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## **County Employment and Wages in Minnesota Third Quarter 2007**

The average weekly wage in Ramsey County increased 5.5 percent from the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007, the largest advance among Minnesota's seven counties with employment of 75,000 or more (as measured by 2006 annual average employment.) Hennepin County's 5.4-percent wage growth was the second fastest in the State. Hennepin County also had the highest average weekly wage level in Minnesota at \$1,043 followed by the counties of Olmsted (\$904) and Ramsey (\$896). (See table 1.) Regional Commissioner Jay A. Mousa noted that among Minnesota's seven largest counties, only Ramsey and Hennepin reported wage growth above the national increase of 4.3 percent. Three counties—Hennepin, Olmsted, and Ramsey—had weekly wages that exceeded the national average of \$818.

Among the seven largest counties in Minnesota, employment was highest in Hennepin County (849,500) and lowest in Stearns County (82,800). Four counties—Stearns, St. Louis, Dakota, and Olmsted—had over-the-year employment growth above the 0.9 percent national average.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 80 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000. All of the State's smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national level. (See table 2.)

### **County Wage levels**

In Hennepin County, wages were \$225 or 27.5 percent above the national average, ranking it 22<sup>nd</sup> among the 328 largest counties in the U.S. Wages in Olmsted and Ramsey Counties were \$86 and \$78 above the national average and ranked 59<sup>th</sup> and 62<sup>nd</sup>, respectively. All three counties were in the top quarter of the nationwide rankings by wage level.

At the other end of the wage spectrum, Stearns and St. Louis Counties reported the lowest average weekly wages among the State's largest counties, \$657 and \$667, respectively, ranking them 290<sup>th</sup> and 279<sup>th</sup> nationally. Both of these Minnesota counties had wage levels in the bottom quarter of the national ranking.

Across the country, average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 112 of the largest 328 U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,585. New York County, N.Y., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,544, followed by Washington, D.C. (\$1,376), Arlington, Va. (\$1,364), and San Mateo, Calif. (\$1,322).

Nationwide, there were 215 counties with an average weekly wage below the national average in the third quarter of 2007. The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$518), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$529), Horry, S.C. (\$536), Webb, Texas (\$548), and Yakima, Wash. (\$568).

### **County Wage Changes**

As noted, only two of Minnesota's seven largest counties recorded over-the-year wage growth at a pace greater than the national average increase of 4.3 percent. Ramsey County's 5.5-percent increase ranked 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation and Hennepin County's 5.4-percent increase ranked 55<sup>th</sup> among the 328 large counties nationwide. (See table 1.) The State's five remaining large counties—Dakota, Anoka, Olmsted, Stearns, and St. Louis, experienced wage increases ranging from 2.1 to 4.2 percent over the year.

Among the largest counties in the nation, Clayton County, Ga., led the nation in growth in average weekly wages, with an increase of 23.9 percent from the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007. Muscogee, Ga., was second with growth of 12.1 percent, followed by the counties of Santa Clara, Calif. (11.8 percent), Rock Island, Ill. (11.5 percent), and Davidson, Tenn. (9.1 percent).

Over the year, 10 large counties experienced declines in average weekly wages. The five largest decreases in wages occurred in Trumbull, Ohio (-10.6 percent), Vanderburgh, Ind. (-6.1 percent), Genesee, Mich. (-4.0 percent), Saginaw, Mich. (-3.1 percent), and Montgomery, Ohio (-3.0 percent).

### **Wage Levels in Minnesota's Smaller Counties**

All of the 80 counties in Minnesota with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages below the national average. Carver County reported the highest wage level at \$803 followed by Scott County at \$708. Traverse County reported the lowest wage level at \$455.

When all 87 counties in Minnesota were considered, 55, or 63 percent, had wages below \$600. Twenty-eight of the counties reported average weekly wages from \$600 to \$799 in the third quarter of 2007, and 4 counties had wages above \$800. Three of these better-paid counties were located in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area and one was located in the Rochester Metropolitan Area.

### **State Average Weekly Wages**

At the state level, the average weekly wage in Minnesota was \$822, \$4 above the nationwide figure and ranked 15<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See table 3.) The five highest wage levels in the nation were in the District of Columbia (\$1,376), Connecticut (\$1,021), New York (\$1,009), Massachusetts (\$1,002), and New Jersey (\$965). Average weekly wages in these states were at least 18 percent higher than the national average. Three states had average earnings of less than 75 percent of the national average: South Dakota (\$598), Mississippi (\$607), and Montana (\$608).

