NEWS RELEASE
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

For Release: Thursday, March 23, 2017 **17-356-ATL**

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.
Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast
Media contact: (404) 893-4220

County Employment and Wages in South Carolina – Third Quarter 2016

Employment increased in all seven of South Carolina's large counties from September 2015 to September 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2015 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that the percent increase in employment for each of South Carolina's large counties was greater than the 1.7-percent rate of job growth for the nation. (See table 1.)

From September 2015 to September 2016, employment increased in 307 of the 344 largest U.S. counties. York, S.C., recorded the largest percentage increase in the country, up 6.0 percent over the year. Midland, Texas, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment among the large U.S. counties, down 5.8 percent.

Among the seven largest counties in South Carolina, employment was highest in Greenville County (262,200) in September 2016. Two other counties, Charleston and Richland, had employment levels above 200,000. Together, South Carolina's large counties accounted for 59.2 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 142.9 million in September 2016.

From the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016, York County recorded the largest increase in average weekly wages among the large counties in South Carolina, up 8.2 percent. (See table 1.) Charleston County recorded the highest average weekly wage among the state's large counties at $916, followed by Greenville County at $898. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 5.4 percent over the year to $1,027 in the third quarter of 2016.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 39 counties in South Carolina with employment levels below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from $1,344 to $578. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages increased in each of the seven largest counties in South Carolina from the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016. The wage gains in two of the state's large counties placed in the top 50 among the nation's 344 largest counties—York (8.2 percent, 23rd) and Lexington (7.3 percent, 47th). The state's remaining five large counties had wage increases ranging from 6.0 to 4.3 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 339 of the 344 largest counties registered over-the-year wage increases. Clark, Nev., had the largest wage gain, up 12.2 percent from the third quarter of 2015. Manatee, Fla., was second with a wage increase of 10.7 percent, followed by the counties of Hillsborough, N.H. (10.4 percent); Boone, Ky. and Elkhart, Ind. (10.3 percent each); and McLean, Ill. (10.2 percent).

Among the largest U.S. counties, five experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Rockland, N.Y., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-14.9 percent), followed by Lafayette, La. (-3.4 percent); Benton, Ark. (-2.0 percent); Lake, Ill. (-0.9 percent); and Midland, Texas (-0.3 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Charleston and Greenville Counties, with average weekly wages of $916 and $898, respectively, placed in the middle third of the national ranking among the 344 largest U.S. counties in the third quarter of 2016. Average weekly wages in South Carolina's five other large counties placed in the bottom third of the national ranking. (See table 1.)

Nationally, 102 large counties had average weekly wages above the U.S. average of $1,027 in the third quarter of 2016. Santa Clara, Calif., had the highest average weekly wage at $2,260, followed by San Mateo, Calif. ($2,098); San Francisco, Calif. ($1,892); New York, N.Y. ($1,879); and Washington, D.C. ($1,728).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 241 had weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2016. Horry, S.C., had the lowest wage ($632), followed by Cameron, Texas ($636); Hidalgo, Texas ($654); Webb, Texas ($680); and Osceola, Fla. ($707).

Average weekly wages in South Carolina's smaller counties

Among the 39 smaller counties in South Carolina with employment below 75,000, Fairfield ($1,334) was the only county with an average weekly wage above the $1,027 national average. Clarendon County had the lowest weekly wage among all the counties in the state, averaging $578 in the third quarter of 2016. (See table 2.)

When all 46 counties in South Carolina were considered, 13 had wages of $699 or below, 21 had wages from $700-$799, 8 had wages from $800-$899, and 4 had average weekly wages above $900. (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 2015 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 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2015* are now available online at https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm. The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2016 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 7, 2017.

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 9.8 million employer reports cover 142.9 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.

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 counties in South Carolina, third quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2015-16 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, third quarter 2015-16 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	142,940.5	1.7	--	$1,027	--	5.4	--
South Carolina	2,008.6	2.5	--	832	43	5.6	23
Charleston, S.C.	243.7	3.7	34	916	198	4.4	262
Greenville, S.C.	262.2	1.9	153	898	217	4.3	269
Horry, S.C.	124.7	3.1	58	632	344	5.5	177
Lexington, S.C.	115.7	2.0	142	791	319	7.3	47
Richland, S.C.	219.0	2.0	142	885	231	6.0	130
Spartanburg, S.C.	133.0	3.7	34	861	260	5.9	139
York, S.C.	89.8	6.0	1	830	290	8.2	23

