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County Employment and Wages in Illinois Fourth Quarter 2007

The average weekly wage in Lake County increased 15.6 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007, the largest advance among Illinois' 14 counties with employment of 75,000 or more (as measured by 2006 annual average employment). Rock Island County had the second-highest wage growth at 6.8 percent, followed by St. Clair County at 4.9 percent. Lake County had the highest average weekly wage in the State at \$1,266, followed by the counties of Cook (\$1,101) and Rock Island (\$1,063). (See table 1.) Regional Commissioner Jay A. Mousa noted that among Illinois' 14 largest counties, five reported wage growth above the national rate of 4.2 percent and four had average weekly wages above the national average of \$898.

Among the 14 largest counties in Illinois, employment was highest in Cook County (2,556,200) and lowest in Rock Island County (79,800) in December 2007. Five of the State's 14 large counties recorded an employment gain greater than the national average of 0.8 percent from December 2006 to December 2007. McHenry County was the only large county with employment growth that equaled the national average during this time period.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 88 counties in Illinois with employment below 75,000. Four of the State's smaller counties had average weekly wages above the national level, led by Putnam at \$1,028. (See table 2.)

Large County Average Weekly Wages

The average weekly wages in the counties of Lake, Cook, Rock Island, and Du Page placed in the top fourth of the national ranking among the 328 largest counties in the United States. Lake County's average weekly wage ranked 13th; Cook's, 35th; Rock Island's, 43rd; and Du Page's, 44th.

The average weekly wages in four of Illinois large counties placed in the bottom fourth of the national rankings: Winnebago (\$750/251st), Champaign (\$734/268th), Madison (\$731/271st), and St. Clair (\$724/278th).

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).

Nationwide, 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).

Wage Changes in Large Counties

In Illinois, five large counties recorded wage growth above the national increase of 4.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007. (See table 1.) As mentioned, Lake County's 15.6-percent wage gain was the largest increase in the State and ranked 3rd in the nation. Rock Island County, at 6.8 percent, placed 22nd. Will County had the State's smallest wage increase, 1.1 percent and ranked 297th among the nation's largest counties.

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 Wages in Illinois' Smaller Counties

Putnam County's \$1,028 average weekly was the highest among the 88 counties in the State that had employment below 75,000. Along with Putnam, three other smaller counties had wages that were greater than the national average in the fourth quarter of 2007: Tazewell (\$1,022), Grundy (\$904), and Boone (\$900). (See table 2.)

When all 102 counties in Illinois were considered, five counties in the State reported average weekly wages below \$500, and 33 reported wages in the \$500-\$599 range. Thirty-six counties had average weekly wages in the \$600 to \$699 range. Twenty-eight counties in the State reported average weekly wages greater than \$700.

State Average Weekly Wages

At the state level, the average weekly wage in Illinois was \$975, \$77 above the nationwide figure, ranking 8th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See table 3.) 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). All had wages at least 20 percent higher than the national average. Three states had average earnings of less than 75 percent of the national average: South Dakota (\$647), Mississippi (\$654), and Montana (\$659).

Illinois experienced wage growth of 5.1 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007, ranking 13th among the 50 states and District of Columbia. Wage gains in the neighboring states of Indiana (3.0 percent) and Wisconsin (3.1

percent) were considerably smaller. Iowa experienced similar wage growth (4.9 percent). Arkansas experienced a wage gain of 9.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2006 to the fourth quarter of 2007, higher than any other state. Next highest was North Dakota (7.3 percent) followed by Wyoming (7.1 percent) and Nevada (6.7 percent). The only state to record a decline in average weekly wages over the year was New Hampshire, down 0.3 percent. (See table 3.)

