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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MISSISSIPPI, SECOND QUARTER 2008

The average weekly wage in Hinds County was \$733 in the second quarter of 2008, 2.9 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 although Hinds County's average weekly wage was \$108 below the national average of \$841, its wage growth (2.9 percent) was higher than the nationwide increase of 2.6 percent. The only other large county in Mississippi—that is, it had 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2007 annual average employment—was Harrison County. Harrison County recorded an average weekly wage of \$656, a 0.6-percent increase from one year earlier. (See table 1.)

Employment in Hinds County stood at 127,500 in June 2008, a 0.2-percent increase from June 2007. Harrison County had an employment level of 87,600, up 0.6 percent over-the-year. Nationally, employment declined 0.3 percent from June 2007 to June 2008.

Employment and average wages (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 80 counties in Mississippi with employment below 75,000. Three of these counties had average weekly wages equal to or above the national average. (See table 2.)

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Nationally, 224 of the 334 largest counties had average weekly wages below the national average. Hinds County's wage ranked 229th and Harrison County placed 313th, putting both counties in the bottom third of the national ranking.

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 109 of the 334 largest counties in the nation. New York County, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$1,569. Santa Clara, Calif., was second at \$1,529, followed by Washington, D.C. (\$1,433), Arlington, Va. (\$1,376), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,334).

At the other end of the spectrum, Cameron County, Texas, reported the lowest average weekly wage (\$535) in the U.S., followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$538), Horry, S.C. (\$539), Webb, Texas (\$562), and Yakima, Wash. (\$580).

Over the year, the national average weekly wage rose by 2.6 percent. Hinds County's 2.9-percent wage growth ranked 129th and Harrison County's 0.6-percent gain placed 281st among the largest counties.

Rock Island, Ill., led the nation in wage growth with an increase of 10.5 percent from the second quarter of 2007 to the second quarter of 2008. Weld, Colo., was second with 10.4 percent growth, followed by the counties of Utah, Utah (9.4 percent), Whatcom, Wash. (8.3 percent), and East Baton Rouge, La. (7.8 percent).

Twenty-six counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Clayton County, Ga., had the largest decline (-43.7 percent), followed by the counties of Boone, Ky. (-10.0 percent), Trumbull, Ohio and Ventura, Calif. (-4.8 percent each), and Queens, N.Y., (-4.3 percent).

Average Wages in Mississippi's Smaller Counties

Seventy-seven of the 80 counties in Mississippi with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages less than the national average. Issaquena County reported the lowest wage at \$398, followed by Sharkey County (\$450) and Montgomery County (\$451). Jefferson Davis County (\$1,016) and Claiborne County (\$884) had wages that exceeded the national average. Jackson County's \$841 was identical to that of the nation and Hancock County closely followed at \$824.

When all 82 counties in the State were considered, 14 reported average weekly wages below \$500. More than 75 percent of the counties (62) reported average weekly wages from \$501 to \$700 in the second quarter of 2008, while another 6 recorded wages above \$700. (See table 2.)

State Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wage in Mississippi was \$635 in the second quarter of 2008, \$206 below that for the nation. The five highest wage levels in the U.S. were in the District of Columbia (\$1,433), Massachusetts (\$1,044), New York (\$1,040), Connecticut (\$1,036), and New Jersey (\$1,004). (See table 3.)

Average weekly wages in Mississippi rose 4.4 percent over the year, placing the state in the top 10 of the national ranking in wage growth at 7th. The District of Columbia experienced a wage gain of 5.9 percent from the second quarter of 2007 to the second quarter of 2008, a larger wage gain than any other state. North Dakota was second with 5.8-percent growth. Rounding out the top five were Louisiana (5.5 percent), Wyoming (5.4 percent), and Oklahoma (5.3 percent). The smallest wage gains were in Connecticut (0.3 percent) and New Hampshire (1.5 percent). Two states experienced over the year declines in wages including Delaware (-0.8 percent) and Georgia (-0.6 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 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 136.6 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.

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 2007 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 2008 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from the 2007 Employment and Wages Annual Bulletin are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn07.htm. These tables present final 2007 annual averages. The tables will also be included on the CD which accompanies the hardcopy version of the Annual Bulletin. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2007* will be available for sale as a chartbook by the end of the first quarter 2009 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.

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 Southeast Information Office at 404-893-4222 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET. This release is available on the Atlanta BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/ro4/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 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.

Table 1. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and the 2 largest counties in Mississippi, second quarter 2008[2]

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage [3]			
	June 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2007-08 [4]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [5]	Percent change, second quarter 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]
United States [6]	136,631.8	-0.3	\$841	--	2.6	--
Mississippi	1,139.1	0.1	635	49	4.4	7
Harrison, Miss.	87.6	0.6	656	313	0.6	281
Hinds, Miss.	127.5	0.2	733	229	2.9	129

[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.

