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County Employment and Wages in Pennsylvania – First Quarter 2018

All large counties in Pennsylvania had average weekly wage increases over the year

Employment rose in 18 of the 19 largest counties in Pennsylvania from March 2017 to March 2018, 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 2017 annual average employment.) Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that Lancaster County's 2.1-percent rate of employment growth was the fastest in Pennsylvania, followed by Lehigh County with an employment increase of 2.0 percent. Erie County's employment was unchanged from March 2017 to March 2018.

Nationally, employment grew 1.6 percent during this 12-month period, as 314 of the 349 large counties nationwide gained jobs. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase in employment, up 12.6 percent over the year. Kanawha, W.Va., had the largest employment decrease with a loss of 1.4 percent.

Among the 19 largest counties in Pennsylvania, employment was highest in Allegheny County (691,300) in March 2018. One other county, Philadelphia, had employment above 600,000. Together, Pennsylvania's 19 large counties accounted for 77.0 percent of total employment within the commonwealth. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 73.1 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Westmoreland County increased 4.5 percent from the first quarter of 2017 to the first quarter of 2018—the largest wage increase among Pennsylvania's largest counties and ranked 56th nationwide. The remaining 18 large counties in Pennsylvania had wage increases ranging from 4.3 percent in Delaware to 0.5 percent in Butler. (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.7 percent over the year to $1,152 in the first quarter of 2018.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 48 counties in Pennsylvania with employment below 75,000. Forty-seven of these smaller counties had weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Five of Pennsylvania's 19 large counties had over-the-year wage increases greater than the national increase of 3.7 percent in the first quarter of 2018. All five of these counties had wage growth that ranked in the top 100 of the 349 large counties nationwide. Among the remaining 14 large counties in Pennsylvania, the smallest wage gain was in Butler (0.5 percent, ranked 326th), followed by Lehigh (0.7 percent, ranked 322nd).

Among the 349 largest U.S. counties, 336 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Peoria, Ill., had the largest percentage wage increase, (23.8 percent). Of the 13 counties with over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages, Forsyth, N.C., had the largest decrease at 4.8 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

The average weekly wage in Montgomery ($1,497) ranked 26th among the nation's 339 largest counties. Chester ($1,479) and Philadelphia ($1,322) also ranked in the top 50 nationwide. In addition to these counties, Delaware, Allegheny, and Washington also had wages above the U.S. average of $1,152.

Five large counties in the commonwealth had average weekly wages that placed in the bottom fourth of the national ranking—Erie, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Luzerne, and Westmoreland. Wages in these counties were more than 20 percent below the national average for the first quarter of 2018.

Average weekly wages in Pennsylvania's smaller counties

Forty-seven of the 48 counties in Pennsylvania with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of $1,152. The exception was Montour County with wages of $1,249. Perry had the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, averaging $612 in the first quarter of 2018. (See table 2.)

When all 67 counties in Pennsylvania were considered, 60 had average weekly wages below the national average of $1,152. Six reported wages below $700, 21 had wages from $700 to $799, 18 had wages from $800 to $899, 11 had wages from $900 to $999, and 11 had wages above $1,000. (See chart 1.) Four of the seven counties with wages above the national average of $1,152 were located in the Philadelphia metropolitan area, and two were located in the Pittsburgh area.

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/.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2017 edition of this publication is now available and contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2018 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2017 are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn17.htm. The 2018 edition of Employment and Wages Annual Online will be available in September 2019.

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 10.0 million employer reports cover 144.6 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.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 19 largest counties in Pennsylvania, first quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	March 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2017-18 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, first quarter 2017-18 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	144,562.9	1.6	--	$1,152	--	3.7	--
Pennsylvania	5,787.2	1.4	--	1,115	16	3.4	22
Allegheny, Pa.	691.3	1.2	181	1,238	67	3.1	160
Berks, Pa.	171.8	1.2	181	976	197	4.2	70
Bucks, Pa.	261.8	1.2	181	1,002	173	2.5	214
Butler, Pa.	84.9	0.1	370	967	203	0.5	326
Chester, Pa.	247.7	1.3	170	1,479	29	4.2	70
Cumberland, Pa.	132.7	0.4	282	997	178	3.5	124
Dauphin, Pa.	180.5	1.9	113	1,085	125	2.5	214
Delaware, Pa.	222.5	1.2	181	1,272	60	4.3	65
Erie, Pa.	120.2	0.0	315	825	316	3.1	160
Lackawanna, Pa.	97.2	1.2	181	808	324	4.1	78
Lancaster, Pa.	238.3	2.1	93	902	264	2.2	253
Lehigh, Pa.	188.9	2.0	103	1,073	131	0.7	322
Luzerne, Pa.	143.6	1.3	170	837	309	1.6	302
Montgomery, Pa.	490.0	1.0	212	1,497	26	3.5	124
Northampton, Pa.	113.4	0.4	282	932	234	1.7	293
Philadelphia, Pa.	677.2	1.5	149	1,322	47	3.4	132
Washington, Pa.	86.0	1.6	140	1,228	68	3.3	141
Westmoreland, Pa.	131.9	0.5	273	880	278	4.5	56
York, Pa.	178.0	0.9	222	936	226	3.3	141

