



NEWS RELEASE



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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN TENNESSEE – FIRST QUARTER 2011

Employment advanced in all six of Tennessee's large counties from March 2010 to March 2011, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2010 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that Williamson County experienced the largest increase, up 4.1 percent, while Shelby County registered the smallest advance at 0.1 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment increased 1.3 percent during the 12-month period, as 256 of the 322 large U.S. counties gained jobs. Elkhart County, Ind., posted the largest percentage increase, up 6.2 percent. Sacramento, Calif., experienced the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment at 1.6 percent.

Among the six large counties in Tennessee, employment was highest in Shelby County (458,000) in March 2011. One other county, Davidson, had an employment level exceeding 400,000. All together, Tennessee's large counties accounted for 56.5 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.7 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 127.9 million in March 2011.

The average weekly wage in Shelby County rose 4.9 percent from the first quarter of 2010 to the first quarter of 2011, the largest increase among Tennessee's six large counties. Williamson County had the second highest rate at 4.4 percent. Williamson County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,054, followed by the counties of Davidson (\$927) and Shelby (\$915). (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 5.2 percent over the year to \$935 in the first quarter of 2011.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 89 counties in Tennessee with employment below 75,000. All but two of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Average weekly wages increased in all six of Tennessee's large counties from the first quarter of 2010 to the first quarter of 2011. Two of these counties ranked in the top half in wage growth among the 322 large counties nationwide—Shelby (4.9 percent, 99th) and Williamson (4.4 percent, 134th). The remaining four large counties recorded wage advances in the 3.2 to 0.1 percent range, all below the national increase of 5.2 percent. Hamilton County's 0.1-percent wage growth ranked 315th in the nation. (See table 1.)

Nationwide, 315 large counties experienced growth in average weekly wages. Peoria, Ill., ranked first with an over-the-year increase of 18.9 percent. Santa Clara, Calif., had the second largest increase (12.4 percent), followed by the counties of Macomb, Mich. (12.0 percent), Clayton, Ga. (11.9 percent), and Wayne, Mich. (11.3 percent).

Among the 322 largest counties, 3 had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages in the first quarter of 2011. Williamson, Texas, had the largest decrease in the nation (-3.8 percent), followed by the counties of Hudson, N.J. (-1.5 percent), and Durham, N.C. (-0.5 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 3 of Tennessee's 6 large counties placed in the top half of the national ranking among the 322 largest counties in the United States in the first quarter of 2011. Of the three highest-paid large counties in the state, only Williamson (\$1,054) recorded a wage greater than the national average, ranking 52nd nationwide. Tennessee's three other large counties placed in the bottom half of the national ranking with average weekly wages ranging from \$750 to \$785. (See table 1.)

Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than average in 94 of the 322 largest counties. New York, N.Y., recorded the highest average weekly wage at \$2,634. Fairfield, Conn., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,888, followed by Somerset, N.J. (\$1,867), Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,863) and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,723).

There were 228 large counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the first quarter of 2011. Horry County, S.C. (\$534) reported the lowest wage in the nation, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$546), Hidalgo, Texas (\$556), Lake, Fla. (\$586), and Webb, Texas (\$590).

Average weekly wages in Tennessee's smaller counties

Eighty-seven of Tennessee's 89 counties with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$935. Hancock (\$438) reported the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, while Roane recorded the highest at \$995. (See table 2.)

When all 95 counties in Tennessee were considered, 92 had wages below those for the nation. Thirteen counties reported average weekly wages under \$500, 35 had wages from \$500 to \$599, 30 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 9 had wages from \$700 to \$799, and 8 had wages above \$800. (See chart 1.)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly 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 <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 2009 edition of this bulletin contains selected data produced by the Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2010 version of the national news release. This web-only publication has replaced the annual print bulletin, *Employment and Wages Annual Averages*. The March 2010 issue of this annual bulletin was the final one to be issued on paper. Tables and additional content from the 2009 Employment and Wages Annual Bulletin are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn09.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 Southeast Information Office in Atlanta at 404-893-4222.

