

News

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AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES IN UTAH: FIRST QUARTER 2007

Utah County records fastest growth in wages and employment Salt Lake County has highest average weekly wage

The average weekly wage in Utah County rose 6.0 percent and employment rose 7.3 percent from the first quarter of 2006 to the first quarter of 2007, the largest increases in the State among those counties with employment of 75,000 or more (as measured by the 2006 annual average employment), according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Wages in Salt Lake County increased 5.8 percent joining Utah County as the only two large counties in Utah to record over-the-year wage growth greater than the 5.1-percent gain for the nation. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that Salt Lake County had the highest average weekly wage in Utah at \$788; even so, that level did not exceed the national average of \$885. (See table A.)

Table A. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 4 largest counties in Utah, first quarter 2007(2)

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	March 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2006-2007(5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (4)	Percent change, first quarter 2006-07 (5)	National ranking by percent change (4)
United States (6)	134,320.6	1.4	\$885	--	5.1	--
Utah	1,203.9	5.1	696	38	5.3	9
Davis, Utah	101.7	4.0	656	296	2.8	237
Salt Lake, Utah	577.6	4.6	788	159	5.8	51
Utah, Utah	172.8	7.3	623	310	6.0	45
Weber, Utah	93.9	4.3	604	317	4.3	135

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. These 328 U.S. counties comprise 71.1 percent of the total workers in the U.S.

(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.

(7) Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2007 (continued)

Wage levels

Salt Lake County's average weekly wage of \$788 was the highest in the State and placed it in the top half (159th) among the 328 largest counties in the nation in the first quarter of 2007. However, the county's wage level was \$97 below the national average of \$885. The remaining three large counties in the State had wages ranking them in the bottom 10 percent nationwide, with Davis County averaging \$656 (296th), Utah, \$623 (310th), and Weber, \$604 (317th).

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 92 of the largest 328 U.S. counties. New York County, N.Y., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,821. Fairfield, Conn., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,979, followed by Suffolk, Mass. (\$1,659), San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,639), and Somerset, N.J. (\$1,615). Four of the 10 counties with the highest wages in the U.S. were located in the greater New York metropolitan area (New York, N.Y., Fairfield, Conn., Somerset, N.J., and Hudson, N.J.), 3 others were located in or around the San Francisco area (Santa Clara, San Francisco, and San Mateo, all in California), while 2 more were located in or around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Va.). Rounding out the top 10 was Suffolk County, Mass., part of the Boston metropolitan area.

Of the large counties in the United States, 236 had an average weekly wage below that for the nation in the first quarter of 2007. The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$502), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$516), Horry, S.C. (\$536), Webb, Texas (\$542), and Yakima, Wash. (\$569).

At the state level, Utah's weekly wage of \$696 was 21.4 percent below the national average, ranking 38th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See table 1.) Four neighboring states had average weekly wages higher than Utah—Colorado (\$889/11th), Arizona (\$803/21st), Nevada (\$802/22nd), and Wyoming (\$730/32nd). Two neighboring states had lower wages, New Mexico (\$685/40th) and Idaho (\$636/47th).

Over-the-year wage changes

As mentioned, two of Utah's four large counties recorded wage growth greater than the national increase of 5.1 percent from the first quarter of 2006 to the first quarter of 2007. Utah County's 6.0-percent wage gain was the largest increase in the State, ranking 45th in the nation among the 328 largest counties. Salt Lake County experienced the second-highest wage increase in the State at 5.8 percent and ranked 51st nationwide. Average weekly wage increases in Weber County (4.3 percent) and Davis County (2.8 percent) ranked them 135th and 237th, respectively.

Among the 328 largest counties in the United States, Trumbull, Ohio, led the nation in average weekly wage growth with an increase of 22.3 percent from the first quarter of 2006. New York, N.Y., was second with growth of 16.7 percent, followed by the counties of Cobb, Ga. (11.2 percent), Suffolk, Mass. (10.8 percent), and Clay, Mo. (9.7 percent).

Fourteen counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Bibb, Ga., and Loudoun, Va., led the nation in declines (-3.0 percent each), followed by the counties of Orleans, La., and Norfolk, Mass. (-2.7 percent each), and Arapahoe, Colo., Sarasota, Fla., and Peoria, Ill. (-1.8 percent each).

At the state level, Utah's wage growth of 5.3 percent in the first quarter of 2007 was above the national average, ranking 9th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Across the nation, New York had the fastest wage growth (11.8 percent) and Oklahoma the slowest (1.3 percent).

Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2007 (continued)

Employment

Among the four large counties in Utah, employment was highest in Salt Lake County at 577,600 and lowest in Weber County at 93,900 in March 2007. All four counties' over-the-year employment growth rates exceeded the national average of 1.4 percent. Utah County had the largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment, 7.3 percent, ranking third among the 328 largest counties. Salt Lake County had the next largest increase at 4.6 percent, followed by Weber (4.3 percent), and Davis (4.0 percent).

Of the 328 largest counties in the United States, 117 had over-the-year rates of growth in employment above the national average of 1.4 percent in March 2007 and 196 experienced changes below the national average. Orleans County, La., which includes the city of New Orleans, recorded the largest over-the-year percentage increase with a gain of 15.0 percent, followed closely by Harrison County, Miss., with an over-the-year gain of 14.5 percent. As mentioned, Utah County, Utah, ranked third in employment growth at 7.3 percent. Rounding out the top five were Williamson, Texas (7.0 percent), and Jefferson, La. (6.6 percent). The large employment gains in Orleans, Harrison, and Jefferson counties reflected significant recovery following substantial job losses that occurred in September 2005 due to Hurricane Katrina.