[7] Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

Table 2. Covered(1) employment and wages in the United States and all of the counties in Mississippi second quarter 2008(2)

Area	Employment June 2008	Average Weekly Wages(3)	Area	Employment June 2008	Average Weekly Wages(3)
United States(4)	136,631,800	\$841	Lee	50,528	\$622
Mississippi	1,139,105	635	Leflore	15,484	554
Adams	12,255	597	Lincoln	11,591	572
Alcorn	12,996	571	Lowndes	25,672	652
Amite	2,062	552	Madison	42,410	678
Attala	5,116	495	Marion	7,597	548
Benton	1,162	520	Marshall	6,016	563
Bolivar	12,061	549	Monroe	9,719	620
Calhoun	3,379	481	Montgomery	2,564	451
Carroll	1,179	504	Neshoba	14,925	551
Chickasaw	5,605	526	Newton	6,245	534
Choctaw	1,919	634	Noxubee	2,705	503
Claiborne	3,010	884	Oktibbeha	18,908	607
Clarke	3,073	525	Panola	10,516	561
Clay	5,561	577	Pearl River	10,411	532
Coahoma	8,660	541	Perry	2,283	690
Copiah	7,980	503	Pike	16,643	568
Covington	5,253	497	Pontotoc	10,923	543
De Soto	45,665	578	Prentiss	7,892	582
Forrest	36,139	638	Quitman	1,504	461
Franklin	1,667	590	Rankin	57,810	642
George	4,967	646	Scott	12,817	505
Greene	2,101	545	Sharkey	1,357	450
Grenada	10,610	550	Simpson	7,614	469
Hancock	13,722	824	Smith	2,950	551
Harrison	87,570	656	Stone	4,304	562
Hinds	127,510	733	Sunflower	9,828	508
Holmes	4,150	525	Tallahatchie	2,782	472
Humphreys	3,363	456	Tate	5,552	538
Issaquena	296	398	Tippah	6,269	555
Itawamba	5,669	563	Tishomingo	5,738	532
Jackson	53,187	841	Tunica	14,827	538
Jasper	4,323	605	Union	9,048	536
Jefferson	1,112	526	Walthall	3,008	515
Jefferson Davis	2,661	1,016	Warren	23,176	698
Jones	29,853	609	Washington	19,747	547
Kemper	1,670	492	Wayne	5,296	544
Lafayette	17,971	641	Webster	2,094	490
Lamar	18,169	496	Wilkinson	2,030	559
Lauderdale	36,207	609	Winston	5,509	799
Lawrence	2,909	675	Yalobusha	2,988	590
Leake	5,870	485	Yazoo	5,981	624

(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, second quarter 2008[2]

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [3]			
	June 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2007-08	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2007-08	National ranking by percent change
United States [4]	136,631.8	-0.3	\$841	-	2.6	-
Alabama	1,955.4	-0.5	720	33	3.3	15
Alaska	330.6	1.4	860	12	3.1	16
Arizona	2,543.9	-2.6	806	19	2.4	34
Arkansas	1,183.5	-0.2	661	46	3.4	11
California	15,760.3	-0.5	955	6	2.2	42
Colorado	2,346.3	0.8	858	13	3.1	16
Connecticut	1,722.3	0.5	1,036	4	0.3	49
Delaware	427.3	-0.9	862	10	-0.8	51
District of Columbia	691.4	1.2	1,433	1	5.9	1
Florida	7,620.1	-3.4	762	26	2.6	30
Georgia	4,059.7	-0.6	787	22	-0.6	50
Hawaii	623.9	-1.3	764	24	3.9	9
Idaho	671.9	-0.9	636	48	1.6	46
Illinois	5,930.0	-0.4	893	8	2.3	39
Indiana	2,906.5	-0.9	715	38	1.9	43
Iowa	1,521.2	0.1	683	42	2.9	23
Kansas	1,389.1	1.2	720	33	2.4	34
Kentucky	1,818.9	-0.5	718	35	2.6	30
Louisiana	1,900.3	1.2	750	29	5.5	3
Maine	620.3	0.1	676	44	2.7	28
Maryland	2,577.7	-0.3	920	7	2.8	26
Massachusetts	3,310.4	0.1	1,044	2	3.6	10
Michigan	4,163.3	-2.2	825	18	2.4	34
Minnesota	2,733.9	-0.5	849	14	1.8	45
Mississippi	1,139.1	0.1	635	49	4.4	7
Missouri	2,761.6	0.0	752	28	3.4	11
Montana	450.3	0.1	629	50	2.9	23
Nebraska	936.1	0.5	676	44	3.4	11
Nevada	1,271.8	-1.9	797	20	2.7	28
New Hampshire	641.9	-0.4	835	16	1.5	48
New Jersey	4,054.4	-0.4	1,004	5	1.6	46
New Mexico	837.2	0.6	715	38	4.2	8
New York	8,758.2	0.6	1,040	3	2.3	39
North Carolina	4,083.6	-0.1	735	31	2.4	34
North Dakota	356.4	2.5	654	47	5.8	2
Ohio	5,315.0	-1.3	757	27	2.3	39
Oklahoma	1,556.0	1.0	701	40	5.3	5
Oregon	1,747.4	-0.8	764	24	3.0	20
Pennsylvania	5,743.3	0.1	827	17	3.1	16
Rhode Island	481.6	-2.2	796	21	2.8	26
South Carolina	1,907.5	-0.6	681	43	2.4	34
South Dakota	409.0	1.2	606	51	2.9	23
Tennessee	2,752.7	-0.4	745	30	1.9	43
Texas	10,510.3	2.2	849	14	2.5	33
Utah	1,234.3	0.1	716	37	2.6	30
Vermont	305.6	-0.9	718	35	3.0	20
Virginia	3,720.4	-0.3	885	9	3.0	20
Washington	3,000.9	0.3	862	10	3.4	11
West Virginia	715.3	0.0	695	41	5.1	6
Wisconsin	2,836.8	-0.5	730	32	3.1	16
Wyoming	296.7	2.7	780	23	5.4	4
Puerto Rico	997.8	-2.0	475	[5]	3.5	[5]
Virgin Islands	45.9	-2.2	703	[5]	-0.6	[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.