



NEWS RELEASE



NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE
Boston, Mass.

For release: Tuesday, January 31, 2012

12-178-BOS

Technical Information: (617) 565-2327 • BLSInfoBoston@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/ro1
Media Contact: (617) 565-2326 • consedine.tim@bls.gov

COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MASSACHUSETTS SECOND QUARTER 2011

Employment increased in all nine large counties in Massachusetts from June 2010 to June 2011. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2010 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Denis M. McSweeney noted that Suffolk County had the largest gain, up 1.8 percent, followed by Essex County, up 1.1 percent. Barnstable, Bristol, and Worcester Counties all experienced over-the-year employment gains that matched the national increase of 0.9 percent.

Nationally, 215 of the 322 large counties had net job gains from June 2010 to June 2011. The largest over-the-year percentage gain was recorded in Ottawa, Mich., 4.7 percent. San Joaquin, Calif., experienced the largest over-the-year decrease in employment among the large U.S. counties with a loss of 4.0 percent.

Among the nine large counties in Massachusetts, employment was highest in Middlesex (814,732) in June 2011, followed by Suffolk (585,161). Together, Massachusetts' large counties accounted for 93.6 percent of total employment within the commonwealth. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Middlesex County rose 10.2 percent from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011, the largest increase among Massachusetts' nine large counties. Essex County had the second-highest rate of growth at 5.6 percent, followed by Bristol (5.0 percent) and Hampden (4.4 percent). Middlesex County had the highest average weekly wage at \$1,385, followed by Suffolk (\$1,382) and Norfolk (\$1,047). (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.0 percent over the year to \$891 in the second quarter 2011.

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

Large County Wage Changes

Each of Massachusetts' nine large counties saw wage increases from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011. (See table 1.) Middlesex County's 10.2-percent wage gain ranked second among the 322 largest U.S. counties. Essex County (5.6 percent) ranked 14th, followed by Bristol (5.0 percent) which placed 27th. Wage gains in three other counties outpaced the national increase of 3.0 percent—

Hampden (4.4 percent; 47th), Suffolk (3.7 percent; 80th), and Plymouth (3.2 percent; 109th). Barnstable County (2.2 percent; 196th) saw the smallest over-the-year wage growth in the commonwealth.

Nationwide, Williamson, Texas, ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 18.0 percent from the second quarter of 2010. As noted, Middlesex, Mass., placed second among the largest U.S. counties, followed by Harford, Md. (8.8 percent) and Santa Clara, Calif. (8.5 percent).

Eleven large U.S. counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages in the second quarter. The largest decrease was in Champaign, Ill., with a decline of 3.6 percent over the year. Benton, Ark., had the second largest decline, followed by Rutherford, Tenn.; New York, N.Y.; and Elkhart, Ind.

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Average weekly wages in 5 of Massachusetts' 9 large counties were above the national average in the second quarter of 2011 with 2 of these counties placing in the top 10 nationwide—Middlesex (\$1,385, 9th) and Suffolk (\$1,382, 10th). Average weekly wages were lowest in Barnstable County (\$754, 245th).

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average (\$891) in 107 of the 322 largest U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,743. New York, N.Y., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,645, followed by Arlington, Va. (\$1,553), Washington, D.C. (\$1,541), and Fairfield, Conn. (\$1,469).

Two-thirds of the largest U.S. counties (215) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the second quarter of 2011. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C. (\$526), followed by the Texas counties of Hidalgo (\$571) and Cameron (\$572). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than one-third of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,743).

Average Weekly Wages in Massachusetts' Smaller Counties

All five counties in Massachusetts with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$891. Franklin County reported the lowest wage \$682, over twenty three percent below the national average. The highest paid small county was Nantucket at \$840.

When all 14 counties in Massachusetts were considered, 9 had wages below the national average. As mentioned, the lowest weekly wage was reported in Franklin County, the only county in the commonwealth with average weekly wages below \$700. Eight others reported wages between \$700 and \$899. The three highest-paid counties—Suffolk, Middlesex, and Norfolk—all had average weekly wages over \$1,000 and were concentrated in the vicinity of the Boston metropolitan area, including the area encircled by Highway 495. (See chart 1.)

Additional Statistics and other Information

QCEW data for states have 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 www.bls.gov/cew. QCEW data in this release are based on the 2012 North American Industry Classification System. Data for 2011 are preliminary and subject to revision.

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages Annual Wages Online*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2010 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2011 version of the news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online 2010* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm. The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in 2012.

Information in this release 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 QCEW program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the New England Information Office at (617) 565-2327. This release is available in PDF and HTML format on the New England BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/ro1/maqcew.htm.

