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County Employment and Wages in Texas – Third Quarter 2014

Employment rose in 25 of the 26 largest counties in Texas from September 2013 to September 2014, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2013 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the rates of job growth in three Texas counties ranked in the top 10 nationwide. Midland County's 7.4-percent job gain ranked second in the nation and Fort Bend and Montgomery Counties' gains, each at 5.1 percent, ranked ninth. (See table 1.)

Employment nationwide advanced 2.0 percent from September 2013 to September 2014 as 306 of the 339 largest U.S. counties registered increases. Weld, Colo., recorded the fastest employment gain in the country, up 8.8 percent, while Atlantic, N.J., registered the largest decline, down 4.0 percent.

Among the largest counties in Texas, employment was highest in Harris County (2,269,500) in September 2014, followed by Dallas County (1,558,500). Three other counties, Tarrant, Bexar, and Travis, had employment levels exceeding 600,000. Together, the 26 largest Texas counties accounted for 80.1 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 339 largest counties made up 71.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the third quarter of 2013 to the third quarter of 2014, average weekly wages nationwide increased 2.9 percent to $949. Among large counties in Texas, Brazoria registered the largest increase in average weekly wages with a gain of 7.1 percent, while Williamson recorded the only decrease, down 0.8 percent. (See table 1.) In the third quarter of 2014, Midland had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at $1,256 and Cameron had the lowest at $603.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 228 counties in Texas with employment levels below 75,000 in 2013. Among these smaller counties, 195 had average weekly wages below the national average in September 2014. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Nineteen of Texas's 26 large counties recorded wage growth above the 2.9-percent national increase from the third quarter of 2013 to the third quarter of 2014. Wage growth in Brazoria (7.1 percent, 4th) and Midland (6.8 percent, 6th) placed in the top 10 nationwide. (See table 1.) Three other Texas counties registered wage growth ranking in the top 25 nationally: Montgomery and Nueces (5.5 percent each, 13th); and Jefferson (4.5 percent, 23rd).

Among the 339 largest U.S. counties, 328 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Olmsted, Minn., had the largest increase with a gain of 11.1 percent, followed by San Francisco, Calif. (8.6 percent) and Santa Clara, Calif. (7.4 percent). Wage decreases were recorded in 10 large counties nationwide, with the largest over-the-year loss in Collier, Fla., down 3.9 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 5 of the 26 large Texas counties were at least 10 percent above the national average of $949 per week in the third quarter of 2014. Midland County led at $1,256 per week and ranked 16th among the 339 large counties nationwide. Midland was followed by Harris ($1,238, 19th), Dallas ($1,141, 33rd), Collin ($1,097, 43rd), and Travis ($1,074, 47th). Four additional Texas counties reported average weekly wages above the national average: Jefferson ($969, 84th), Brazoria ($966, 87th), Fort Bend ($956, 93rd), and Montgomery ($954, 97th).

Texas had four of the lowest-paying large counties in the United States, all located along the border with Mexico: Cameron ($603, 338th), Hidalgo ($616, 337th), Webb ($653, 334th), and El Paso ($682, 328th). Other Texas counties that ranked in the bottom quintile were Brazos ($734, 316th), Lubbock ($764, 287th), and McLennan ($775, 276th).

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 99 of the largest counties in the country. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of $2,012. San Mateo, Calif., was second at $1,824, followed by New York, N.Y. ($1,733), San Francisco, Calif. ($1,685), and Washington, D.C. ($1,631).

Of the largest counties in the United States, 237, or more than two-thirds, reported average weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2014. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C., at $580 per week, followed by the Texas counties of Cameron and Hidalgo. Wages in these three lowest-ranked counties were less than one-third of the average weekly wage in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif.

Average weekly wages in smaller Texas counties

Thirty-three of the 228 smaller Texas counties – those with employment below 75,000 – reported average weekly wages above the national average of $949. Three of these smaller counties had wages that were also the highest in the state: Irion ($1,514), Sutton ($1,379), and Carson ($1,370). Delta County registered the lowest weekly wage, averaging $375 in the third quarter of 2014. (See table 2.)

When all 254 counties in Texas were considered, all but 42 had wages below the national average. Fifty-four reported average weekly wages under $650, 76 registered wages from $650 to $749, 52 had wages from $750 to $849, 30 had wages from $850 to $949, and 42 had wages of $950 or more per week. (See chart 1.) The counties with the highest average weekly wages were located around the large metropolitan areas of Dallas, Houston, and Austin, as well as the smaller areas of Midland, Odessa, and Amarillo. Lower-paying counties were concentrated in the agricultural areas of central Texas and the Texas Panhandle, as well as along the Texas-Mexico border.