Footnotes:
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.
(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Pennsylvania, 1st quarter 2018

Area	Employment March 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	144,562,926	$1,152
Pennsylvania	5,787,229	1,115
Adams	34,686	782
Allegheny	691,325	1,238
Armstrong	16,336	776
Beaver	51,550	915
Bedford	15,258	687
Berks	171,798	976
Blair	57,779	782
Bradford	22,724	912
Bucks	261,833	1,002
Butler	84,938	967
Cambria	50,522	745
Cameron	1,939	757
Carbon	16,694	689
Centre	68,820	950
Chester	247,696	1,479
Clarion	13,317	669
Clearfield	29,547	771
Clinton	13,211	801
Columbia	24,626	780
Crawford	29,685	777
Cumberland	132,733	997
Dauphin	180,471	1,085
Delaware	222,456	1,272
Elk	14,834	840
Erie	120,158	825
Fayette	38,498	753
Forest	1,915	856
Franklin	58,697	830
Fulton	6,022	895
Greene	12,816	1,101
Huntingdon	12,274	748
Indiana	29,563	918
Jefferson	15,526	766
Juniata	6,782	666
Lackawanna	97,216	808
Lancaster	238,255	902
Lawrence	27,724	780
Lebanon	49,727	807
Lehigh	188,882	1,073
Luzerne	143,586	837
Lycoming	51,113	842
Mckean	15,004	805
Mercer	45,879	800
Mifflin	15,582	742
Monroe	55,264	856
Montgomery	490,047	1,497
Montour	15,584	1,249
Northampton	113,370	932
Northumberland	26,683	775
Perry	7,737	612
Philadelphia	677,173	1,322
Pike	10,800	642
Potter	5,416	817
Schuylkill	48,716	812

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Pennsylvania, 1st quarter 2018 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
Snyder	16,612	725
Somerset	23,742	760
Sullivan	1,613	702
Susquehanna	8,988	827
Tioga	12,374	791
Union	17,448	852
Venango	17,719	729
Warren	14,438	783
Washington	85,974	1,228
Wayne	14,308	743
Westmoreland	131,926	880
Wyoming	9,430	920
York	177,959	936