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 130.5 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 9 largest counties in Massachusetts, second quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	June 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, second quarter 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	130,469.9	0.9	--	\$891	--	3.0	--
Massachusetts	3,230.4	0.9	--	1,120	2	5.6	3
Barnstable, Mass.	97.8	0.9	134	754	245	2.2	196
Bristol, Mass.	212.9	0.9	134	837	151	5.0	27
Essex, Mass.	304.0	1.1	114	976	65	5.6	14
Hampden, Mass.	197.7	0.7	156	814	176	4.4	47
Middlesex, Mass.	814.7	0.4	178	1,385	9	10.2	2
Norfolk, Mass.	319.2	0.4	178	1,047	39	2.5	168
Plymouth, Mass.	174.7	0.1	204	875	123	3.2	109
Suffolk, Mass.	585.2	1.8	66	1,382	10	3.7	80
Worcester, Mass.	316.8	0.9	134	908	93	2.6	153

[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.

Table 2. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and all the counties in Massachusetts, second quarter 2011 [2]

Area	Employment June 2011	Average Weekly Wage [3]
United States [4]	130,469,924	\$891
Massachusetts	3,230,373	1,120
Barnstable County	97,814	754
Berkshire County	62,284	746
Bristol County	212,851	837
Dukes County	9,661	783
Essex County	303,977	976
Franklin County	26,323	682
Hampden County	197,716	814
Hampshire County	59,644	773
Middlesex County	814,732	1,385
Nantucket County	7,561	840
Norfolk County	319,153	1,047
Plymouth County	174,677	875
Suffolk County	585,161	1,382
Worcester County	316,840	908

[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, second quarter 2011 (2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	June 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2010-11	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2010-11	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	130,469.9	0.9	\$891	--	3.0	--
Alabama	1,824.8	-0.4	767	34	2.3	41
Alaska	335.9	1.6	941	9	2.6	27
Arizona	2,336.3	1.1	842	20	2.7	26
Arkansas	1,140.4	-1.3	703	47	2.6	27
California	14,664.6	0.3	1,019	6	4.0	7
Colorado	2,234.7	1.4	900	13	3.4	16
Connecticut	1,630.2	0.8	1,116	3	3.8	9
Delaware	408.4	0.5	926	12	5.9	2
District of Columbia	711.3	1.4	1,541	1	2.4	36
Florida	7,092.3	0.8	802	25	2.6	27
Georgia	3,803.1	1.0	832	21	2.5	32
Hawaii	590.5	0.7	799	26	2.4	36
Idaho	616.6	0.0	667	49	2.3	41
Illinois	5,633.0	1.0	939	10	3.2	17
Indiana	2,769.2	1.3	749	41	2.2	46
Iowa	1,476.9	0.7	726	43	2.5	32
Kansas	1,313.2	-0.1	754	40	2.9	23
Kentucky	1,751.8	0.9	760	38	2.3	41
Louisiana	1,844.3	-0.1	794	28	3.1	18
Maine	593.8	0.3	712	46	1.9	48
Maryland	2,513.5	0.5	987	7	3.1	18
Massachusetts	3,230.4	0.9	1,120	2	5.6	3
Michigan	3,896.9	1.8	845	19	2.4	36
Minnesota	2,645.4	1.4	898	15	3.5	12
Mississippi	1,079.4	-0.6	664	50	1.8	49
Missouri	2,617.7	0.3	774	31	1.6	50
Montana	434.1	0.5	681	48	3.5	12
Nebraska	911.6	0.1	714	45	2.4	36
Nevada	1,123.0	0.5	816	24	2.5	32
New Hampshire	615.2	0.4	888	16	2.4	36
New Jersey	3,836.2	-0.3	1,056	5	2.6	27
New Mexico	788.7	-0.5	763	37	2.8	24
New York	8,575.3	1.0	1,092	4	1.0	51
North Carolina	3,865.9	1.5	783	30	2.5	32
North Dakota	382.4	5.1	769	33	8.2	1
Ohio	5,009.1	0.9	795	27	2.6	27
Oklahoma	1,510.3	0.7	749	41	4.5	5
Oregon	1,637.5	0.7	819	22	4.2	6
Pennsylvania	5,606.5	1.0	875	17	3.1	18
Rhode Island	458.1	0.3	862	18	3.5	12
South Carolina	1,801.6	1.1	726	43	2.3	41
South Dakota	404.8	0.8	656	51	3.8	9
Tennessee	2,616.9	1.3	794	28	2.3	41
Texas	10,462.4	2.1	900	13	4.0	7
Utah	1,183.9	2.0	756	39	3.1	18
Vermont	297.0	1.0	773	32	2.8	24
Virginia	3,619.7	0.9	949	8	2.2	46
Washington	2,875.8	0.6	928	11	3.5	12
West Virginia	702.9	0.3	765	36	5.4	4
Wisconsin	2,712.0	0.9	767	34	3.0	22
Wyoming	284.7	1.2	819	22	3.7	11
Puerto Rico	915.1	-1.4	496	(5)	0.6	(5)
Virgin Islands	44.1	0.6	747	(5)	5.5	(5)