Minnesota experienced wage growth of 4.6 percent from the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007, ranking 16<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and District of Columbia. The neighboring states of North Dakota and South Dakota reported larger over-the-year-wage increases of 5.8 and 4.7 percent, respectively. Wage growth in Iowa (4.2 percent) and Wisconsin (2.6 percent) was slower than in Minnesota. The highest over-the-year wage

gains in the third quarter of 2007 were recorded by Washington (6.7 percent), Connecticut (6.6 percent), and New York (6.1 percent). The only state to report a decline in average weekly wages was Rhode Island, where wages edged down 0.1 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 state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 9.0 million employer reports cover 136.2 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.

#### **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 fourth quarter 2006 version of this news release. This edition also includes the data on a CD for enhanced access and usability. As a result of this change, the printed booklet contains only selected graphic representation of QCEW data; the data tables themselves are published exclusively in electronic formats as PDF and fixed-width text files. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2006* is now available for sale from the United States Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents. On-line ordering information is available at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov/>. The 2006 bulletin is available in a portable document format (PDF) on the BLS Web site at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn06.htm](http://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 Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Midwest Information Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1880 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

#### **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 7 largest counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2007 (2)**

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	September 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2006-2007 (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (4)	Percent change, third quarter 2006-07 (5)	National ranking by percent change (4)
United States (6)	136,246.9	0.9	\$818	--	4.3	--
Minnesota	2,713.3	0.9	822	15	4.6	16
Anoka, Minn.	116.7	0.6	769	159	2.9	216
Dakota, Minn.	177.2	1.9	772	155	2.1	261
Hennepin, Minn.	849.5	0.8	1,043	22	5.4	55
Olmsted, Minn.	91.7	1.4	904	59	3.2	199
Ramsey, Minn.	337.0	0.9	896	62	5.5	48
St. Louis, Minn.	98.4	2.0	667	279	4.2	110
Stearns, Minn.	82.8	3.0	657	290	4.0	125

(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 in the United States and all of the counties in Minnesota, third quarter 2007 (2)**

Area	Employment September 2007	Average Weekly Wage (3)	Area	Employment September 2007	Average Weekly Wage (3)
United States (4)	136,246,900	\$818	Marshall	2,351	\$548
Minnesota	2,713,335	822	Martin	9,350	594
Aitkin	4,324	503	McLeod	18,352	674
Anoka	116,726	769	Meeker	6,959	590
Becker	13,183	523	Mille Lacs	9,823	529
Beltrami	18,338	579	Morrison	11,681	571
Benton	16,899	633	Mower	16,521	622
Big Stone	1,969	488	Murray	2,849	484
Blue Earth	37,307	617	Nicollet	14,610	627
Brown	14,267	598	Nobles	10,483	544
Carlton	13,559	631	Norman	1,821	493
Carver	32,351	803	Olmsted	91,690	904
Cass	10,225	466	Otter Tail	22,338	533
Chippewa	5,867	533	Pennington	9,213	619
Chisago	14,620	631	Pine	7,993	487
Clay	18,087	542	Pipestone	4,472	495
Clearwater	2,487	520	Polk	12,652	527
Cook	2,978	491	Pope	3,992	527
Cottonwood	5,080	516	Ramsey	337,001	896
Crow Wing	29,769	573	Red Lake	1,226	575
Dakota	177,151	772	Redwood	6,706	526
Dodge	5,624	644	Renville	6,125	545
Douglas	17,654	579	Rice	23,549	658
Faribault	5,647	653	Rock	3,301	522
Fillmore	6,423	486	Roseau	9,025	613
Freeborn	12,895	546	St. Louis	98,390	667
Goodhue	21,502	626	Scott	44,011	708
Grant	1,858	499	Sherburne	23,929	677
Hennepin	849,506	1,043	Sibley	4,420	535
Houston	4,965	459	Stearns	82,808	657
Hubbard	6,514	526	Steele	21,609	640
Isanti	11,027	599	Stevens	5,148	621
Itasca	15,941	621	Swift	3,945	552
Jackson	4,907	504	Todd	6,341	532
Kanabec	3,951	522	Traverse	1,280	455
Kandiyohi	23,197	574	Wabasha	7,236	552
Kittson	1,418	508	Wadena	5,869	560
Koochiching	5,343	675	Waseca	8,151	566
Lac Qui Parle	2,447	491	Washington	74,598	692
Lake	4,450	608	Watonwan	4,250	511
Lake of the Woods	1,472	487	Wilkin	1,982	543
Le Sueur	8,288	561	Winona	25,328	608
Lincoln	1,657	470	Wright	38,345	602
Lyon	14,898	615	Yellow Medicine	4,547	566
Mahnomen	2,021	493			

