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County Employment and Wages in Colorado – Fourth Quarter 2018

Employment rose in all nine large counties in Colorado from December 2017 to December 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2017 average annual employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that Weld County (3.9 percent) had the fastest employment growth among the nine largest counties in the state. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationwide, employment advanced 1.5 percent during the 12-month period as 296 of the 349 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Midland, TX, had the largest over-the-year percentage increase, up 10.0 percent. Bay, FL, experienced the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.6 percent.

Among the nine largest counties in Colorado, employment was highest in Denver County (522,900) and lowest in Weld (111,400) in December 2018. Together, the nine largest Colorado counties accounted for 80.6 percent of total employment within the state.

Average weekly wages increased in 8 of the 9 large counties in Colorado. Douglas County (-3.6 percent) was the only large county to record a decrease over the year. Jefferson County had the largest over-the-year wage increase among the state's large counties, up 8.7 percent. Denver County (\$1,414) had the highest average weekly wage among Colorado's large counties and was above the national average of \$1,144. (See [table 1.](#))

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 55 counties in Colorado with employment levels below 75,000. Of these small counties, Broomfield (\$1,546) had the highest average weekly wage level. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

Jefferson County's 8.7-percent annual wage increase ranked eighth among large U.S. counties in the fourth quarter of 2018. Three large counties registered increases of 6.0 percent each and ranked 25th: Boulder, Denver, and Larimer. Douglas County had an over-the-year decline of 3.6 percent, which ranked 346th among the 349 large U.S. counties. (See [table 1.](#))

Average weekly wages for the nation increased to \$1,144, a 3.2-percent increase over the year. Of the 349 largest U.S. counties, 332 had over-the-year wage increases. Tippecanoe, IN, had the largest fourth quarter over-the-year wage gain at 15.1 percent. Fifteen large U.S. counties had over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Washington, PA, recorded the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 6.6 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Three of the state's large counties had average weekly wages that placed in the top 50 of the 349 largest U.S. counties in the fourth quarter of 2018. Average weekly wages in Denver County (\$1,414, 25th), Boulder County (\$1,354, 39th), and Arapahoe County (\$1,306, 47th) recorded wages above the national average of \$1,144. Douglas County (\$1,272, 51st) and Jefferson County (\$1,211, 67th) also recorded wages above the national average and were in the top third of the national ranking. The four remaining large counties in Colorado had average weekly wages that placed in the middle-third of the national ranking.

Nationally, 94 large counties registered average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2018. Santa Clara, CA, held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,670. San Francisco, CA, was second at \$2,452. The average weekly wage in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, CA, was nearly four times the average weekly wage in the lowest-ranked county, Hidalgo, TX (\$680).

Average weekly wages in Colorado's smaller counties

Of the 55 counties in Colorado with employment below 75,000, Broomfield County reported the highest average weekly wage at \$1,546 and San Juan County reported the lowest average weekly wage at \$548 in the fourth quarter of 2018. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 64 counties in Colorado were considered, 6 had wages above the national average. Thirteen reported average weekly wages of \$1000 or higher, 5 reported wages from \$900 to \$999, 18 had wages from \$800 to \$899, 16 recorded wages from \$700 to \$799, and 12 counties had wages of \$699 or less. (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 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 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 <https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn17.htm>. The 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2019.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 21, 2019, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

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 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: (800) 877-8339

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 9 largest counties in Colorado, fourth quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	148,061.8	1.5	--	\$1,144	--	3.2	--
Colorado.....	2,713.7	2.2	--	1,180	10	4.1	11
Adams.....	220.0	3.7	12	1,094	123	2.0	257
Arapahoe.....	334.5	1.6	126	1,306	47	3.0	176
Boulder.....	185.8	1.9	86	1,354	39	6.0	25
Denver.....	522.9	1.8	100	1,414	25	6.0	25
Douglas.....	127.7	1.7	114	1,272	51	-3.6	346
El Paso.....	280.0	2.2	60	1,013	189	4.6	65
Jefferson.....	241.3	1.6	126	1,211	67	8.7	8
Larimer.....	163.5	2.7	36	1,064	150	6.0	25
Weld.....	111.4	3.9	9	1,014	188	5.3	43