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

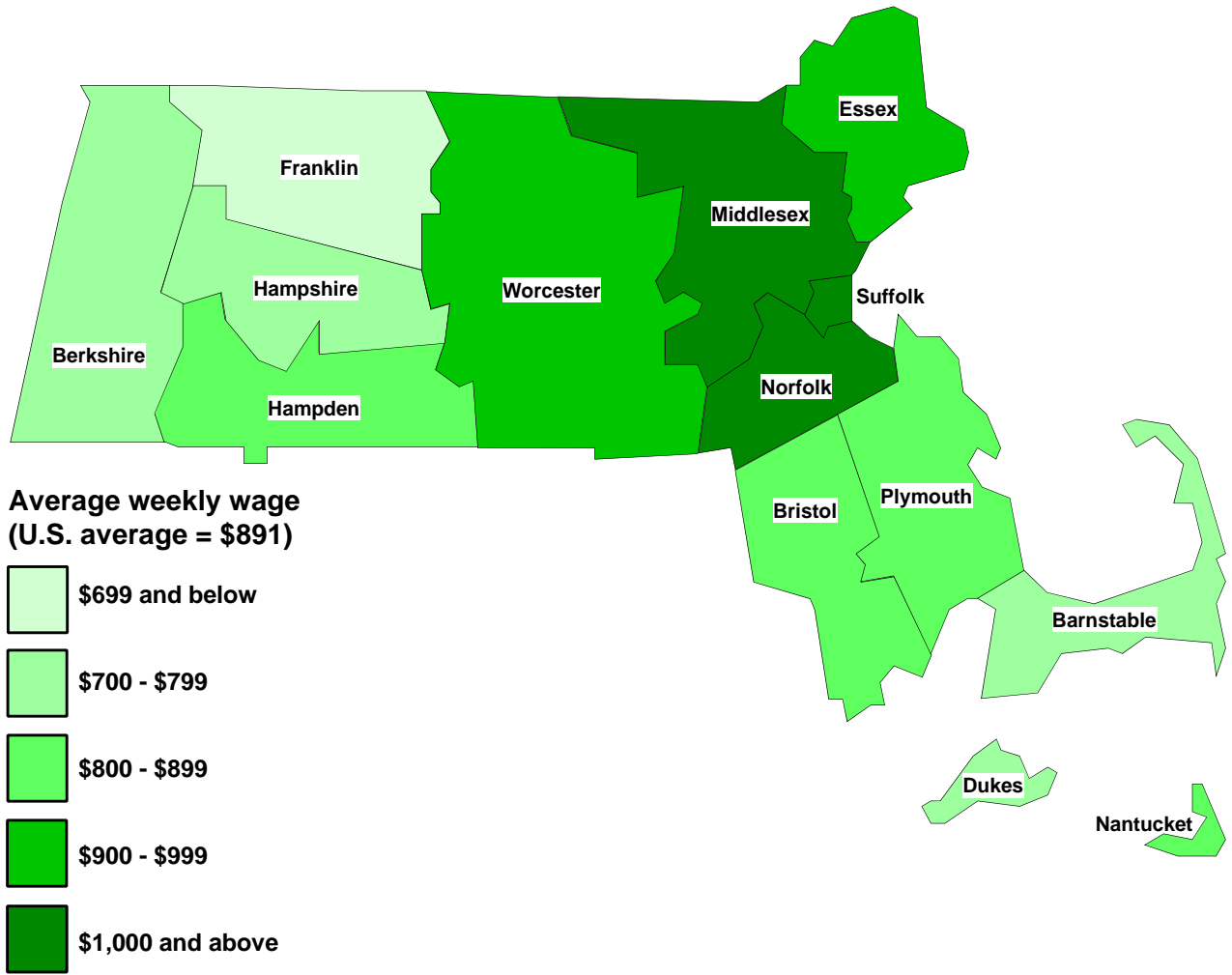
(2) Data are preliminary.

(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 by county in Massachusetts, second quarter 2011



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2011