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 every employer subject to unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The 8.9 million employer reports cover 134.3 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; this 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 <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 will contain 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 will include the data on a CD for enhanced access and usability with the printed booklet containing selected graphic representations of QCEW data; the data tables themselves will be published exclusively in electronic formats as PDFs. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2006* will be available for sale in early 2008 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.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient BLS Web site location, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.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.

Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2007 (continued)

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Kansas City Information Office at 816-285-7000 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. CT.

Industry Changes to County Employment and Wages Data

In an effort to enhance the comparability of industrial employment and wage statistics across Mexico, Canada, and the United States, and reflect economic activities within industries more accurately, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is revised periodically. In conjunction with its counterparts in Mexico and Canada, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget developed NAICS 2007.

The conversion to NAICS 2007 resulted in minor revisions reflecting content changes within the Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector and the Manufacturing sector; the restructuring of the Telecommunications subsector; the elimination of the Real estate and investment trusts industry within the Finance and insurance sector; and minor content changes within the Professional, scientific, and technical services sector. Several industry titles and descriptions also were updated. This revision was introduced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) with the release of first quarter 2007 QCEW data. This revision had a minimal impact on QCEW data. Approximately 1 percent of both employment and establishments and 2 percent of total wages were reclassified into different industries as a result of the revision.

With the introduction of this revision, some industries were directly transferred to new industries while others were split into two or more industries, with the original industry often retaining a portion of the establishments, employment, and wages. Of the 1,179 industries used by BLS under NAICS 2002, 8 industries were directly moved to new industries created by the NAICS 2007 revision. Involved in these direct transfers were 41,821 establishments, 829,263 employees, and \$12.6 billion in total wages. In addition, 13 industries were split into 2 or more industries. In all, 27,457 establishments, 662,125 employees, and \$16.5 billion in total wages changed industries via these split transfers.

A total of 69,278 establishments, 1,491,388 employees, and \$29.1 billion in total wages changed industries in first quarter 2007 due to this revision. This represents 37 percent of the overall 186,702 establishments, 43 percent of the overall 3,478,087 employees, and 55 percent of the overall \$52.9 billion in total wages affected by an administrative industry change in first quarter 2007. (See Technical Note.) All figures cited are preliminary and all employment figures cited reflect March 2007 data. For further information on the NAICS 2007 revision, see the U.S. Census Bureau Web site at <http://www.census.gov/epcd/naics07/index.html>. More information on the NAICS 2007 revision, including the implementation schedules of other BLS programs, will be posted on the BLS Web site as it becomes available.

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 by state, first quarter 2007(2)

State	Employment	Average weekly wage (3)			
	March 2007 (thousands)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2006-07	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	134,320.6	\$885	-	5.1	-
Alabama	1,953.7	716	35	3.5	39
Alaska	299.8	831	20	5.2	11
Arizona	2,667.2	803	21	4.7	18
Arkansas	1,179.9	642	46	3.2	42
California	15,569.4	988	6	3.9	34
Colorado	2,262.4	889	11	3.6	37
Connecticut	1,665.0	1,263	3	6.1	4
Delaware	416.6	986	7	2.1	50
District of Columbia	674.4	1,428	1	4.7	18
Florida	8,093.4	764	25	3.4	40
Georgia	4,065.1	837	17	4.9	14
Hawaii	626.4	748	27	4.2	30
Idaho	645.0	636	47	4.6	23
Illinois	5,795.7	956	8	4.6	23
Indiana	2,880.8	739	30	2.9	44
Iowa	1,457.6	686	39	3.6	37
Kansas	1,349.1	720	34	4.7	18
Kentucky	1,791.5	699	37	4.0	32
Louisiana	1,863.5	730	32	4.4	27
Maine	582.1	677	41	3.7	36
Maryland	2,527.0	939	9	4.6	23
Massachusetts	3,167.5	1,110	4	6.1	4
Michigan	4,130.2	851	15	4.0	32
Minnesota	2,629.6	873	12	5.2	11
Mississippi	1,127.3	616	48	3.2	42
Missouri	2,710.1	744	29	2.9	44
Montana	428.8	600	51	4.9	14
Nebraska	899.3	667	44	2.8	46
Nevada	1,282.3	802	22	4.8	16
New Hampshire	619.8	836	18	4.6	23
New Jersey	3,926.6	1,097	5	5.6	7
New Mexico	819.3	685	40	5.9	6
New York	8,441.3	1,397	2	11.8	1
North Carolina	4,034.3	779	24	4.7	18
North Dakota	334.5	615	49	4.8	16
Ohio	5,241.0	793	23	5.3	9
Oklahoma	1,534.3	676	43	1.3	51
Oregon	1,707.8	755	26	2.7	47
Pennsylvania	5,589.6	849	16	5.1	13
Rhode Island	472.2	834	19	7.1	3
South Carolina	1,885.9	677	41	2.3	48
South Dakota	381.9	602	50	3.4	40
Tennessee	2,732.5	738	31	4.7	18
Texas	10,143.0	872	13	5.6	7
Utah	1,203.9	696	38	5.3	9
Vermont	300.0	704	36	2.3	48
Virginia	3,644.6	901	10	4.4	27
Washington	2,869.9	868	14	4.3	29
West Virginia	700.3	652	45	4.2	30
Wisconsin	2,727.7	745	28	3.9	34
Wyoming	269.1	730	32	9.3	2
Puerto Rico	1,024.5	476	(5)	5.3	(5)
Virgin Islands	45.6	687	(5)	6.3	(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.