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 South Carolina, 3rd quarter 2016

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	142,940,452	$1,027
South Carolina	2,008,603	832
Abbeville	5,486	700
Aiken	59,104	945
Allendale	2,651	785
Anderson	64,636	732
Bamberg	3,977	626
Barnwell	5,062	644
Beaufort	63,673	732
Berkeley	48,621	921
Calhoun	4,709	833
Charleston	243,667	916
Cherokee	19,363	686
Chester	8,298	781
Chesterfield	14,932	702
Clarendon	6,742	578
Colleton	10,847	609
Darlington	20,324	821
Dillon	8,672	604
Dorchester	33,454	683
Edgefield	5,550	713
Fairfield	10,702	1,334
Florence	62,573	736
Georgetown	23,064	735
Greenville	262,161	898
Greenwood	28,706	750
Hampton	4,612	722
Horry	124,677	632
Jasper	8,626	738
Kershaw	18,319	755
Lancaster	23,668	881
Laurens	22,187	746
Lee	3,458	715
Lexington	115,657	791
McCormick	1,671	689
Marion	6,534	601
Marlboro	6,688	786
Newberry	14,858	700
Oconee	23,163	859
Orangeburg	28,613	701
Pickens	34,828	760
Richland	219,033	885
Saluda	4,555	603
Spartanburg	132,978	861
Sumter	36,988	710
Union	7,709	658
Williamsburg	9,379	677
York	89,766	830

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.