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 2013 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 2014 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2013* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn13.htm. The 2014 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2015.

The County Employment and Wages release for fourth quarter 2014 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, June 17, 2015, 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 9.4 million employer reports cover 137.7 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: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 26 largest counties in Texas, third quarter 2014

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage [1]			
	September 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2013-14 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [3]	Percent change, third quarter 2013-14 [2]	National ranking by percent change [3]
United States [4]	137,724.1	2.0	--	$949	--	2.9	--
Texas	11,433.6	3.1	--	988	11	3.8	6
Bell, Texas	111.2	-0.1	315	798	254	3.5	66
Bexar, Texas	796.4	2.6	102	854	186	3.3	81
Brazoria, Texas	99.4	2.6	102	966	87	7.1	4
Brazos, Texas	96.2	1.1	212	734	316	3.2	91
Cameron, Texas	133.5	1.0	228	603	338	3.1	103
Collin, Texas	346.4	3.2	65	1,097	43	2.0	231
Dallas, Texas	1,558.5	3.5	54	1,141	33	2.5	165
Denton, Texas	205.8	4.5	17	871	171	3.6	61
El Paso, Texas	283.4	0.4	282	682	328	2.4	183
Fort Bend, Texas	164.4	5.1	9	956	93	0.7	310
Galveston, Texas	101.0	2.8	86	824	222	2.1	223
Gregg, Texas	79.0	3.0	77	864	179	2.5	165
Harris, Texas	2,269.5	3.6	51	1,238	19	4.0	40
Hidalgo, Texas	237.9	2.6	102	616	337	3.5	66
Jefferson, Texas	124.0	4.6	16	969	84	4.5	23
Lubbock, Texas	131.5	2.2	128	764	287	3.7	55
McLennan, Texas	105.0	0.7	263	775	276	4.2	31
Midland, Texas	93.1	7.4	2	1,256	16	6.8	6
Montgomery, Texas	159.5	5.1	9	954	97	5.5	13
Nueces, Texas	164.1	3.4	57	860	180	5.5	13
Potter, Texas	77.3	0.5	276	802	246	3.4	74
Smith, Texas	96.9	1.7	162	818	231	3.9	44
Tarrant, Texas	825.6	1.9	147	944	107	3.9	44
Travis, Texas	658.1	3.9	36	1,074	47	3.7	55
Webb, Texas	95.0	2.4	113	653	334	3.3	81
Williamson, Texas	144.5	2.4	113	923	126	-0.8	337

(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 Texas 3rd quarter 2014

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage [1]
United States [2]	137,724,117	$949
Texas	11,433,567	988
Anderson	18,262	785
Andrews	7,818	1,166
Angelina	36,677	740
Aransas	6,483	682
Archer	1,884	731
Armstrong	387	594
Atascosa	13,743	884
Austin	10,061	865
Bailey	2,578	682
Bandera	3,110	678
Bastrop	15,595	668
Baylor	1,229	607
Bee	9,493	734
Bell	111,212	798
Bexar	796,421	854
Blanco	2,846	790
Borden	245	494
Bosque	3,792	646
Bowie	39,865	714
Brazoria	99,370	966
Brazos	96,202	734
Brewster	3,726	770
Briscoe	318	541
Brooks	2,712	786
Brown	15,196	664
Burleson	4,292	807
Burnet	13,453	737
Caldwell	8,133	685
Calhoun	11,596	1,120
Callahan	2,154	695
Cameron	133,512	603
Camp	4,044	673
Carson	4,445	1,370
Cass	7,224	652
Castro	2,612	661
Chambers	11,834	996
Cherokee	14,728	636
Childress	2,350	624
Clay	1,768	786
Cochran	768	725
Coke	644	593
Coleman	2,062	562
Collin	346,439	1,097
Collingsworth	838	707
Colorado	7,122	715
Comal	45,645	729
Comanche	3,625	587
Concho	825	681
Cooke	16,587	901
Coryell	14,833	619
Cottle	515	745
Crane	1,684	1,246
Crockett	1,834	805
Crosby	1,488	651