(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 3. Covered (1) employment and wages by state, third quarter 2007 (2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	September 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2006- 2007	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	136,246.9	0.9	\$818	-	4.3	-
Alabama	1,959.0	1.1	707	32	3.7	37
Alaska	327.3	0.7	840	13	5.4	9
Arizona	2,644.9	0.5	783	20	4.1	25
Arkansas	1,184.5	0.3	629	46	4.1	25
California	15,755.0	0.7	932	6	4.5	18
Colorado	2,314.3	2.4	844	12	3.2	42
Connecticut	1,696.9	1.0	1,021	2	6.6	2
Delaware	425.2	0.1	860	10	1.2	50
District of Columbia	679.0	0.6	1,376	1	5.3	12
Florida	7,879.9	-0.9	741	26	4.1	25
Georgia	4,089.4	1.2	782	21	4.1	25
Hawaii	624.4	0.3	760	22	5.4	9
Idaho	675.5	2.2	634	45	3.4	41
Illinois	5,917.6	0.6	866	9	4.0	32
Indiana	2,937.4	0.5	702	34	2.2	49
Iowa	1,494.5	0.9	668	40	4.2	22
Kansas	1,368.7	1.7	680	38	2.7	46
Kentucky	1,814.3	1.0	676	39	3.0	44
Louisiana	1,880.8	2.7	716	31	4.5	18
Maine	615.3	0.7	660	44	3.9	35
Maryland	2,563.7	0.7	892	7	4.1	25
Massachusetts	3,261.0	1.0	1,002	4	5.5	5
Michigan	4,218.2	-1.4	808	16	2.4	48
Minnesota	2,713.3	0.9	822	15	4.6	16
Mississippi	1,142.2	0.6	607	50	3.8	36
Missouri	2,746.7	0.8	719	29	4.2	22
Montana	446.1	2.7	608	49	4.6	16
Nebraska	922.7	1.7	666	41	5.4	9
Nevada	1,286.4	-0.1	792	19	5.5	5
New Hampshire	637.2	0.3	799	18	3.2	42
New Jersey	3,985.2	0.1	965	5	3.7	37
New Mexico	830.4	0.8	682	37	4.1	25
New York	8,585.3	1.3	1,009	3	6.1	3
North Carolina	4,104.1	2.4	719	29	3.5	40
North Dakota	347.4	1.5	621	48	5.8	4
Ohio	5,331.9	-0.2	745	25	2.8	45
Oklahoma	1,548.2	1.8	666	41	5.5	5
Oregon	1,751.7	1.2	750	24	4.2	22
Pennsylvania	5,673.4	0.5	802	17	4.4	20
Rhode Island	486.1	-1.0	759	23	-0.1	51
South Carolina	1,904.7	1.7	664	43	3.6	39
South Dakota	397.5	2.0	598	51	4.7	15
Tennessee	2,774.4	0.5	728	28	4.3	21
Texas	10,304.9	2.9	825	14	5.0	13
Utah	1,231.6	3.6	696	36	5.5	5
Vermont	305.2	-0.2	699	35	4.0	32
Virginia	3,686.6	1.0	857	11	5.0	13
Washington	2,976.5	2.1	878	8	6.7	1
West Virginia	713.8	0.3	623	47	4.0	32
Wisconsin	2,802.3	-0.1	705	33	2.6	47
Wyoming	284.3	3.6	734	27	4.1	25
Puerto Rico	1,008.0	-1.1	453	(5)	2.5	(5)
Virgin Islands	45.0	0.7	682	(5)	-0.3	(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.