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County Employment and Wages in Texas – Third Quarter 2016

Employment rose in 19 of the 26 largest counties in Texas from September 2015 to September 2016, 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 2015 annual average employment.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that two Texas counties ranked among the top 20 nationwide for job growth. The employment gains in Galveston and Williamson Counties, at 4.1 percent each, were the fastest in the state and ranked 18th nationwide. In contrast, employment fell in five of the state's largest counties. (See table 1.)

Nationwide, employment advanced 1.7 percent from September 2015 to September 2016 as 307 of the 344 largest U.S. counties registered increases. York, S.C., recorded the fastest employment gain in the country, up 6.0 percent. Midland, Texas, experienced the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 5.8 percent; employment in Midland's trade, transportation, and utilities sector recorded the largest numerical decrease among the county sectors with a loss of 1,504 jobs (-8.2 percent).

Among the largest counties in Texas, employment was highest in Harris County (2,262,300) in September 2016, followed by Dallas County (1,662,800). Three other counties, Tarrant, Bexar, and Travis, had employment levels exceeding 700,000. Together, the 26 largest Texas counties accounted for 80.7 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016, average weekly wages nationwide increased 5.4 percent to $1,027. Among large counties in Texas, McLennan registered the largest increase in average weekly wages with a gain of 7.7 percent, while wages in Midland County fell, down 0.3 percent. (See table 1.) In the third quarter of 2016, Harris had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at $1,267 and Cameron had the lowest at $636.

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 2015. Among these smaller counties, 212 had average weekly wages below the national average in September 2016. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Ten of Texas's 26 large counties recorded wage growth equal to or above the 5.4-percent national increase from the third quarter of 2015 to the third quarter of 2016. McLennan County's 7.7-percent wage increase was the highest in the state and placed 33rd nationally, followed by Dallas, Denton, and Williamson (6.8 percent

each, 68th), and Tarrant (6.6 percent, 87th). (See table 1.) Fifteen large Texas counties had over-the-year wage increases that were below the national average, and Midland County registered a decrease in average weekly wages, down 0.3 percent.

Nationally, 339 of the 344 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. Clark, Nev., experienced the largest wage gain in the nation, up 12.2 percent. Manatee, Fla., had the second largest increase (10.7 percent), followed by Hillsborough, N.H. (10.4 percent); four other large U.S. counties had increases above 10.0 percent.

Nationwide, five of the largest counties registered wage declines during the period. Rockland, N.Y., experienced the largest decrease in average weekly wages with a loss of 14.9 percent over the year. Lafayette, La., had the second largest wage decline (-3.4 percent), followed by Benton, Ark. (-2.0 percent), Lake, Ill. (-0.9 percent), and Midland, Texas (-0.3 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 5 of the 26 large Texas counties were more than 14 percent above the national average of $1,027 in the third quarter of 2016. Harris County led at $1,267 per week and ranked 23rd among the 344 large counties nationwide. Harris was followed by Dallas ($1,239, 30th), Collin ($1,191, 40th), Midland ($1,176, 43rd), and Travis ($1,174, 45th). Three additional Texas counties reported average weekly wages above the national average: Jefferson ($1,061, 81st), Brazoria ($1,045, 87th), and Tarrant ($1,029, 101st).

Texas had a number of low-paying large counties. Three of the four lowest-paying large counties in the United States were located along the border with Mexico: Cameron ($636, 343rd), Hidalgo ($654, 342nd), and Webb ($680, 341st). Other Texas counties with low national rankings included El Paso ($728, 333rd), Brazos ($772, 327th), and Lubbock ($811, 306th).

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average in 102 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 $2,260. San Mateo, Calif., was second at $2,098, followed by San Francisco, Calif. ($1,892), New York, N.Y. ($1,879), and Washington, D.C. ($1,728).

Among the largest U.S. counties, more than two-thirds (241) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the third quarter of 2016. The lowest wage was reported in Horry, S.C., at $632 per week, followed by the Texas counties of Cameron and Hidalgo. Wages in these three lowest-ranked counties were less than 30 percent of the average weekly wage in the highest-ranked county, Santa Clara, Calif.

Average weekly wages in smaller Texas counties

Sixteen of the 228 smaller Texas counties – those with employment below 75,000 – reported average weekly wages above the national average of $1,027. Two of these smaller counties had wages that were also the highest in the state: Carson ($1,631) and Irion ($1,333). Delta County registered the lowest weekly wage, averaging $413 in the third quarter of 2016. (See table 2.)