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas 3rd quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage [1]
Culberson	1,196	612
Dallam	4,340	774
Dallas	1,558,479	1,141
Dawson	4,376	744
De Witt	7,934	794
Deaf Smith	7,470	717
Delta	1,424	375
Denton	205,795	871
Dickens	446	664
Dimmit	7,069	1,040
Donley	919	528
Duval	3,735	898
Eastland	7,605	873
Ector	78,399	1,096
Edwards	360	643
El Paso	283,435	682
Ellis	44,932	779
Erath	15,409	613
Falls	3,042	654
Fannin	6,829	715
Fayette	9,461	752
Fisher	849	677
Floyd	1,749	622
Foard	345	440
Fort Bend	164,366	956
Franklin	3,129	659
Freestone	5,956	869
Frio	7,574	1,042
Gaines	6,278	856
Galveston	100,960	824
Garza	1,944	782
Gillespie	9,824	645
Glasscock	469	687
Goliad	1,390	757
Gonzales	7,210	767
Gray	9,362	893
Grayson	43,668	750
Gregg	79,042	864
Grimes	8,386	897
Guadalupe	33,149	760
Hale	11,999	638
Hall	858	641
Hamilton	2,543	619
Hansford	2,285	953
Hardeman	1,145	592
Hardin	12,789	747
Harris	2,269,524	1,238
Harrison	24,898	922
Hartley	2,221	678
Haskell	1,738	620
Hays	58,244	699
Hemphill	2,540	1,004
Henderson	16,544	656
Hidalgo	237,854	616
Hill	9,603	727

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas 3rd quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage [1]
Hockley	10,577	1,008
Hood	16,899	860
Hopkins	13,038	688
Houston	6,352	818
Howard	13,042	840
Hudspeth	1,111	1,037
Hunt	27,486	814
Hutchinson	9,817	1,113
Irion	772	1,514
Jack	3,683	1,072
Jackson	6,013	782
Jasper	10,831	725
Jeff Davis	970	576
Jefferson	124,015	969
Jim Hogg	2,039	1,032
Jim Wells	20,392	944
Johnson	45,264	810
Jones	3,867	750
Karnes	5,750	952
Kaufman	27,780	711
Kendall	12,817	817
Kenedy	781	1,148
Kent	277	637
Kerr	17,381	725
Kimble	1,356	608
King	111	1,142
Kinney	824	822
Kleberg	13,220	705
Knox	1,178	1,119
La Salle	3,756	1,086
Lamar	19,413	738
Lamb	4,356	656
Lampasas	4,509	607
Lavaca	5,626	682
Lee	7,052	889
Leon	5,810	936
Liberty	17,045	783
Limestone	8,410	705
Lipscomb	1,255	775
Live Oak	4,728	813
Llano	4,334	640
Loving	55	680
Lubbock	131,511	764
Lynn	1,300	680
Madison	5,012	649
Marion	1,978	563
Martin	1,713	913
Mason	1,062	555
Matagorda	10,365	900
Maverick	16,883	622
McCulloch	3,211	788
McLennan	104,966	775
McMullen	762	1,012
Medina	9,527	658
Menard	420	493

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas 3rd quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage [1]
Midland	93,138	1,256
Milam	5,710	848
Mills	1,323	593
Mitchell	2,404	775
Montague	5,608	795
Montgomery	159,540	954
Moore	10,599	785
Morris	4,597	911
Motley	289	460
Nacogdoches	22,008	659
Navarro	16,768	653
Newton	1,591	549
Nolan	6,148	750
Nueces	164,069	860
Ochiltree	5,519	966
Oldham	1,027	796
Orange	22,519	896
Palo Pinto	8,637	774
Panola	10,510	898
Parker	33,032	848
Parmer	5,531	712
Pecos	6,010	877
Polk	10,734	670
Potter	77,346	802
Presidio	2,305	709
Rains	1,822	553
Randall	28,921	717
Reagan	2,299	1,043
Real	698	464
Red River	2,410	594
Reeves	4,362	797
Refugio	2,704	801
Roberts	205	629
Robertson	3,902	759
Rockwall	24,592	738
Runnels	2,940	680
Rusk	15,044	849
Sabine	2,234	635
San Augustine	1,527	668
San Jacinto	2,065	629
San Patricio	19,661	825
San Saba	1,540	556
Schleicher	1,027	800
Scurry	8,503	1,096
Shackelford	1,694	1,193
Shelby	8,496	699
Sherman	1,035	691
Smith	96,863	818
Somervell	4,200	1,012
Starr	14,824	547
Stephens	3,390	753
Sterling	700	774
Stonewall	556	704
Sutton	2,520	1,379
Swisher	1,952	596

