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Parish Employment and Wages in Louisiana – First Quarter 2019

Employment rose in 4 of the 7 largest parishes in Louisiana from March 2018 to March 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties/parishes are those with 2018 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rate of job growth in St. Tammany Parish, 2.2 percent, ranked 69th highest among the 355 large U.S. counties. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.4 percent from March 2018 to March 2019 as 298 of the 355 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Midland, TX, had the largest percentage increase, up 5.8 percent over the year. Bay, FL, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.9 percent.

Among the seven largest parishes in Louisiana, employment was highest in East Baton Rouge (267,600) in March 2019, followed by Orleans (197,800) and Jefferson (188,200). Together, Louisiana's seven large parishes accounted for 56.7 percent of the state's total employment. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the first quarter of 2018 to the first quarter of 2019, Calcasieu recorded the biggest increase in average weekly wages among the large Louisiana parishes, with a gain of 5.1 percent. (See [table 1.](#)) Orleans had the highest average wage among the largest parishes at \$1,064 per week. Nationally, average weekly wages increased 2.8 percent over the year to \$1,184.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 57 parishes in Louisiana with employment below 75,000. Wage levels in six of these smaller parishes were above the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large parish wage changes

Average weekly wages rose in all seven large Louisiana parishes from the first quarter of 2018 to the first quarter of 2019. Calcasieu Parish's 5.1-percent rise in average weekly wages ranked 31st among the nation's 355 largest counties. (See [table 1.](#)) Jefferson Parish's 3.3-percent weekly wage increase ranked 110th in the nation. The smallest increase among the large Louisiana parishes was in Orleans (0.8 percent, 303rd). Over-the-year wage gains in the remaining four large parishes ranged from 2.8 percent to 2.2 percent.

Among the 355 largest U.S. counties, 325 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. San Francisco, CA, had the largest over-the-year wage gain, up 10.2 percent from the first quarter of 2018. Over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages occurred in 28 large U.S. counties. Elkhart, IN, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 7.6 percent.

Large parish average weekly wages

Weekly wages in all seven large parishes in Louisiana were below the national average of \$1,184 in the first quarter of 2019. However, average weekly wage levels in two of these parishes placed in the top half of the national ranking. Orleans (\$1,064) had the highest average weekly wage among the state's large parishes and ranked 153rd in the country, followed by East Baton Rouge (\$1,050, 166th). Average weekly wages in the five remaining large parishes ranged from \$1,007 to \$859 and placed in bottom half of the national ranking.

In the first quarter of 2019, 263 of the 355 largest U.S. counties reported wages below the national weekly average of \$1,184. Cameron, TX, reported the lowest wage (\$648), followed by Horry County, SC (\$652), and Hidalgo, TX (\$662).

Among the nation's 355 largest counties, 92 registered weekly wages above the U.S. average. New York, NY, held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$3,153. San Francisco, CA, was second at \$2,759, closely followed by Santa Clara, CA, at \$2,758. Average wages in the highest-ranked county, New York, NY, were nearly five times the average wage in the lowest-ranked county, Cameron, TX (\$648).

Average weekly wages in Louisiana's smaller parishes

For smaller parishes in Louisiana – those with employment below 75,000 – 51 of 57 reported weekly wages below the national average (\$1,184) in the first quarter of 2019. In the six remaining smaller parishes, wages not only exceeded the national average, but were also the highest in the state, ranging from \$1,900 in Cameron to \$1,419 in West Feliciana. Franklin Parish had the lowest weekly wages in the state at \$574. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 64 parishes were considered, 3 reported average weekly wages of \$599 or less, 28 registered wages from \$600 to \$749, 11 had wages from \$750 to \$899, 11 had wages from \$900 to \$1,049, and 11 had wages of \$1,050 or more. (See [chart 1](#).) The higher-paying parishes were concentrated in the southern half of the state around the metropolitan areas of Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, and New Orleans. The lowest-paid parishes, those with weekly wages under \$600, were located in the northeastern quadrant of the state.

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 2018 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 2019 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2018/home.htm.

The County Employment and Wages release for second quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, November 20, 2019.

QCEW Data Now Available in Census Business Builder Version 2.6

The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data is now available in Census Business Builder Version 2.6, a suite of U.S. Census Bureau web tools that assists business owners and regional analysts in data-driven decision making. As the first collaboration of this type between the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau, this data-sharing project makes data more accessible for local users and enhances the efficiency of digital service delivery. The Census Business Builder is available at: www.census.gov/data/data-tools/cbb.html.

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 (see Technical Note below) 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 7 largest parishes in Louisiana, first quarter 2019

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, first quarter 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	146,497.6	1.4	--	\$1,184	--	2.8	--
Louisiana	1,916.8	-0.1	--	954	34	2.5	32
Caddo, La.....	111.5	-0.3	316	859	314	2.3	200
Calcasieu, La.....	102.5	-1.6	348	1,007	191	5.1	31
East Baton Rouge, La.....	267.6	0.3	263	1,050	166	2.2	212
Jefferson, La.....	188.2	-0.2	308	960	223	3.3	110
Lafayette, La.....	130.4	1.0	184	914	273	2.8	153
Orleans, La.....	197.8	0.9	201	1,064	153	0.8	303
St. Tammany, La.....	89.3	2.2	69	921	270	2.8	153

(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 parishes in Louisiana, 1st quarter 2019

