

# News

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## **COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MAINE: THIRD QUARTER 2008**

Maine's large county, Cumberland, reported a 0.1-percent decline in employment from September 2007 to September 2008. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2007 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Denis M. McSweeney noted that the rate of decline in employment in Cumberland was smaller than that for both the state of Maine and the United States.

Nationally, employment declined 0.8 percent during this 12-month period, as only 109 of the 334 large counties nationwide added jobs. The largest over-the-year percentage decline in employment in the nation was recorded in Elkhart, Ind. (-10.8 percent); Yakima, Wash., experienced the fastest growth (3.2 percent).

In September 2008, employment was 174,000 in Cumberland County, accounting for 28.5 percent of total employment within the State. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.2 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Cumberland County rose 3.4 percent from the third quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2008, while the average weekly wage in Cumberland was \$768. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 2.8 percent over the year to \$841 in the third quarter of 2008.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 15 counties in Maine with employment below 75,000. All 15 of these small counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

### Large County Wage Changes

Cumberland County's wage growth of 3.4 percent placed 94<sup>th</sup> in the national ranking and in the top one-third of the nation's 334 largest counties. (See table 1.)

Nationwide, Rutherford, Tenn., ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 17.3 percent from the third quarter 2007. Yolo, Calif., was second with growth of 9.7 percent, followed by the counties of Madison, Ill. (9.2 percent), Suffolk, N.Y. (8.6 percent), and Calcasieu, La. (7.8 percent).

Twenty-one large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest decrease (-14.6 percent), followed by the counties of Santa Clara, Calif. and Duval, Fla. (-3.4 percent each), Gwinnett, Ga. (-3.1 percent), and Rock Island, Ill. (-2.6 percent).

### Large County Average Weekly Wages

Cumberland County's average weekly wage of \$768 placed in the bottom half of the national ranking (183<sup>rd</sup>) in the third quarter of 2008.

Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 108 of the largest 334 U.S. counties. New York, N.Y., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,552. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,530, followed by Washington, D.C. (\$1,391), San Mateo, Calif. (\$1,374), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,350).

Among the 226 counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2008 the lowest average weekly wage was reported in Horry, S.C. (\$537), followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$538), Hidalgo, Texas (\$549), Webb, Texas (\$559), and Yakima, Wash. (\$580). Wages in the lowest-ranked county, Horry, S.C., were less than 65 percent of average weekly wages across the U.S.

### Average Weekly Wages in Maine's Smaller Counties

All of the 15 counties in Maine with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$841. Sagadahoc had the highest wage, \$776. Piscataquis had the lowest wage, \$517. (See table 2.)

When all 16 counties in Maine were considered, 2 had wages above \$700, 8 reported wages from \$600 to \$699, and 6 had wages from \$500 to \$599. (See chart 1.) The two counties with the highest wages were concentrated in the vicinity of the major metropolitan area of Portland. Among the six lower-paid counties, two were located near Cumberland and Sagadahoc counties and three were located in the northeastern part of the State.

### Additional Statistics and other Information

QCEW data for states has been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>.

An annual bulleting, *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 will contain 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 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](http://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* is expected to be available for sale by the end of the second quarter of 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.

This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (617) 565-2072, Federal Relay Services: 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 New England (Boston) Information Office at (617) 565-2327 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. EDT.

## **Technical Note**

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/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

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 largest county in Maine, third quarter 2008(2)**

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage [3]			
	September 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [5]	Percent change, third quarter 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]
United States [6]	135,173.8	-0.8	--	\$841	--	2.8	--
Maine	610.8	-0.6	--	683	43	3.5	14
Cumberland, Maine	174.0	-0.1	121	768	183	3.4	94

[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<sup>1</sup> employment and wages in the United States and all of the counties in Maine, third quarter 2008<sup>2</sup>**

Area	Employment September 2008	Average Weekly Wage <sup>3</sup>
United States <sup>4</sup>	135,173,800	\$841
Maine	610,842	683
Androscoggin	48,860	665
Aroostook	30,273	571
Cumberland	173,975	768
Franklin	11,417	627
Hancock	24,850	613
Kennebec	60,089	685
Knox	17,810	617
Lincoln	11,775	534
Oxford	17,157	585
Penobscot	71,405	654
Piscataquis	5,822	517
Sagadahoc	16,032	776
Somerset	18,031	641
Waldo	11,270	582
Washington	10,702	546
York	70,506	654

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

<sup>2</sup> Data are preliminary.