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 Colorado, 4th quarter 2018

Area	Employment December 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	148,061,773	\$1,144
Colorado	2,713,706	1,180
Adams	220,006	1,094
Alamosa	8,271	763
Arapahoe	334,539	1,306
Archuleta	4,151	697
Baca	1,105	624
Bent	1,075	744
Boulder	185,785	1,354
Broomfield	40,255	1,546
Chaffee	7,946	824
Cheyenne	695	855
Clear Creek	3,422	904
Conejos	1,449	625
Costilla	895	612
Crowley	1,085	830
Custer	851	675
Delta	8,450	703
Denver	522,914	1,414
Dolores	538	672
Douglas	127,650	1,272
Eagle	35,471	945
Elbert	3,764	880
El Paso	280,019	1,013
Fremont	13,494	824
Garfield	26,263	1,009
Gilpin	4,734	886
Grand	8,265	723
Gunnison	8,829	771
Hinsdale	254	666
Huerfano	1,753	698
Jackson	569	865
Jefferson	241,298	1,211
Kiowa	482	762
Kit Carson	2,819	742
Lake	2,498	823
La Plata	26,057	991
Larimer	163,454	1,064
Las Animas	5,033	842
Lincoln	2,266	761
Logan	8,052	808
Mesa	63,396	895
Mineral	706	554
Moffat	4,750	978
Montezuma	9,046	713
Montrose	15,400	801
Morgan	12,520	953
Otero	6,056	736
Ouray	1,796	776
Park	2,365	809
Phillips	1,694	769
Pitkin	18,536	1,111
Prowers	4,472	684
Pueblo	61,586	872
Rio Blanco	2,683	1,086
Rio Grande	3,922	782
Routt	16,188	889

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Colorado, 4th quarter 2018 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2018	Average Weekly Wage(1)
Saguache	1,555	663
San Juan	282	548
San Miguel	6,078	841
Sedgwick	787	721
Summit	24,582	819
Teller.....	7,240	777
Washington.....	1,241	786
Weld	111,425	1,014
Yuma	4,419	848

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, fourth quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	148,061.8	1.5	\$1,144	--	3.2	--
Alabama.....	1,986.6	1.6	957	36	3.1	33
Alaska.....	308.3	0.4	1,103	16	4.9	7
Arizona.....	2,921.1	3.0	1,017	24	4.1	11
Arkansas.....	1,227.0	0.8	869	50	2.4	43
California.....	17,556.7	1.7	1,392	4	3.3	26
Colorado.....	2,713.7	2.2	1,180	10	4.1	11
Connecticut.....	1,697.9	0.5	1,334	5	1.3	49
Delaware.....	451.2	1.1	1,107	15	2.4	43
District of Columbia.....	775.1	0.6	1,943	1	7.3	2
Florida.....	8,902.7	2.1	1,006	27	3.1	33
Georgia.....	4,499.8	1.8	1,053	21	2.4	43
Hawaii.....	669.3	0.6	1,016	25	3.3	26
Idaho.....	734.4	3.2	890	47	3.6	20
Illinois.....	6,026.0	0.3	1,189	9	3.3	26
Indiana.....	3,086.2	0.9	941	38	2.8	37
Iowa.....	1,558.4	0.5	966	35	3.0	35
Kansas.....	1,402.2	0.8	927	41	3.7	18
Kentucky.....	1,914.0	0.3	924	42	3.2	30
Louisiana.....	1,934.1	0.7	968	34	3.8	15
Maine.....	618.4	1.3	906	44	2.5	41
Maryland.....	2,702.5	0.8	1,228	8	1.7	48
Massachusetts.....	3,620.3	1.0	1,457	2	3.3	26
Michigan.....	4,366.5	1.0	1,077	19	1.3	49
Minnesota.....	2,902.3	0.9	1,140	14	3.6	20
Mississippi.....	1,144.3	0.2	793	51	2.5	41
Missouri.....	2,821.3	0.5	980	31	3.6	20
Montana.....	468.8	1.6	888	48	5.2	5
Nebraska.....	983.0	0.2	930	40	3.2	30
Nevada.....	1,397.4	3.3	1,006	27	5.3	4
New Hampshire.....	666.0	0.7	1,158	12	2.3	46
New Jersey.....	4,125.6	0.8	1,298	6	2.7	38
New Mexico.....	830.2	1.5	905	45	4.6	9
New York.....	9,613.2	1.5	1,445	3	1.0	51
North Carolina.....	4,458.9	1.6	1,013	26	5.1	6
North Dakota.....	422.3	1.5	1,057	20	4.7	8
Ohio.....	5,442.9	0.5	1,006	27	3.4	24
Oklahoma.....	1,632.3	1.5	932	39	4.1	11
Oregon.....	1,935.8	1.7	1,052	22	3.7	18
Pennsylvania.....	5,932.5	1.0	1,103	16	2.6	39
Rhode Island.....	487.2	0.8	1,085	18	2.6	39
South Carolina.....	2,119.6	2.8	893	46	1.9	47
South Dakota.....	428.4	1.2	885	49	3.4	24
Tennessee.....	3,039.8	1.8	1,030	23	3.0	35
Texas.....	12,531.7	2.5	1,148	13	3.5	23
Utah.....	1,511.5	3.2	972	33	3.8	15
Vermont.....	314.2	-0.4	954	37	3.2	30
Virginia.....	3,927.2	1.1	1,164	11	3.8	15
Washington.....	3,384.2	2.4	1,292	7	6.3	3
West Virginia.....	704.2	1.5	917	43	8.3	1
Wisconsin.....	2,892.3	0.6	989	30	4.0	14
Wyoming.....	272.1	1.8	978	32	4.4	10
Puerto Rico.....	896.4	0.8	576	(3)	0.9	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	34.5	0.5	925	(3)	2.3	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