Area	Employment March 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	146,497,599	\$1,184
Louisiana	1,916,817	954
Acadia	14,285	682
Allen	7,643	735
Ascension	47,501	1,151
Assumption	3,795	825
Avoyelles	10,373	601
Beauregard	7,222	871
Bienville	4,227	767
Bossier	44,402	800
Caddo	111,522	859
Calcasieu	102,496	1,007
Caldwell	2,265	637
Cameron	9,467	1,900
Catahoula	1,933	594
Claiborne	3,417	736
Concordia	5,109	677
De Soto	6,967	1,044
East Baton Rouge	267,609	1,050
East Carroll	1,673	584
East Feliciana	5,189	862
Evangeline	7,661	649
Franklin	4,742	574
Grant	3,368	737
Iberia	26,326	925
Iberville	15,595	1,440
Jackson	3,289	753
Jefferson	188,182	960
Jefferson Davis	8,021	709
La Salle	4,684	745
Lafayette	130,353	914
Lafourche	33,727	961
Lincoln	19,330	696
Livingston	28,620	732
Madison	3,061	600
Morehouse	6,560	660
Natchitoches	13,265	692
Orleans	197,774	1,064
Ouachita	70,299	800
Plaquemines	12,171	1,450
Pointe Coupee	5,250	911
Rapides	56,397	796
Red River	2,519	725
Richland	6,453	641
Sabine	5,417	687
St. Bernard	10,027	1,043
St. Charles	23,031	1,525
St. Helena	1,542	711
St. James	8,069	1,575
St. John the Baptist	14,801	1,118
St. Landry	23,708	698
St. Martin	11,761	822
St. Mary	21,236	969
St. Tammany	89,287	921
Tangipahoa	43,520	685
Tensas	868	626

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all parishes in Louisiana, 1st quarter 2019 - Continued

Area	Employment March 2019	Average weekly wage(1)
Terrebonne	49,782	974
Union	5,160	625
Vermilion.....	12,544	747
Vernon	12,547	767
Washington.....	10,301	682
Webster	11,707	736
West Baton Rouge	12,840	1,127
West Carroll.....	2,020	630
West Feliciana	5,795	1,419
Winn	4,441	730

(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: Covered employment and wages 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 2019

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	March 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2018-19	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2018-19	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	146,497.6	1.4	\$1,184	--	2.8	--
Alabama	1,978.0	1.6	944	38	2.5	32
Alaska	312.4	0.3	1,108	18	3.3	9
Arizona	2,895.1	2.5	1,056	22	3.0	21
Arkansas	1,218.5	0.7	896	45	2.2	38
California	17,436.4	1.8	1,401	5	3.8	4
Colorado	2,690.3	1.9	1,231	9	4.8	2
Connecticut	1,650.6	0.0	1,487	4	2.3	34
Delaware	444.1	1.3	1,199	13	-0.1	51
District of Columbia	773.5	0.5	1,921	1	0.2	49
Florida	8,894.3	2.1	1,015	26	2.7	25
Georgia.....	4,488.6	2.1	1,121	17	2.6	28
Hawaii.....	658.1	-0.4	1,006	27	3.4	8
Idaho	732.3	2.7	828	50	2.3	34
Illinois	5,912.0	0.1	1,275	8	2.7	25
Indiana.....	3,059.1	1.2	963	33	0.9	48
Iowa	1,527.1	0.1	942	39	2.3	34
Kansas	1,379.3	0.6	940	40	3.2	12
Kentucky.....	1,882.6	0.6	920	41	2.2	38
Louisiana	1,916.8	-0.1	954	34	2.5	32
Maine.....	599.8	1.2	919	42	3.1	16
Maryland.....	2,670.3	0.9	1,228	10	1.7	45
Massachusetts	3,558.1	1.1	1,561	3	3.5	7
Michigan	4,307.4	0.6	1,078	20	0.1	50
Minnesota.....	2,840.8	0.5	1,203	12	2.3	34
Mississippi.....	1,129.8	0.4	779	51	1.8	43
Missouri.....	2,788.4	0.5	986	31	2.6	28
Montana	458.8	0.9	844	49	3.1	16
Nebraska	965.6	0.1	917	43	2.2	38
Nevada	1,392.2	3.0	992	29	1.5	47
New Hampshire.....	656.2	1.2	1,156	15	3.1	16
New Jersey.....	4,040.2	1.3	1,399	6	1.7	45
New Mexico.....	825.4	1.3	890	47	3.2	12
New York	9,453.5	1.5	1,639	2	2.6	28
North Carolina	4,458.5	2.0	1,054	23	3.2	12
North Dakota	414.3	1.5	1,021	25	3.3	9
Ohio	5,363.2	0.7	1,035	24	3.0	21
Oklahoma.....	1,617.0	1.1	953	35	4.3	3
Oregon	1,921.9	1.3	1,060	21	3.3	9
Pennsylvania.....	5,850.3	1.1	1,146	16	2.8	24
Rhode Island	474.7	0.8	1,104	19	1.8	43
South Carolina.....	2,110.0	2.0	901	44	3.0	21
South Dakota.....	419.0	0.4	865	48	2.7	25
Tennessee.....	3,004.2	2.0	996	28	1.9	42
Texas	12,455.6	2.2	1,204	11	3.1	16
Utah	1,501.4	3.0	978	32	3.1	16
Vermont.....	309.1	0.4	950	36	3.7	5
Virginia.....	3,896.9	1.2	1,186	14	2.1	41
Washington.....	3,371.1	1.8	1,368	7	4.9	1
West Virginia	687.1	0.3	896	45	3.2	12
Wisconsin.....	2,838.9	0.1	992	29	2.6	28
Wyoming	269.0	1.9	948	37	3.7	5
Puerto Rico.....	875.8	2.2	553	(3)	-2.1	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	36.6	9.6	966	(3)	-1.0	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