<sup>3</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>4</sup> 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 2008[2]**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [3]			
	September 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2007-08	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2007-08	National ranking by percent change
United States [4]	135,173.8	-0.8	\$841	-	2.8	-
Alabama	1,936.4	-1.2	730	32	3.3	17
Alaska	332.1	1.4	872	13	3.7	13
Arizona	2,570.1	-3.0	798	20	2.0	45
Arkansas	1,185.0	-0.1	649	47	3.0	22
California	15,527.1	-1.4	959	6	2.9	24
Colorado	2,322.7	0.4	877	11	3.8	12
Connecticut	1,692.5	-0.3	1,032	2	1.0	50
Delaware	420.6	-1.1	879	10	2.1	42
District of Columbia	688.2	1.4	1,391	1	1.0	50
Florida	7,546.4	-4.1	756	27	2.2	40
Georgia	4,018.6	-1.6	794	21	1.5	47
Hawaii	613.0	-2.1	774	24	1.8	46
Idaho	665.7	-1.4	643	48	1.3	49
Illinois	5,872.8	-0.7	891	9	2.9	24
Indiana	2,897.6	-1.4	718	35	2.3	37
Iowa	1,499.0	0.2	696	40	4.2	8
Kansas	1,368.9	0.0	711	38	4.6	6
Kentucky	1,795.3	-1.0	692	42	2.4	36
Louisiana	1,877.4	-0.2	756	27	5.6	4
Maine	610.8	-0.6	683	43	3.5	14
Maryland	2,543.4	-0.8	920	7	3.1	19
Massachusetts	3,265.7	0.0	1,025	4	2.3	37
Michigan	4,093.9	-3.0	820	18	1.5	47
Minnesota	2,699.6	-0.5	862	14	4.7	5
Mississippi	1,128.3	-1.3	631	49	4.0	11
Missouri	2,736.1	-0.4	739	31	2.8	29
Montana	446.4	0.1	628	50	3.1	19
Nebraska	925.7	0.2	694	41	4.2	8
Nevada	1,253.0	-2.7	809	19	2.1	42
New Hampshire	634.6	-0.5	822	16	2.8	29
New Jersey	3,952.9	-0.7	990	5	2.5	33
New Mexico	835.2	0.7	712	37	3.5	14
New York	8,633.8	0.5	1,030	3	2.2	40
North Carolina	4,064.2	-1.0	741	30	3.1	19
North Dakota	357.0	2.8	665	45	6.9	1
Ohio	5,251.1	-1.5	766	25	2.8	29
Oklahoma	1,562.8	1.2	698	39	4.5	7
Oregon	1,734.1	-1.0	766	25	2.1	42
Pennsylvania	5,679.0	0.0	822	16	2.5	33
Rhode Island	476.0	-2.0	778	23	2.5	33
South Carolina	1,874.6	-1.5	683	43	2.9	24
South Dakota	401.3	1.0	623	51	4.2	8
Tennessee	2,730.4	-1.5	745	29	2.8	29
Texas	10,438.3	1.4	850	15	2.9	24
Utah	1,229.3	-0.1	717	36	2.9	24
Vermont	304.2	-0.5	722	34	3.3	17
Virginia	3,676.1	-0.3	877	11	2.3	37
Washington	3,007.5	1.0	903	8	3.0	22
West Virginia	716.4	0.6	661	46	5.9	3
Wisconsin	2,788.7	-0.6	730	32	3.4	16
Wyoming	294.0	3.3	781	22	6.4	2
Puerto Rico	992.8	-1.6	477	[5]	5.5	[5]
Virgin Islands	44.9	-0.9	709	[5]	4.3	[5]

