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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN OKLAHOMA SECOND QUARTER 2008

Two Largest Counties Experienced Above-Average Employment and Wage Growth

Employment in Tulsa County rose 1.1 percent from June 2007 to June 2008 and in Oklahoma County, 0.7 percent, both counter to the national employment decline of 0.3 percent during this period, according to data released by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that over-the-year wage growth in both of the State's large counties also outpaced the nationwide average. Oklahoma County's average wage increased 6.0 percent to \$777 and Tulsa County's rose 3.2 percent to \$766. Nationally, wages were up 2.6 percent from June 2007. Oklahoma and Tulsa were the only two large counties in the State, that is, they had 75,000 or more jobs as measured by 2007 annual average employment. (See table A.)

Table A. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and the 2 largest counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2008 [2]

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage [3]			
	June 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [5]	Percent change, second quarter 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]
United States [6]	136,631.8	-0.3	--	\$841	--	2.6	--
Oklahoma	1,556.0	1.0	9	701	40	5.3	5
Oklahoma, Okla.	425.0	0.7	71	777	168	6.0	9
Tulsa, Okla.	351.2	1.1	48	766	183	3.2	109

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

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 75 counties in Oklahoma with employment below 75,000. Among these smaller counties, the highest average weekly wage was \$793 in Washington and the lowest was \$447 in Cimarron. When all 77 counties in the State were considered, 7 had average weekly wages of \$700 or more, 25 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 38 averaged \$500 to \$599, and 7 were below \$500. (See table 1.)

Large County Employment

Tulsa and Oklahoma Counties were among 125 large counties nationwide with over-the-year employment growth. Tulsa's 1.1-percent job growth ranked 48th among all 334 large counties, and Oklahoma's 0.7-percent increase ranked 71st, placing both in the nation's top one-fourth. Combined, the two counties accounted for one-half of the State's employment gain. (See table A.)

Nationally, Orleans County, La., had the largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment (5.6 percent). Williamson, Texas, had the next largest increase, 4.3 percent, followed by the counties of Fort Bend, Texas (4.2 percent), Tulare, Calif. (4.0 percent), and Montgomery, Texas (3.8 percent). Employment declined in 188 counties during this period, with the largest percentage decline occurring in Lee, Fla. (-8.8 percent). Collier, Fla., had the next largest percentage decline (-6.8 percent), followed by the counties of Sarasota, Fla., and Elkhart, Ind. (-6.5 percent each), and Marion, Fla. (-6.0 percent).

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Of the 334 largest counties in the United States, 224 had average weekly wages below the national average of \$841. Oklahoma County's \$777 average weekly wage ranked 168th and Tulsa County's \$766 placed 183rd.

New York County, N.Y., led the nation with an average weekly wage of \$1,569. Santa Clara, Calif., was second at \$1,529, followed by Washington, D.C. (\$1,433), Arlington, Va. (\$1,376), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,334).

At the other end of the spectrum, wages averaged less than \$600 per week in six large counties in the United States. The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron, Texas (\$535), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$538), Horry, S.C. (\$539), Webb, Texas (\$562), Yakima, Wash. (\$580), and Tulare, Calif. (\$591). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than 40 percent of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, New York.

Over-the-year Wage Changes

Although Oklahoma's two large counties had average weekly wages that were below the national average, their over-the-year wage growth exceeded that of the nation (2.6 percent). In fact, Oklahoma's 6.0-percent wage gain ranked 9th nationally while Tulsa's 3.2-percent increase ranked 109th.

Rock Island, Ill., led the nation in growth in average weekly wages, with an increase of 10.5 percent from the second quarter of 2007. Weld, Colo., was second with growth of 10.4 percent, followed by the counties of Utah, Utah (9.4 percent), Whatcom, Wash. (8.3 percent), and East Baton Rouge, La. (7.8 percent).

Twenty-six large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest decrease (-43.7 percent), followed by the counties of Boone, Ky. (-10.0 percent), Ventura, Calif., and Trumbull, Ohio (-4.8 percent each), and Queens, N.Y. (-4.3 percent).

State Average Weekly Wages

On a statewide level, Oklahoma's average weekly wage of \$701 ranked 40th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia in the second quarter of 2008. Oklahoma's weekly wage was above that of neighboring Arkansas (\$661, 46th), but below that of Kansas (\$720, 33rd), Texas, (\$849, 14th) and Colorado (\$858, 13th). The District of Columbia had the highest weekly wage at \$1,433 and South Dakota had the lowest at \$606. (See table 2.)

Average weekly wages in the State of Oklahoma rose 5.3 percent from the second quarter of 2007 to the second quarter of 2008, ranking Oklahoma 5th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The District of Columbia ranked 1st with a 5.9-percent wage gain, followed by North Dakota (5.8 percent) and Louisiana (5.5 percent). An over-the-year decline in average weekly wages was recorded in two states: Delaware (-0.8 percent) and Georgia (-0.6 percent).

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 jobs. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing total quarterly 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, counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been adjusted (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 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 national 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* will be available for sale as a chartbook by the end of the first quarter 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.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient BLS Web site location, 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. For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Covered Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Dallas Information Office at 214-767-6970 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT. This release is available in text and PDF format on the Dallas BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/ro6/home.htm.

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 all of the counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2008 [2]

Area	Employment June 2008	Average weekly wage [3] second quarter 2008
United States [4]	136,631,800	\$841
Oklahoma	1,556,039	\$701
Adair County	5,419	\$535
Alfalfa County	1,360	\$512
Atoka County	3,362	\$523
Beaver County	1,455	\$623
Beckham County	10,057	\$742
Blaine County	3,381	\$571
Bryan County	15,911	\$577
Caddo County	7,121	\$630
Canadian County	26,847	\$662
Carter County	23,317	\$669
Cherokee County	15,074	\$545
Choctaw County	4,496	\$515
Cimarron County	641	\$447
Cleveland County	72,863	\$626
Coal County	1,073	\$515
Comanche County	42,431	\$587
Cotton County	1,903	\$565
Craig County	6,396	\$549
Creek County	17,777	\$668
Custer County	11,796	\$592
Delaware County	8,848	\$518
Dewey County	1,245	\$589
Ellis County	1,075	\$648
Garfield County	25,617	\$649
Garvin County	9,693	\$664
Grady County	12,995	\$597
Grant County	1,138	\$620
Greer County	1,380	\$571
Harmon County	711	\$497
Harper County	1,241	\$566
Haskell County	3,857	\$479
Hughes County	2,536	\$547
Jackson County	10,644	\$608
Jefferson County	1,154	\$510
Johnston County	2,970	\$553
Kay County	22,025	\$654
Kingfisher County	6,335	\$663
Kiowa County	2,379	\$520
Latimer County	4,559	\$768

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Covered [1] employment and wages in the United States and all of the counties in Oklahoma, second quarter 2008 [2] (continued)

Area	Employment June 2008	Average weekly wage [3] second quarter 2008
Le Flore County	13,688	\$543
Lincoln County	7,733	\$584
Logan County	7,019	\$549
Love County	3,694	\$485
Major County	2,437	\$611
Marshall County	4,444	\$570
Mayes County	11,869	\$607
McClain County	7,624	\$561
McCurtain County	10,056	\$575
McIntosh County	4,352	\$474
Murray County	5,477	\$546
Muskogee County	29,766	\$618
Noble County	4,269	\$676
Nowata County	1,812	\$526
Okfuskee County	2,279	\$549
Oklahoma County	425,000	\$777
Okmulgee County	10,564	\$538
Osage County	6,434	\$572
Ottawa County	12,069	\$544
Pawnee County	3,662	\$612
Payne County	32,442	\$638
Pittsburg County	18,605	\$678
Pontotoc County	17,500	\$580
Pottawatomie County	21,620	\$557
Pushmataha County	2,865	\$510
Roger Mills County	792	\$665
Rogers County	25,792	\$703
Seminole County	8,014	\$595
Sequoyah County	9,542	\$491
Stephens County	16,240	\$690
Texas County	8,872	\$611
Tillman County	2,076	\$547
Tulsa County	351,198	\$766
Wagoner County	7,738	\$621
Washington County	20,993	\$793
Washita County	2,236	\$646
Woods County	2,988	\$498
Woodward County	10,398	\$741

