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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN FLORIDA: THIRD QUARTER 2008

Each of Florida's 22 largest counties reported declines in their employment levels 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 Janet S. Rankin noted that Lee County had the largest drop, down 8.1 percent, followed by Collier and Sarasota, down 7.4 percent and 7.1 percent, respectively.

Nationally, employment decreased 0.8 percent during this 12-month period, as only 109 of the 334 large U.S. counties added jobs. Elkhart County, Ind., located about 100 miles east of Chicago, posted the largest percentage decline, at 10.8 percent. Yakima, Wash., experienced the fastest growth at 3.2 percent.

Among the 22 largest counties in Florida, employment was highest in Miami-Dade County (993,100) in September 2008. Three other counties—Broward, Orange, and Hillsborough—had employment levels exceeding 600,000. Together, Florida's large counties accounted for 85 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 Polk County rose 7.0 percent from the third quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2008, the largest increase among Florida's 22 large counties. Leon County had the second-highest rate of growth at 4.2 percent. Miami-Dade County had the highest average weekly wage in the State among the 22 largest counties at \$842, followed by the counties of Palm Beach (\$811) and Hillsborough (\$807). (See table 1.) 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 45 counties in Florida with employment below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large County Wage Changes

Fourteen of Florida's 22 large counties recorded wage growth below the national increase of 2.8 percent from the third quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2008. (See table 1.) Thirteen of these counties had wage gains in the 2.5- to 0.8-percent range. Average weekly wages in Duval County declined over the year (-3.4 percent), ranking it 326th among the nation's 334 large counties. Wages in

Volusia County matched the national average, while six other large counties in Florida had wage gains above the national average in the 7.0- to 2.9-percent range. (See table 1.)

Nationwide, Rutherford, Tenn., within the Nashville metropolitan area, ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 17.3 percent from the third quarter of 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 in the United States experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest decrease in the nation and was the only county to experience a double-digit decline (14.6 percent). The next largest declines were recorded in 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

Average weekly wages in 6 of Florida's 22 largest counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 334 largest counties in the United States in the third quarter of 2008. The highest-paid county in the State, Miami-Dade, was the only county above the U.S. average of \$841, and ranked 107th nationwide. The average weekly wage in Florida's 16 other large counties placed in the bottom half of the national ranking. The four counties with the lowest average weekly wages, Volusia County (\$615, 324th), Lake County and Marion County (both at \$606, 325th) and Pasco County (\$595, 329th), placed among the 15 lowest in the United States.

Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than average in 108 of the largest 334 counties. New York, N.Y., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$1,552. Santa Clara, Calif., was second with a 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, Horry, S.C. (\$537), reported the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron County, Texas (\$538), Hidalgo, Texas (\$549), Webb, Texas (\$559), and Yakima, Wash. (\$580). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than 40 percent of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, New York.

Average Weekly Wages in Florida's Smaller Counties

All of Florida's smaller counties with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$841. Holmes County reported the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, as well as the State, averaging \$484 in the third quarter of 2008. (See table 2.)

When all 67 counties in Florida were considered, all but one county had wages below the national average of \$841. Two reported average weekly wages under \$500, 51 reported wages from \$501 to \$700, and 14 had wages from \$701 to \$900. (See chart 1.)

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 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 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 is expected to be available for sale as a chartbook 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.

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 Southeast Information Office in Atlanta at (404) 893-4222 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

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 9.2 million employer reports cover 135.2 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/; 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 22 largest counties in Florida, 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	--
Florida	7,546.4	-4.1	--	756	27	2.2	40
Alachua, Fla.	123.2	-0.6	162	723	246	2.0	221
Brevard, Fla.	196.9	-4.2	308	793	154	3.5	82
Broward, Fla.	728.6	-4.1	307	792	155	2.2	201
Collier, Fla.	116.5	-7.4	325	749	206	[7]	-
Duval, Fla.	456.0	-3.4	295	797	150	-3.4	326
Escambia, Fla.	125.0	-4.9	315	667	300	2.9	148
Hillsborough, Fla.	604.0	-4.9	315	807	138	3.5	82
Lake, Fla.	83.6	-4.5	312	606	325	1.7	244
Lee, Fla.	201.1	-8.1	326	706	270	1.0	270
Leon, Fla.	142.3	-2.6	277	750	204	4.2	46
Manatee, Fla.	109.6	-1.8	250	663	305	0.8	281
Marion, Fla.	98.9	-6.4	323	606	325	2.5	176
Miami-Dade, Fla.	993.1	-3.2	291	842	107	2.2	201
Okaloosa, Fla.	78.4	-4.3	310	688	284	1.8	234
Orange, Fla.	680.9	-2.5	272	764	190	1.3	260
Palm Beach, Fla.	519.2	-4.6	313	811	136	0.9	275
Pasco, Fla.	99.4	-2.8	283	595	329	1.9	230
Pinellas, Fla.	414.8	-4.4	311	737	225	3.4	94
Polk, Fla.	197.1	-3.3	293	699	275	7.0	9
Sarasota, Fla.	143.5	-7.1	324	709	267	1.0	270
Seminole, Fla.	171.0	-5.8	320	712	262	0.8	281
Volusia, Fla.	159.4	-5.9	322	615	324	2.8	156

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

[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

[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 counties in Florida, third quarter 2008(2)

Area	Employment September 2008	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment September 2008	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	135,173,818	\$841			
Florida	7,546,351	756	Lafayette	1,824	\$510
Alachua	123,187	723	Lake	83,604	606
Baker	7,457	541	Lee	201,118	706
Bay	71,869	640	Leon	142,328	750
Bradford	7,176	598	Levy	8,503	496
Brevard	196,913	793	Liberty	2,823	656
Broward	728,560	792	Madison	4,486	527
Calhoun	3,013	516	Manatee	109,573	663
Charlotte	40,074	609	Marion	98,898	606
Citrus	32,738	595	Martin	55,488	674
Clay	45,847	579	Miami-Dade	993,115	842
Collier	116,504	749	Monroe	35,344	689
Columbia	22,488	610	Nassau	19,226	644
De Soto	7,903	563	Okaloosa	78,350	688
Dixie	2,509	541	Okeechobee	10,126	580
Duval	456,039	797	Orange	680,916	764
Escambia	125,046	667	Osceola	71,928	604
Flagler	17,575	563	Palm Beach	519,214	811
Franklin	3,134	540	Pasco	99,366	595
Gadsden	14,222	588	Pinellas	414,757	737
Gilchrist	3,030	562	Polk	197,128	699
Glades	1,321	637	Putnam	17,687	620
Gulf	4,122	597	St. Johns	55,640	653
Hamilton	3,651	696	St. Lucie	67,019	647
Hardee	7,165	598	Santa Rosa	31,001	577
Hendry	10,087	598	Sarasota	143,549	709
Hernando	37,335	557	Seminole	171,028	712
Highlands	26,077	545	Sumter	18,666	603
Hillsborough	604,029	807	Suwannee	9,521	540
Holmes	3,617	484	Taylor	7,060	654
Indian River	46,480	657	Union	4,110	634
Jackson	14,869	567	Volusia	159,383	615
Jefferson	2,979	549	Wakulla	5,717	598
			Walton	19,307	579
			Washington	6,275	548

(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 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 Florida, third quarter 2008