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

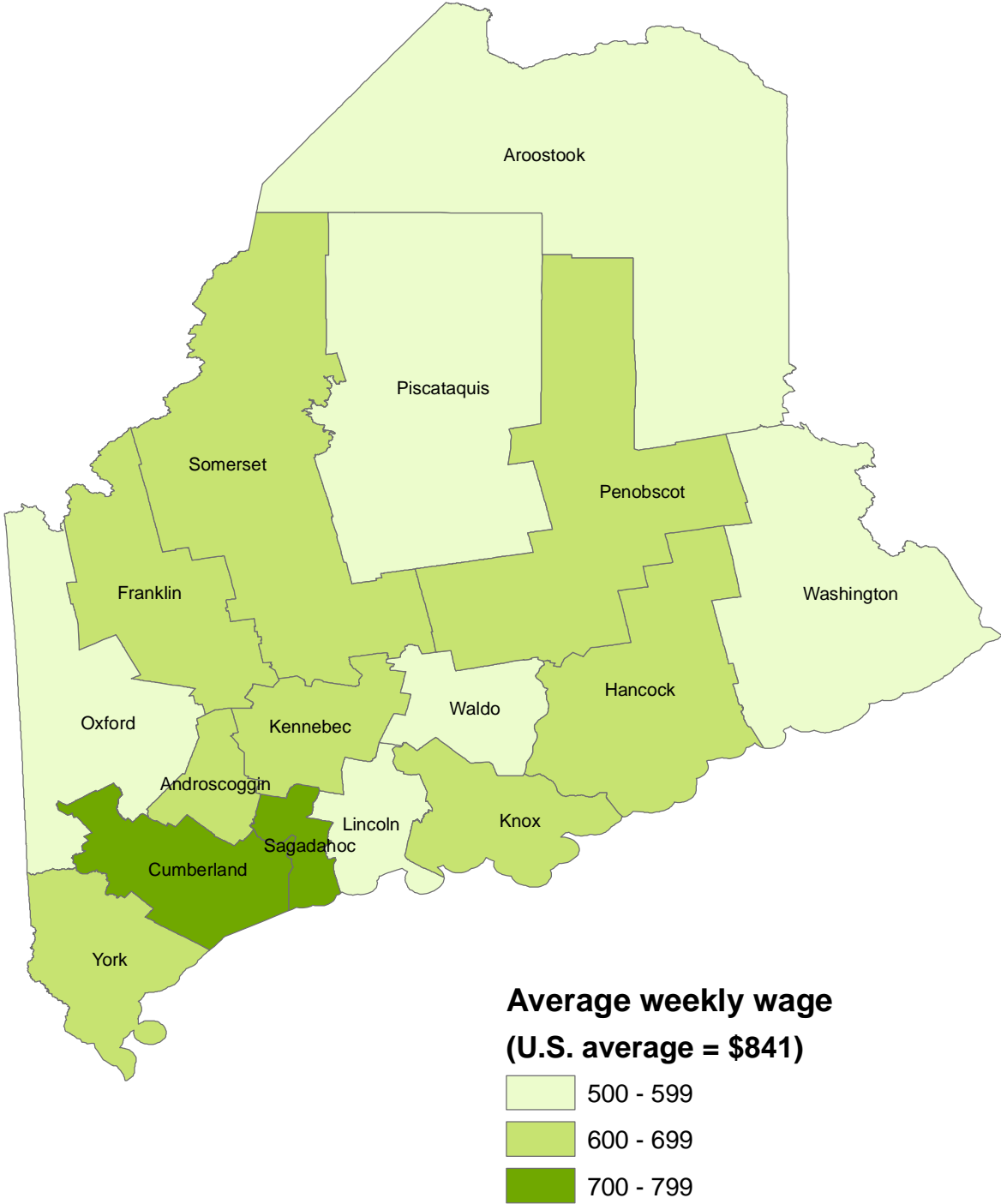
[2] Data are preliminary.

[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.

# Chart 1. Average weekly wages, counties in Maine, third quarter 2008



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, April 2009