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 127.9 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 6 largest counties in Tennessee, first quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	March 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, first quarter 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	127,851.0	1.3	--	\$935	--	5.2	--
Tennessee	2,575.9	1.7	--	793	29	3.8	36
Davidson, Tenn.	415.0	1.0	158	927	98	3.2	219
Hamilton, Tenn.	181.0	2.0	65	785	206	0.1	315
Knox, Tenn.	215.4	1.9	74	750	240	3.0	236
Rutherford, Tenn.	95.7	1.6	97	771	220	2.1	285
Shelby, Tenn.	458.0	0.1	249	915	111	4.9	99
Williamson, Tenn.	89.6	4.1	8	1,054	52	4.4	134

(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 counties in Tennessee, first quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment March 2011	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment March 2011	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	127,850,997	\$935			
Tennessee	2,575,888	793	Knox	215,447	\$750
Anderson	38,815	963	Lake	1,170	456
Bedford	16,628	619	Lauderdale	5,358	576
Benton	3,577	504	Lawrence	9,848	547
Bledsoe	1,386	495	Lewis	2,417	442
Blount	39,786	744	Lincoln	8,809	571
Bradley	34,591	686	Loudon	13,650	644
Campbell	8,077	525	McMinn	15,235	662
Cannon	1,972	493	McNairy	6,073	525
Carroll	7,257	565	Macon	4,038	555
Carter	10,239	514	Madison	52,034	697
Ceatham	7,524	693	Marion	6,898	566
Chester	3,397	527	Marshall	7,212	591
Claiborne	8,453	524	Mauri	26,398	743
Clay	1,521	458	Meigs	1,800	557
Cocke	7,163	574	Monroe	11,965	606
Coffee	22,584	670	Montgomery	44,402	615
Crockett	3,371	626	Moore	1,558	694
Cumberland	15,502	536	Morgan	2,479	556
Davidson	414,972	927	Obion	11,268	709
Decatur	3,706	628	Overton	4,446	573
De Kalb	5,433	539	Perry	1,567	485
Dickson	13,768	610	Pickett	861	452
Dyer	14,127	627	Polk	2,184	514
Fayette	7,138	669	Putnam	31,423	608
Fentress	4,333	505	Rhea	10,180	721
Franklin	9,077	565	Roane	18,485	995
Gibson	13,947	574	Robertson	16,961	604
Giles	8,531	614	Rutherford	95,722	771
Grainger	3,079	517	Scott	5,026	499
Greene	23,939	659	Sequatchie	2,166	483
Grundy	2,059	460	Sevier	35,747	455
Hamblen	29,083	670	Shelby	457,976	915
Hamilton	181,017	785	Smith	4,654	623
Hancock	873	438	Stewart	2,554	888
Hardeman	6,268	695	Sullivan	66,161	908
Hardin	7,596	714	Sumner	40,912	640
Hawkins	11,257	686	Tipton	10,311	567
Haywood	4,971	650	Trousdale	1,462	538
Henderson	8,077	561	Unicoi	4,885	725
Henry	9,907	553	Union	2,540	662
Hickman	3,110	516	Van Buren	738	521
Houston	1,527	489	Warren	11,633	607
Humphreys	5,383	841	Washington	59,711	637
Jackson	1,365	589	Wayne	3,504	502
Jefferson	10,700	604	Weakley	9,567	542
Johnson	3,230	577	White	6,463	558
			Williamson	89,593	1,054
			Wilson	33,618	690