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas 3rd quarter 2014 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2014	Average Weekly Wage (1)
Tarrant	825,621	944
Taylor	59,954	745
Terrell	410	944
Terry	3,875	761
Throckmorton	501	720
Titus	15,415	658
Tom Green	46,974	750
Travis	658,080	1,074
Trinity	2,384	608
Tyler	3,986	631
Upshur	6,825	686
Upton	1,898	1,149
Uvalde	9,776	611
Val Verde	16,744	697
Van Zandt	9,941	619
Victoria	41,750	855
Walker	24,012	709
Waller	16,066	858
Ward	4,948	1,087
Washington	15,287	717
Webb	94,976	653
Wharton	15,653	718
Wheeler	2,777	712
Wichita	52,832	706
Wilbarger	6,057	713
Willacy	3,991	669
Williamson	144,513	923
Wilson	7,499	647
Winkler	2,777	1,059
Wise	22,353	942
Wood	9,347	657
Yoakum	4,485	1,088
Young	7,179	741
Zapata	4,880	1,012
Zavala	2,457	510

(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.

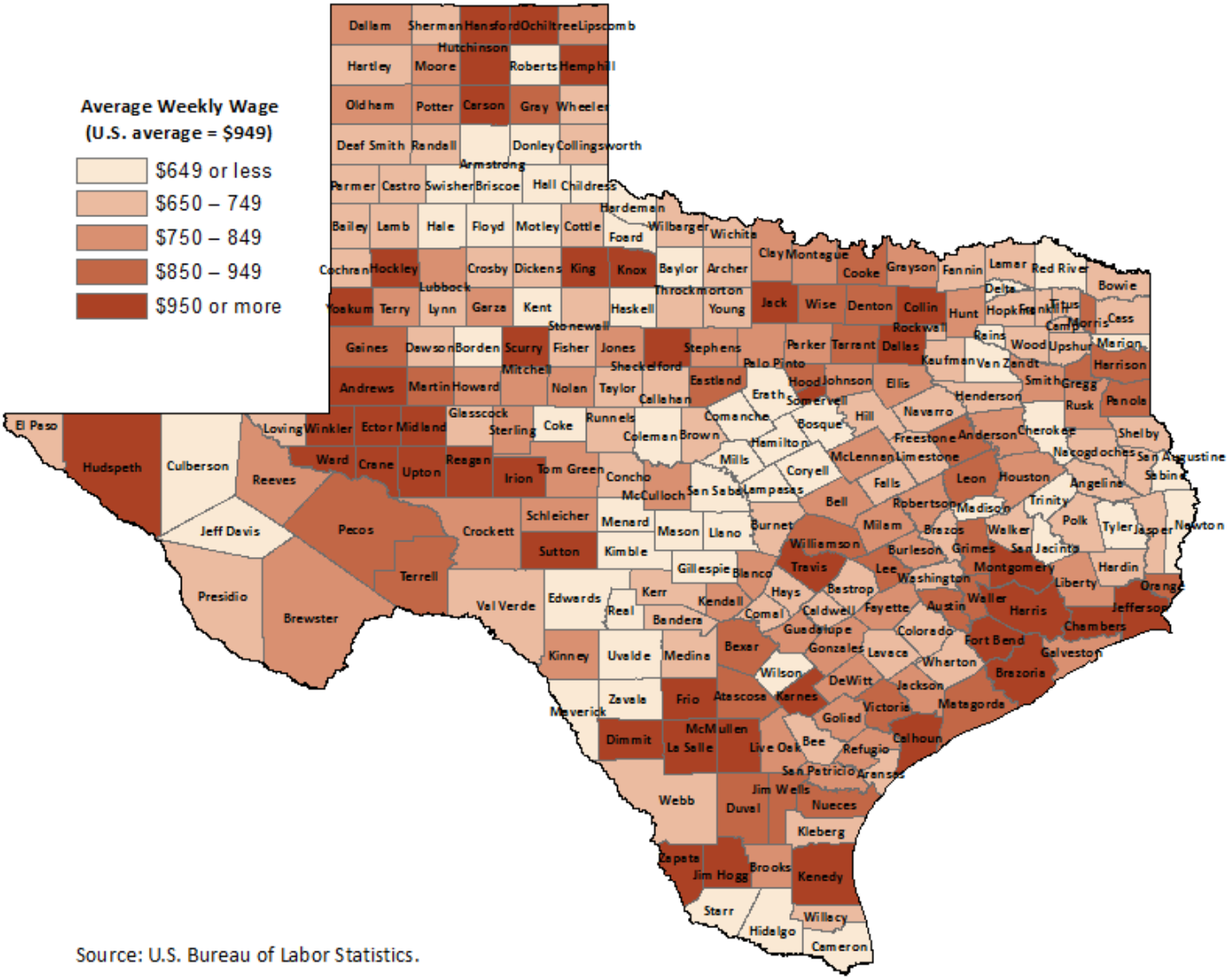
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2014