Footnotes
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

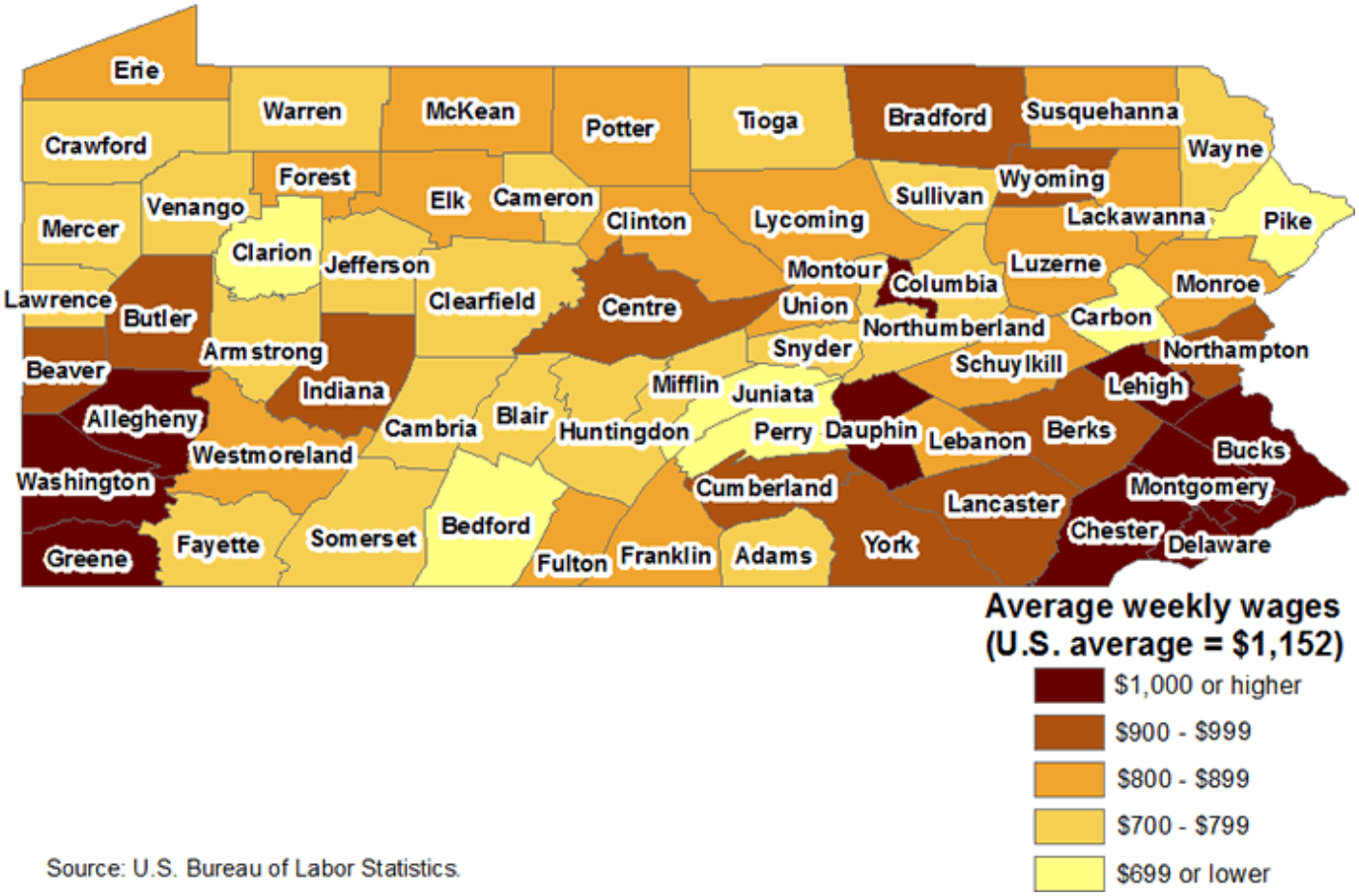
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, first quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	March 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	144,562.9	1.6	$1,152	--	3.7	--
Alabama	1,948.9	1.1	919	36	2.9	34
Alaska	311.2	-0.5	1,074	20	2.3	44
Arizona	2,822.5	2.8	1,025	22	3.5	19
Arkansas	1,211.4	0.9	879	44	2.4	40
California	17,152.5	2.1	1,352	6	4.4	6
Colorado	2,639.5	2.5	1,175	11	3.4	22
Connecticut	1,651.9	0.1	1,447	4	2.4	40
Delaware	438.7	1.2	1,202	10	1.3	51
District of Columbia	770.2	1.2	1,917	1	1.9	49
Florida	8,716.8	2.2	988	25	4.1	9
Georgia	4,409.1	2.3	1,095	17	2.3	44
Hawaii	658.4	0.3	974	29	2.3	44
Idaho	712.6	3.5	809	50	4.3	7
Illinois	5,909.3	1.0	1,241	8	3.9	10
Indiana	3,018.8	1.2	954	32	3.9	10
Iowa	1,525.8	0.5	921	35	2.4	40
Kansas	1,370.6	0.2	912	40	2.7	38
Kentucky	1,873.7	0.5	901	41	2.5	39
Louisiana	1,914.7	0.5	932	34	3.0	30
Maine	592.1	0.9	891	43	3.6	16
Maryland	2,646.9	0.9	1,209	9	3.2	26
Massachusetts	3,509.9	1.1	1,510	3	5.6	2
Michigan	4,289.0	1.4	1,078	19	3.4	22
Minnesota	2,823.6	0.7	1,175	11	2.1	47
Mississippi	1,125.9	0.1	765	51	2.1	47
Missouri	2,777.6	0.5	960	31	3.1	28
Montana	455.5	1.0	819	49	2.4	40
Nebraska	966.0	0.4	898	42	3.6	16
Nevada	1,351.6	3.0	977	28	4.8	5
New Hampshire	648.2	0.8	1,122	15	4.9	3
New Jersey	3,997.6	1.3	1,373	5	3.0	30
New Mexico	813.3	1.0	862	47	2.9	34
New York	9,318.9	1.8	1,597	2	3.4	22
North Carolina	4,370.6	1.8	1,022	23	3.0	30
North Dakota	408.2	0.6	988	25	3.7	15
Ohio	5,328.5	0.9	1,005	24	2.9	34
Oklahoma	1,600.9	1.8	914	38	3.5	19
Oregon	1,894.3	2.0	1,026	21	4.3	7
Pennsylvania	5,787.2	1.4	1,115	16	3.4	22
Rhode Island	469.9	1.1	1,086	18	3.2	26
South Carolina	2,067.4	2.2	877	45	1.7	50
South Dakota	417.5	1.0	842	48	2.8	37
Tennessee	2,950.0	1.6	978	27	3.5	19
Texas	12,179.2	2.0	1,168	13	3.9	10
Utah	1,458.8	3.3	949	33	4.9	3
Vermont	307.1	0.4	917	37	3.1	28
Virginia	3,854.4	1.5	1,162	14	3.0	30
Washington	3,316.1	2.8	1,306	7	7.7	1
West Virginia	684.8	0.6	868	46	3.6	16
Wisconsin	2,831.7	1.0	968	30	3.8	14
Wyoming	263.7	0.3	914	38	3.9	10
Puerto Rico	856.7	-3.8	563	[3]	7.0	[3]
Virgin Islands	33.3	-15.5	969	[3]	24.4	[3]

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.
(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.
(3) Data not included in the national ranking.
Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Pennsylvania, first quarter 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.