[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 2. Covered [1] employment and wages by state, second quarter 2008 [2]

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [3]			
	June 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, June 2007-08	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, second quarter 2007-08	National ranking by percent change
United States [4]	136,631.8	-0.3	\$841	-	2.6	-
Alabama	1,955.4	-0.5	720	33	3.3	15
Alaska	330.6	1.4	860	12	3.1	16
Arizona	2,543.9	-2.6	806	19	2.4	34
Arkansas	1,183.5	-0.2	661	46	3.4	11
California	15,760.3	-0.5	955	6	2.2	42
Colorado	2,346.3	0.8	858	13	3.1	16
Connecticut	1,722.3	0.5	1,036	4	0.3	49
Delaware	427.3	-0.9	862	10	-0.8	51
District of Columbia	691.4	1.2	1,433	1	5.9	1
Florida	7,620.1	-3.4	762	26	2.6	30
Georgia	4,059.7	-0.6	787	22	-0.6	50
Hawaii	623.9	-1.3	764	24	3.9	9
Idaho	671.9	-0.9	636	48	1.6	46
Illinois	5,930.0	-0.4	893	8	2.3	39
Indiana	2,906.5	-0.9	715	38	1.9	43
Iowa	1,521.2	0.1	683	42	2.9	23
Kansas	1,389.1	1.2	720	33	2.4	34
Kentucky	1,818.9	-0.5	718	35	2.6	30
Louisiana	1,900.3	1.2	750	29	5.5	3
Maine	620.3	0.1	676	44	2.7	28
Maryland	2,577.7	-0.3	920	7	2.8	26
Massachusetts	3,310.4	0.1	1,044	2	3.6	10
Michigan	4,163.3	-2.2	825	18	2.4	34
Minnesota	2,733.9	-0.5	849	14	1.8	45
Mississippi	1,139.1	0.1	635	49	4.4	7
Missouri	2,761.6	0.0	752	28	3.4	11
Montana	450.3	0.1	629	50	2.9	23
Nebraska	936.1	0.5	676	44	3.4	11
Nevada	1,271.8	-1.9	797	20	2.7	28
New Hampshire	641.9	-0.4	835	16	1.5	48
New Jersey	4,054.4	-0.4	1,004	5	1.6	46
New Mexico	837.2	0.6	715	38	4.2	8
New York	8,758.2	0.6	1,040	3	2.3	39
North Carolina	4,083.6	-0.1	735	31	2.4	34
North Dakota	356.4	2.5	654	47	5.8	2
Ohio	5,315.0	-1.3	757	27	2.3	39
Oklahoma	1,556.0	1.0	701	40	5.3	5
Oregon	1,747.4	-0.8	764	24	3.0	20
Pennsylvania	5,743.3	0.1	827	17	3.1	16
Rhode Island	481.6	-2.2	796	21	2.8	26
South Carolina	1,907.5	-0.6	681	43	2.4	34
South Dakota	409.0	1.2	606	51	2.9	23
Tennessee	2,752.7	-0.4	745	30	1.9	43
Texas	10,510.3	2.2	849	14	2.5	33
Utah	1,234.3	0.1	716	37	2.6	30
Vermont	305.6	-0.9	718	35	3.0	20
Virginia	3,720.4	-0.3	885	9	3.0	20
Washington	3,000.9	0.3	862	10	3.4	11
West Virginia	715.3	0.0	695	41	5.1	6
Wisconsin	2,836.8	-0.5	730	32	3.1	16
Wyoming	296.7	2.7	780	23	5.4	4
Puerto Rico	997.8	-2.0	475	[5]	3.5	[5]
Virgin Islands	45.9	-2.2	703	[5]	-0.6	[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.