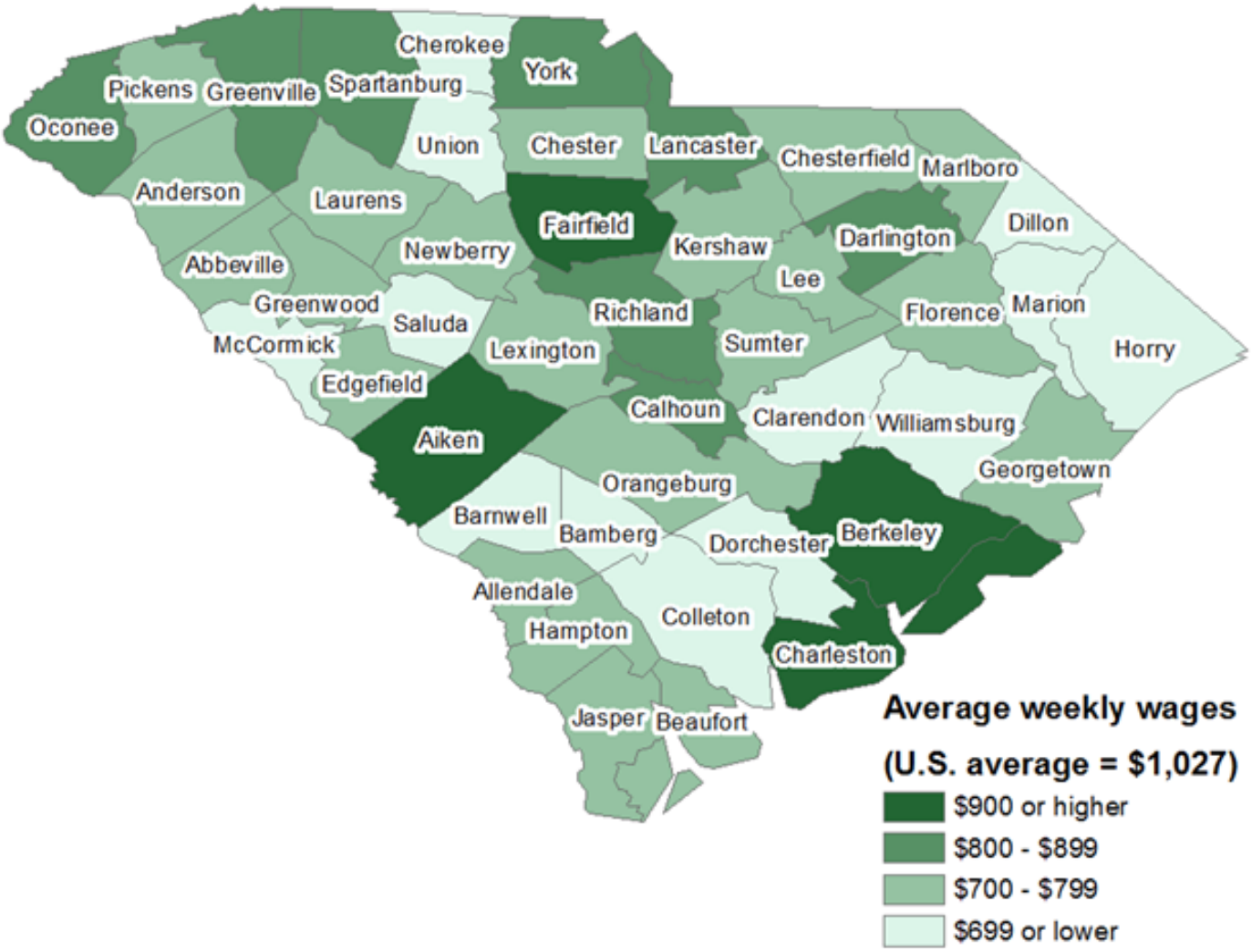
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	142,940.5	1.7	$1,027	--	5.4	--
Alabama	1,923.8	1.5	870	36	4.9	38
Alaska	337.4	-2.6	1,055	12	1.2	49
Arizona	2,695.5	3.1	950	24	6.9	5
Arkansas	1,205.4	1.0	794	48	5.2	32
California	16,871.1	2.4	1,210	4	6.7	8
Colorado	2,576.5	2.6	1,062	10	5.6	23
Connecticut	1,674.2	0.3	1,204	5	5.0	34
Delaware	440.7	0.8	1,022	16	5.6	23
District of Columbia	759.2	1.7	1,728	1	3.8	45
Florida	8,320.2	3.7	905	29	6.2	14
Georgia	4,290.4	2.9	969	21	5.9	18
Hawaii	648.4	1.8	956	23	6.7	8
Idaho	703.7	3.5	782	50	6.3	12
Illinois	5,933.6	0.6	1,062	10	4.4	40
Indiana	3,025.9	1.8	866	37	5.9	18
Iowa	1,548.6	0.8	873	35	6.2	14
Kansas	1,377.2	0.5	857	39	5.9	18
Kentucky	1,880.2	1.5	857	39	6.5	10
Louisiana	1,908.8	-0.9	883	32	2.9	48
Maine	616.2	0.9	825	45	5.9	18
Maryland	2,648.1	1.4	1,124	8	5.3	30
Massachusetts	3,522.9	2.0	1,277	2	6.8	7
Michigan	4,292.2	2.1	976	19	5.9	18
Minnesota	2,849.5	1.6	1,053	13	6.4	11
Mississippi	1,126.9	0.7	739	51	4.7	39
Missouri	2,782.1	1.6	888	30	5.0	34
Montana	464.5	1.5	792	49	4.3	41
Nebraska	973.9	0.9	857	39	5.5	26
Nevada	1,300.7	3.8	949	25	10.1	1
New Hampshire	655.0	1.8	1,027	15	7.9	2
New Jersey	4,000.0	1.8	1,173	7	5.0	34
New Mexico	811.5	0.2	830	44	4.0	43
New York	9,216.6	1.6	1,222	3	3.5	46
North Carolina	4,290.3	2.3	909	28	5.3	30
North Dakota	423.2	-3.4	964	22	0.7	50
Ohio	5,347.3	1.1	924	26	5.4	27
Oklahoma	1,578.7	-1.3	854	42	3.5	46
Oregon	1,866.5	2.6	970	20	5.2	32
Pennsylvania	5,776.7	1.0	1,013	17	5.4	27
Rhode Island	481.1	0.8	990	18	7.6	3
South Carolina	2,008.6	2.5	832	43	5.6	23
South Dakota	424.2	1.1	809	47	7.0	4
Tennessee	2,918.8	2.5	912	27	5.4	27
Texas	11,830.7	1.3	1,042	14	4.3	41
Utah	1,407.4	3.8	881	33	6.3	12
Vermont	309.9	0.5	880	34	6.2	14
Virginia	3,801.0	1.0	1,063	9	5.0	34
Washington	3,278.9	3.0	1,188	6	6.9	5
West Virginia	691.5	-1.6	816	46	3.9	44
Wisconsin	2,850.1	1.0	885	31	6.2	14
Wyoming	274.8	-4.7	865	38	0.0	51
Puerto Rico	888.2	-0.4	524	[3]	2.3	[3]
Virgin Islands	37.4	1.4	778	[3]	5.9	[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 South Carolina, third quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.