When all 254 counties in Texas were considered, all but 24 had wages below the national average. Thirty-six counties reported average weekly wages under $650, 79 registered wages from $650 to $749, 70 had wages from $750 to $849, 33 had wages from $850 to $949, and 36 had wages of $950 or higher. (See chart 1.) The counties with the highest average weekly wages were located around the larger 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, the Texas Panhandle, and 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 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 Online* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm.

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 (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 26 largest counties in Texas, 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	--
Texas	11,830.7	1.3	--	1,042	14	4.3	41
Bell, Texas	116.3	0.0	308	868	252	5.7	160
Bexar, Texas	846.6	2.4	112	914	200	4.6	247
Brazoria, Texas	106.1	1.9	153	1,045	87	5.3	198
Brazos, Texas	101.3	0.8	257	772	327	5.8	152
Cameron, Texas	138.4	2.2	125	636	343	4.3	269
Collin, Texas	381.5	3.8	29	1,191	40	5.9	139
Dallas, Texas	1,662.8	3.1	58	1,239	30	6.8	68
Denton, Texas	228.8	3.4	46	954	164	6.8	68
El Paso, Texas	299.3	2.4	112	728	333	4.4	262
Fort Bend, Texas	174.2	2.1	131	951	166	0.3	339
Galveston, Texas	108.0	4.1	18	896	219	5.4	187
Gregg, Texas	74.0	-3.4	342	858	265	1.2	335
Harris, Texas	2,262.3	-0.9	329	1,267	23	2.1	327
Hidalgo, Texas	248.5	1.8	164	654	342	4.8	233
Jefferson, Texas	122.3	-0.2	315	1,061	81	5.7	160
Lubbock, Texas	137.0	1.4	203	811	306	4.0	286
McLennan, Texas	111.4	2.6	96	850	272	7.7	33
Midland, Texas	83.0	-5.8	344	1,176	43	-0.3	340
Montgomery, Texas	168.4	1.0	238	1,007	116	4.1	279
Nueces, Texas	161.6	-0.5	321	893	221	4.1	279
Potter, Texas	78.9	0.0	308	831	288	3.1	315
Smith, Texas	102.6	1.3	216	849	273	5.3	198
Tarrant, Texas	860.4	2.4	112	1,029	101	6.6	87
Travis, Texas	710.0	2.9	74	1,174	45	5.1	211
Webb, Texas	99.1	2.2	125	680	341	2.9	318
Williamson, Texas	158.7	4.1	18	1,009	114	6.8	68

(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 2016

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	142,940,452	$1,027
Texas	11,830,679	1,042
Anderson	20,713	822
Andrews	6,712	1,084
Angelina	35,376	757
Aransas	6,247	728
Archer	1,684	662
Armstrong	369	670
Atascosa	11,855	856
Austin	10,257	842
Bailey	2,474	769
Bandera	3,164	650
Bastrop	17,115	714
Baylor	1,225	659
Bee	8,974	719
Bell	116,265	868
Bexar	846,607	914
Blanco	3,018	846
Borden	243	625
Bosque	3,720	672
Bowie	41,949	760
Brazoria	106,070	1,045
Brazos	101,266	772
Brewster	3,858	728
Briscoe	293	558
Brooks	2,347	763
Brown	15,907	690
Burleson	3,842	761
Burnet	13,828	788
Caldwell	8,393	703
Calhoun	11,148	1,228
Callahan	2,103	688
Cameron	138,352	636
Camp	3,796	737
Carson	4,727	1,631
Cass	7,359	714
Castro	2,615	687
Chambers	13,514	1,128
Cherokee	14,639	692
Childress	2,569	710
Clay	1,293	630
Cochran	669	709
Coke	705	623
Coleman	2,096	576
Collin	381,483	1,191
Collingsworth	834	761
Colorado	6,788	739
Comal	51,813	805
Comanche	3,641	615
Concho	808	771
Cooke	14,242	850
Coryell	16,427	760
Cottle	500	695
Crane	1,341	1,020
Crockett	1,500	678
Crosby	1,442	624

