

News

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County Employment and Wages in Delaware: Fourth Quarter 2007

New Castle County ranks 48th highest in wages in the nation

The average weekly wage in New Castle County, Delaware, was \$1,031 in the fourth quarter of 2007, 3.0 percent higher than one year earlier, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner noted that New Castle County ranked among the top fifth (48th) in wage level but in the bottom third (219th) in wage growth among the 328 largest counties in the United States (those with 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2006 annual average employment). New Castle County's average weekly wage was \$133 higher than the national average in the fourth quarter of 2007.

Employment in New Castle County stood at 289,094 in December 2007—a 0.2-percent decline from December 2006. Nationally, employment grew 0.8 percent during this same period.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the two counties in Delaware with employment below 75,000. Both Kent and Sussex Counties recorded average weekly wages lower than the national average, at \$720 and \$673, respectively. (See table A and chart 1.)

Table A. Covered¹ employment and wages in the United States and all of the counties in Delaware, fourth quarter 2007²

Area	Employment December 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage ³
United States ⁴	137,027.3	\$898
Delaware	428.8	926
Kent	64.1	720
New Castle	289.1	1,031
Sussex	68.8	673

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.

Wage Levels in the Nation's Largest Counties

The national average weekly wage in the fourth quarter of 2007 was \$898. Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 106 of the largest 328 U.S. counties. New York, N.Y., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,862. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,700, followed by Fairfield, Conn. (\$1,575), Suffolk, Mass. (\$1,546), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,529). (See table 1.)

There were 222 counties with an average weekly wage below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2007. The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$555), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$562), Horry, S.C. (\$582), Webb, Texas (\$590), and Yakima, Wash. (\$596).

Over the year, the national average weekly wage rose by 4.2 percent. Among the largest counties, Pulaski County, Ark., led the nation in growth in average weekly wages, with an increase of 26.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006. Williamson, Texas, was second with growth 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).

Eight large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Among the five largest decreases in wages, Rockingham, N.H., had the greatest decline (-12.4 percent), followed by the counties of Trumbull, Ohio (-7.2 percent), Sedgwick, Kan. (-4.1 percent), Lake, Fla. (-3.9 percent), and Montgomery, Ohio (-2.4 percent).

Average Weekly Wages by State

The weekly wage in Delaware averaged \$926 in the fourth quarter of 2007, \$28 above the national level, ranking 10th highest among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. In fact, 9 of the 13 jurisdictions in which the average weekly wage surpassed the U.S. average fell in a contiguous band along the east coast stretching from New Hampshire to Virginia. The five highest wage levels in the nation were in the District of Columbia (\$1,506), New York (\$1,152), Connecticut (\$1,149), Massachusetts (\$1,133), and New Jersey (\$1,092). (See table 2.) Average weekly wages in this group were 22 percent or more above that for the nation. During this same period, three states had wage levels averaging less than 75 percent of national earnings: South Dakota (\$647), Mississippi (\$654), and Montana (\$659).

Arkansas recorded wage growth 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 7.3-percent growth, followed by Wyoming, which averaged 7.1 percent. New Hampshire was the only state to experience an over-the-year decline in average weekly wages, down 0.3 percent since the fourth quarter of 2006.

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, 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 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. As with the 2005 edition, this edition includes 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 are published exclusively in electronic formats as PDF. The 2006 bulletin is available in a PDF on the BLS Web site 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 Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at 215-597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient Web site location, www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.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. Covered¹ employment and wages in the top 10 counties ranked by average weekly wage, fourth quarter 2007²

Area	Employment	Average weekly wage ³			
	December 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁴	Percent change, 2006-07 ⁵	National ranking by percent change ⁴
United States ⁶	137,027.3	\$898	--	4.2	--
New York, N.Y.	2,419.9	1,862	1	4.1	131
Santa Clara, Calif.	913.9	1,700	2	8.0	9
Fairfield, Conn.	432.8	1,575	3	4.3	123
Suffolk, Mass.	594.7	1,546	4	3.8	149
San Francisco, Calif.	573.2	1,529	5	4.7	94
San Mateo, Calif.	347.6	1,513	6	8.0	9
Washington, D.C.	681.6	1,506	7	5.8	40
Somerset, N.J.	176.3	1,461	8	9.2	7
Arlington, Va.	157.0	1,458	9	4.7	94
Fairfax, Va.	593.2	1,358	10	4.5	108

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

² Data are preliminary.