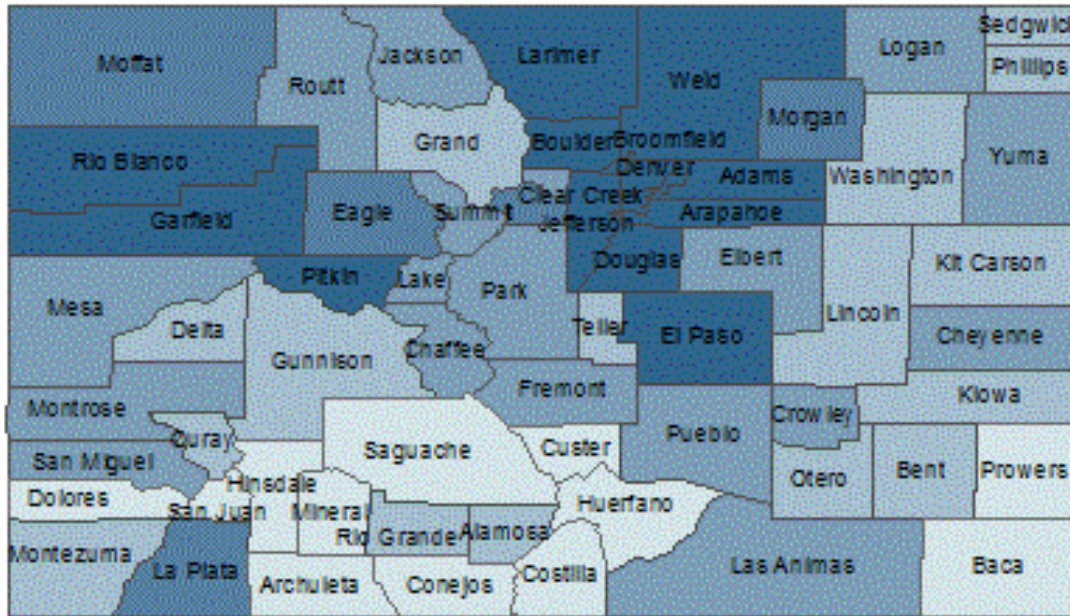
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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 Colorado, fourth quarter 2018



Average weekly wages

(U.S. average = \$1,144)



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.