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 employers subject to state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) laws. 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 Midwest Information Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1880 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

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 14 largest counties in Illinois, fourth quarter 2007 (2)

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	December 2007 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2006-07 (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (4)	Percent change, fourth quarter 2006-07 (5)	National ranking by percent change (4)
United States (6)	137,027.3	0.8	\$898	--	4.2	--
Illinois	5,933.0	0.6	975	8	5.1	13
Champaign, Ill.	92.5	0.6	734	268	4.1	131
Cook, Ill.	2,556.2	-0.1	1,101	35	4.8	86
Du Page, Ill.	604.8	0.0	1,056	44	3.5	172
Kane, Ill.	212.2	0.1	820	167	2.4	254
Lake, Ill.	335.3	1.3	1,266	13	15.6	3
Madison, Ill.	96.7	1.2	731	271	2.5	245
McHenry, Ill.	103.8	0.8	784	213	1.4	292
McLean, Ill.	86.0	0.3	814	173	2.0	271
Peoria, Ill.	105.2	0.4	841	153	2.9	223
Rock Island, Ill.	79.8	1.1	1,063	43	6.8	22
Sangamon, Ill.	130.4	0.0	862	136	4.6	101
St. Clair, Ill.	98.0	1.6	724	278	4.9	80
Will, Ill.	195.9	3.5	797	194	1.1	297
Winnebago, Ill.	138.6	0.7	750	251	2.6	240

(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 noneconomic county reclassifications.

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

Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all of the counties in Illinois, fourth quarter 2007 (2)

Area	Employment December 2007	Average Weekly Wage (3)	Area	Employment December 2007	Average Weekly Wage (3)
United States (4)	137,027,300	\$898	Lawrence	4,531	\$629
Illinois -- Statewide	5,933,011	975	Lee	13,205	692
Adams	33,604	668	Livingston	15,595	706
Alexander	1,991	660	Logan	9,112	612
Bond	4,483	648	Macon	53,710	838
Boone	16,593	900	Macoupin	11,455	579
Brown	3,099	661	Madison	96,720	731
Bureau	12,178	657	Marion	13,822	598
Calhoun	869	442	Marshall	3,431	593
Carroll	4,403	561	Mason	3,292	562
Cass	5,800	572	Massac	4,413	691
Champaign	92,469	734	McDonough	12,407	614
Christian	10,972	610	McHenry	103,805	784
Clark	5,040	571	McLean	85,958	814
Clay	5,394	587	Menard	2,158	512
Clinton	12,374	607	Mercer	2,947	558
Coles	25,580	546	Monroe	8,237	589
Cook	2,556,208	1,101	Montgomery	9,986	607
Crawford	7,397	776	Morgan	15,215	638
Cumberland	2,280	542	Moultrie	4,935	613
De Kalb	37,182	713	Ogle	17,128	771
De Witt	5,152	795	Peoria	105,197	841
Douglas	7,494	611	Perry	5,046	605
Du Page	604,754	1,056	Piatt	3,449	598
Edgar	6,817	612	Pike	4,068	482
Edwards	2,754	603	Pope	764	502
Effingham	20,427	638	Pulaski	1,840	587
Fayette	6,202	559	Putnam	2,116	1,028
Ford	4,751	615	Randolph	12,495	672
Franklin	9,268	549	Richland	6,672	566
Fulton	8,674	532	Rock Island	79,833	1,063
Gallatin	1,653	813	Saline	8,419	624
Greene	2,772	493	Sangamon	130,385	862
Grundy	16,562	904	Schuyler	1,988	749
Hamilton	1,569	507	Scott	1,149	661
Hancock	4,780	525	Shelby	5,059	529
Hardin	892	494	St. Clair	98,022	724
Henderson	1,146	471	Stark	1,375	566
Henry	13,819	593	Stephenson	19,332	714
Iroquois	8,122	536	Tazewell	61,508	1,022
Jackson	26,590	621	Union	5,228	578
Jasper	2,374	617	Vermilion	30,060	674
Jefferson	19,657	656	Wabash	3,427	670
Jersey	4,830	553	Warren	6,061	577
Jo Daviess	8,694	585	Washington	5,162	655
Johnson	2,418	654	Wayne	4,697	562
Kane	212,173	820	White	4,641	600
Kankakee	44,057	674	Whiteside	21,307	586
Kendall	23,598	790	Will	195,874	797
Knox	19,979	552	Williamson	26,575	632
La Salle	45,173	680	Winnebago	138,638	750
Lake	335,316	1,266	Woodford	12,124	649

(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, fourth quarter 2007 (2)

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.