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, 3rd quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Culberson	1,283	786
Dallam	4,438	823
Dallas	1,662,753	1,239
Dawson	4,263	717
De Witt	7,052	775
Deaf Smith	7,547	764
Delta	1,271	413
Denton	228,763	954
Dickens	436	679
Dimmit	5,127	918
Donley	943	646
Duval	3,169	740
Eastland	6,645	805
Ector	66,895	1,022
Edwards	382	631
El Paso	299,326	728
Ellis	48,804	810
Erath	16,145	652
Falls	3,156	687
Fannin	7,512	749
Fayette	9,074	736
Fisher	898	742
Floyd	1,659	641
Foard	336	552
Fort Bend	174,153	951
Franklin	2,922	741
Freestone	4,914	828
Frio	6,016	879
Gaines	6,097	865
Galveston	108,016	896
Garza	1,829	728
Gillespie	10,337	699
Glasscock	568	743
Goliad	1,257	654
Gonzales	7,117	754
Gray	7,709	879
Grayson	45,112	800
Gregg	73,964	858
Grimes	6,980	857
Guadalupe	39,019	791
Hale	11,997	665
Hall	748	555
Hamilton	2,472	666
Hansford	2,169	909
Hardeman	1,188	661
Hardin	12,949	769
Harris	2,262,256	1,267
Harrison	23,095	907
Hartley	2,484	749
Haskell	1,643	639
Hays	63,611	774
Hemphill	2,066	1,084
Henderson	16,731	650
Hidalgo	248,512	654
Hill	9,658	765

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, 3rd quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Hockley	9,342	880
Hood	15,487	790
Hopkins	12,790	725
Houston	7,077	861
Howard	12,280	880
Hudspeth	1,223	1,191
Hunt	28,985	1,010
Hutchinson	8,805	1,135
Irion	1,028	1,333
Jack	3,051	907
Jackson	5,655	807
Jasper	10,052	739
Jeff Davis	973	628
Jefferson	122,260	1,061
Jim Hogg	1,668	769
Jim Wells	15,462	753
Johnson	45,059	799
Jones	2,996	706
Karnes	5,558	954
Kaufman	30,491	772
Kendall	14,803	925
Kenedy	429	1,001
Kent	261	849
Kerr	17,535	810
Kimble	1,288	614
King	93	667
Kinney	784	884
Kleberg	12,045	701
Knox	1,147	803
La Salle	2,956	1,169
Lamar	21,182	815
Lamb	3,827	719
Lampasas	4,463	639
Lavaca	5,513	705
Lee	6,761	941
Leon	4,944	915
Liberty	16,501	773
Limestone	7,401	761
Lipscomb	1,246	745
Live Oak	3,619	965
Llano	4,620	685
Loving	68	732
Lubbock	137,026	811
Lynn	1,401	758
Madison	4,701	695
Marion	1,916	601
Martin	1,929	914
Mason	1,056	578
Matagorda	10,793	947
Maverick	17,441	631
McCulloch	2,799	691
McLennan	111,442	850
McMullen	550	1,038
Medina	9,278	667
Menard	407	494

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, 3rd quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Midland	82,958	1,176
Milam	5,850	811
Mills	1,270	609
Mitchell	2,053	776
Montague	4,614	707
Montgomery	168,384	1,007
Moore	11,189	888
Morris	3,552	751
Motley	336	488
Nacogdoches	22,619	706
Navarro	16,462	692
Newton	1,329	618
Nolan	5,944	791
Nueces	161,637	893
Ochiltree	4,310	895
Oldham	1,060	928
Orange	22,297	958
Palo Pinto	8,424	786
Panola	8,163	853
Parker	31,283	822
Parmer	5,769	788
Pecos	5,647	821
Polk	10,997	728
Potter	78,901	831
Presidio	2,240	747
Rains	1,751	607
Randall	29,751	775
Reagan	1,666	1,029
Real	690	497
Red River	2,596	604
Reeves	4,471	808
Refugio	2,218	766
Roberts	249	771
Robertson	3,973	832
Rockwall	28,377	790
Runnels	2,818	655
Rusk	13,220	856
Sabine	2,204	690
San Augustine	1,597	735
San Jacinto	2,046	647
San Patricio	18,567	849
San Saba	1,863	715
Schleicher	737	797
Scurry	6,872	913
Shackelford	1,256	832
Shelby	8,185	716
Sherman	1,028	785
Smith	102,586	849
Somervell	3,755	1,107
Starr	15,140	587
Stephens	3,127	678
Sterling	560	749
Stonewall	503	680
Sutton	1,865	1,086
Swisher	1,937	642

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Texas, 3rd quarter 2016 - Continued

Area	Employment September 2016	Average weekly wage(1)
Tarrant	860,449	1,029
Taylor	60,461	770
Terrell	297	828
Terry	3,919	787
Throckmorton	491	631
Titus	15,688	713
Tom Green	46,427	773
Travis	710,047	1,174
Trinity	2,364	661
Tyler	3,844	678
Upshur	6,652	682
Upton	1,504	1,087
Uvalde	10,079	639
Val Verde	17,387	712
Van Zandt	10,742	645
Victoria	39,239	849
Walker	24,892	750
Waller	16,001	858
Ward	4,344	992
Washington	14,675	744
Webb	99,111	680
Wharton	15,464	719
Wheeler	2,002	702
Wichita	52,780	753
Wilbarger	5,933	685
Willacy	3,524	649
Williamson	158,701	1,009
Wilson	7,637	689
Winkler	2,364	1,035
Wise	19,199	823
Wood	9,807	689
Yoakum	3,714	1,039
Young	6,817	750
Zapata	3,050	870
Zavala	2,526	614

(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.