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2014 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2013-14	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2013-14	National ranking by percent change
United States [2]	137,724.1	2.0	$949	--	2.9	--
Alabama	1,871.2	1.3	815	34	2.5	30
Alaska	344.7	-0.1	1,019	9	3.0	19
Arizona	2,539.6	1.8	876	24	2.0	40
Arkansas	1,170.9	1.3	737	47	1.8	44
California	16,013.4	3.1	1,095	5	3.7	7
Colorado	2,443.0	3.7	982	12	3.0	19
Connecticut	1,663.2	0.8	1,124	4	1.4	49
Delaware	426.1	1.9	961	16	2.2	37
District of Columbia	732.9	0.8	1,631	1	4.5	2
Florida	7,748.4	3.3	826	32	2.1	38
Georgia	4,059.0	3.4	891	21	2.8	23
Hawaii	625.1	0.9	870	25	3.9	4
Idaho	658.4	2.1	721	50	2.6	26
Illinois	5,807.4	1.2	982	12	2.5	30
Indiana	2,924.7	1.4	799	39	1.9	42
Iowa	1,528.8	1.1	800	38	3.6	10
Kansas	1,363.1	1.2	794	40	2.3	35
Kentucky	1,827.8	1.8	781	42	2.5	30
Louisiana	1,928.3	1.7	852	27	3.1	16
Maine	604.5	0.3	754	46	2.6	26
Maryland	2,574.5	1.1	1,042	8	3.1	16
Massachusetts	3,386.7	1.8	1,164	2	3.0	19
Michigan	4,141.0	1.7	896	19	2.4	33
Minnesota	2,757.9	1.1	965	15	2.9	22
Mississippi	1,105.0	0.5	697	51	1.3	50
Missouri	2,686.4	1.0	828	31	2.7	25
Montana	449.5	0.7	732	49	3.7	7
Nebraska	950.0	1.1	779	43	1.8	44
Nevada	1,215.8	4.0	840	28	0.5	51
New Hampshire	633.5	1.4	927	18	3.6	10
New Jersey	3,880.4	0.8	1,087	6	1.7	47
New Mexico	804.0	1.1	786	41	2.6	26
New York	8,902.1	2.0	1,145	3	3.2	15
North Carolina	4,085.5	1.9	839	29	2.8	23
North Dakota	455.9	4.3	977	14	6.1	1
Ohio	5,219.1	1.4	863	26	3.1	16
Oklahoma	1,592.3	1.0	826	32	3.6	10
Oregon	1,752.8	2.4	887	22	3.6	10
Pennsylvania	5,676.2	1.0	937	17	2.6	26
Rhode Island	471.8	1.4	895	20	1.8	44
South Carolina	1,902.7	2.4	768	45	2.4	33
South Dakota	415.8	1.7	733	48	3.7	7
Tennessee	2,775.5	2.4	837	30	2.1	38
Texas	11,433.6	3.1	988	11	3.8	6
Utah	1,304.7	3.1	803	37	1.5	48
Vermont	306.5	1.2	805	36	2.3	35
Virginia	3,667.9	0.6	989	10	2.0	40
Washington	3,112.8	3.2	1,087	6	3.9	4
West Virginia	709.3	-0.2	778	44	3.5	14
Wisconsin	2,783.1	1.1	808	35	1.9	42
Wyoming	291.3	1.7	877	23	4.4	3
Puerto Rico	896.7	-1.5	505	[3]	0.8	[3]
Virgin Islands	37.5	-1.0	720	[3]	2.0	[3]

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

(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 Texas, third quarter 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.