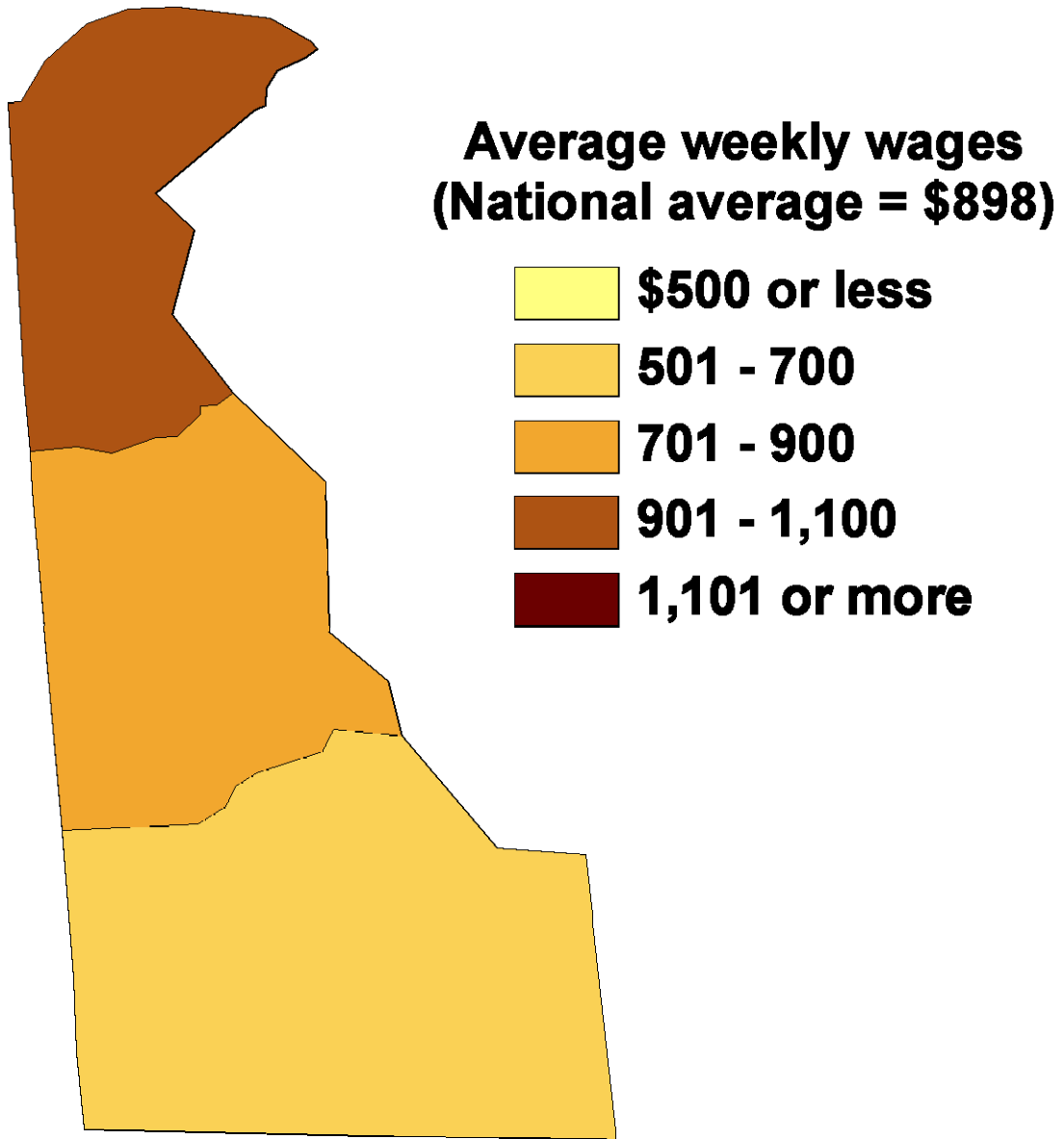
³ Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

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 any noneconomic county reclassifications.

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

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Delaware, fourth quarter 2007



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 2008

Table 2. Covered¹ employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2007²

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.