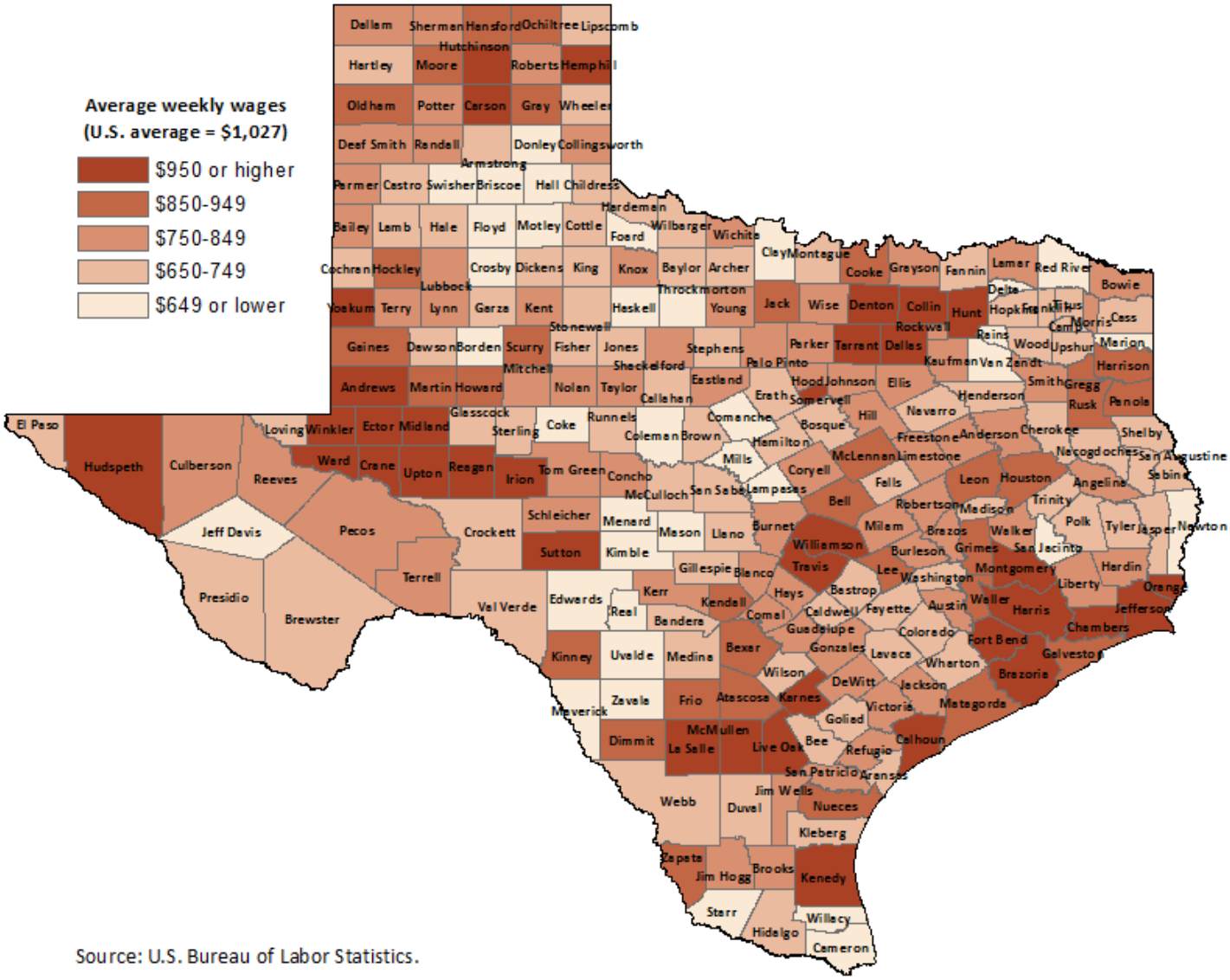
Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, third quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [1]			
	September 2015 (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.

(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 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.