slipped 0.3 percent over the year.

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 9.1 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, 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.

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 contains 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. This edition includes 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 PDF formats at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn06.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 Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) 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 on the Dallas BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/ro6/home.htm.

TECHNICAL NOTE

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 state's 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 all counties in New Mexico, fourth quarter 2007 (2)

Area	Employment December 2007	Average weekly wage (3) fourth quarter 2007
United States (4)	137,027,250	\$898
New Mexico	831,713	\$738
Bernalillo County	337,226	\$785
Catron County	597	\$523
Chaves County	22,540	\$607
Cibola County	8,536	\$566
Colfax County	5,176	\$547
Curry County	16,999	\$551
De Baca County	502	\$590
Dona Ana County	68,765	\$631
Eddy County	22,841	\$860
Grant County	10,364	\$579
Guadalupe County	1,330	\$451
Harding County	194	\$552
Hidalgo County	1,554	\$671
Lea County County	29,431	\$860
Lincoln County	6,857	\$526
Los Alamos County	17,487	\$1,222
Luna County	7,659	\$544
Mckinley County	22,009	\$580
Mora County	902	\$556
Otero County	18,147	\$582
Quay County	2,724	\$491
Rio Arriba County	11,171	\$566
Roosevelt County	6,910	\$528
San Juan County	52,488	\$787
San Miguel County	8,751	\$559
Sandoval County	28,847	\$780
Santa Fe County	66,530	\$798
Sierra County	3,102	\$490
Socorro County	5,671	\$647
Taos County	11,582	\$546
Torrance County	3,430	\$572
Union County	1,333	\$541
Valencia County	16,039	\$532

(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.

Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2007(2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	December 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2006-07	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	137,027.3	0.8	\$898	-	4.2	-
Alabama	1,971.0	1.2	762	33	3.3	39
Alaska	299.4	1.0	877	16	4.9	15
Arizona	2,693.3	-0.1	827	22	2.6	46
Arkansas	1,187.6	0.7	712	44	9.2	1
California	15,794.7	0.8	1,035	6	4.8	18
Colorado	2,329.9	2.0	927	9	5.7	7
Connecticut	1,717.8	0.7	1,149	3	4.5	26
Delaware	428.8	0.3	926	10	3.3	39
District of Columbia	681.6	0.7	1,506	1	5.8	6
Florida	8,024.3	-1.3	810	25	2.8	43
Georgia	4,111.5	0.6	835	21	2.8	43
Hawaii	637.2	0.7	793	28	4.1	29
Idaho	660.2	1.7	686	47	2.1	50
Illinois	5,933.0	0.6	975	8	5.1	13
Indiana	2,929.1	0.1	745	35	3.0	42
Iowa	1,498.5	0.7	732	39	4.9	15
Kansas	1,372.7	1.2	745	35	2.6	46
Kentucky	1,830.5	0.8	732	39	3.4	38
Louisiana	1,903.1	2.3	783	29	4.7	20
Maine	608.8	0.8	707	45	4.1	29
Maryland	2,580.1	0.4	986	7	4.7	20
Massachusetts	3,270.9	0.7	1,133	4	5.4	8
Michigan	4,194.9	-1.2	873	17	2.5	49
Minnesota	2,708.7	0.8	883	15	5.1	13
Mississippi	1,148.9	0.7	654	50	3.8	34
Missouri	2,746.2	0.3	780	30	5.3	11
Montana	440.4	2.1	659	49	5.4	8
Nebraska	925.2	1.3	723	41	5.2	12
Nevada	1,290.8	0.4	872	19	6.7	4
New Hampshire	638.8	0.3	914	12	-0.3	51
New Jersey	4,027.4	0.2	1,092	5	3.5	36
New Mexico	831.7	1.1	738	38	4.8	18
New York	8,762.7	1.4	1,152	2	4.2	27
North Carolina	4,127.7	1.5	777	31	3.5	36
North Dakota	347.7	2.0	690	46	7.3	2
Ohio	5,336.8	-0.2	795	27	2.8	43
Oklahoma	1,556.1	1.3	721	42	6.2	5
Oregon	1,740.5	0.9	798	26	4.6	22
Pennsylvania	5,712.8	0.5	873	17	4.2	27
Rhode Island	480.9	-1.5	838	20	2.6	46
South Carolina	1,904.0	1.0	716	43	4.1	29
South Dakota	393.5	1.7	647	51	5.4	8
Tennessee	2,790.3	0.9	813	24	4.0	33
Texas	10,460.8	3.0	911	13	4.6	22
Utah	1,241.8	2.8	758	34	4.6	22
Vermont	309.1	-0.2	743	37	4.9	15
Virginia	3,709.0	0.7	921	11	3.8	34
Washington	2,936.0	2.6	885	14	4.6	22
West Virginia	716.8	0.4	683	48	4.1	29
Wisconsin	2,803.9	0.3	769	32	3.1	41
Wyoming	279.6	3.0	815	23	7.1	3
Puerto Rico	1,055.2	-1.4	517	(5)	4.4	(5)
Virgin Islands	46.0	0.6	738	(5)	3.9	(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.