(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, first quarter 2011 (2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	March 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2010-11	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2010-11	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	127,851.0	1.3	\$935	--	5.2	--
Alabama	1,808.5	0.3	766	34	4.2	30
Alaska	310.1	2.0	912	15	3.8	36
Arizona	2,392.1	0.7	837	21	4.9	17
Arkansas	1,133.5	0.3	715	47	6.1	6
California	14,413.8	1.2	1,066	6	6.2	5
Colorado	2,179.8	1.3	952	11	4.4	27
Connecticut	1,589.2	1.4	1,282	3	6.3	4
Delaware	396.0	2.1	1,026	7	5.7	11
District of Columbia	702.3	2.5	1,540	1	2.4	51
Florida	7,235.9	1.2	794	28	3.8	36
Georgia	3,771.0	1.4	885	17	5.7	11
Hawaii	593.8	1.2	790	30	3.1	47
Idaho	590.3	-0.1	659	48	4.1	31
Illinois	5,472.4	1.2	1,003	9	6.0	7
Indiana	2,717.1	1.9	772	33	4.5	22
Iowa	1,419.3	0.6	738	40	4.5	22
Kansas	1,293.3	0.6	748	36	4.0	33
Kentucky	1,715.6	1.5	737	42	3.7	40
Louisiana	1,841.3	0.9	798	27	4.5	22
Maine	558.6	0.1	723	43	4.8	18
Maryland	2,452.1	1.3	1,010	8	3.6	41
Massachusetts	3,116.5	1.2	1,159	5	5.8	10
Michigan	3,757.7	2.2	872	19	7.1	2
Minnesota	2,530.7	1.4	935	14	6.0	7
Mississippi	1,074.8	0.6	650	51	3.2	46
Missouri	2,562.3	0.3	786	31	3.0	49
Montana	412.2	0.4	656	50	3.6	41
Nebraska	886.2	0.7	721	46	3.9	35
Nevada	1,102.6	0.4	802	26	3.0	49
New Hampshire	596.3	1.1	876	18	5.2	15
New Jersey	3,701.1	0.0	1,160	4	3.5	43
New Mexico	776.5	-0.1	738	40	3.1	47
New York	8,336.5	1.2	1,368	2	6.7	3
North Carolina	3,809.6	1.6	825	22	4.3	29
North Dakota	364.5	5.0	748	36	9.5	1
Ohio	4,870.6	1.4	819	23	4.6	19
Oklahoma	1,491.5	1.0	739	39	5.3	13
Oregon	1,590.3	1.3	812	24	4.6	19
Pennsylvania	5,459.3	1.5	896	16	4.6	19
Rhode Island	438.1	0.1	863	20	3.4	44
South Carolina	1,767.2	1.4	722	45	4.5	22
South Dakota	382.3	1.3	659	48	4.1	31
Tennessee	2,575.9	1.7	793	29	3.8	36
Texas	10,324.3	2.2	946	13	5.9	9
Utah	1,156.9	2.0	753	35	3.4	44
Vermont	291.9	0.9	741	38	3.8	36
Virginia	3,539.9	1.5	968	10	4.0	33
Washington	2,785.3	1.2	947	12	5.2	15
West Virginia	689.3	1.0	723	43	4.5	22
Wisconsin	2,609.5	1.6	779	32	5.3	13
Wyoming	265.2	1.0	808	25	4.4	27
Puerto Rico	923.0	-2.6	500	(5)	0.8	(5)
Virgin Islands	45.1	0.4	738	(5)	1.0	(5)

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

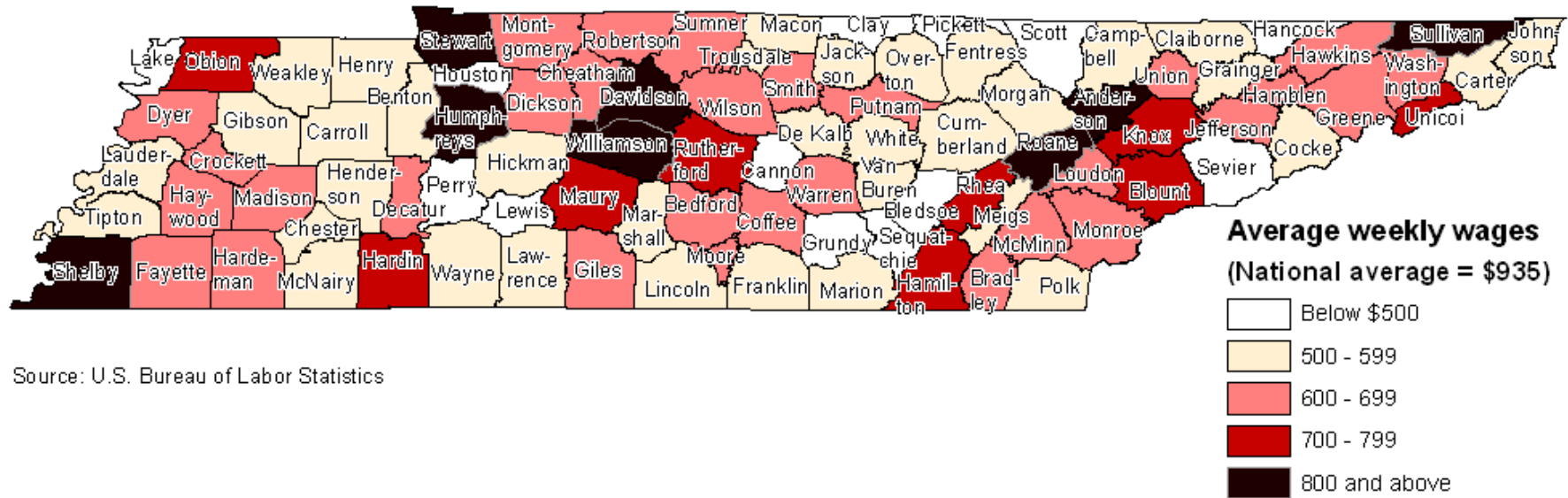
(2) Data are preliminary.

(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 Tennessee, first quarter 2011



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics