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County Employment and Wages in Colorado – Fourth Quarter 2013

Employment growth recorded in all of Colorado's large counties

Employment rose in all nine large counties in Colorado from December 2012 to December 2013, 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 2012 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that eight large counties reported employment growth exceeding the national average of 1.8 percent and one county matched the U.S. average.

Weld County led employment growth in the state with a 6.0-percent gain and ranked 1st among the 334 large counties in the nation, followed by Douglas (5.2 percent, 3rd) and Adams (4.6 percent, 11th). Also ranking in the top 100 counties nationwide were Denver (4.0 percent, 29th), Boulder (3.0 percent, 61st), Larimer (2.9 percent, 72nd), and Arapahoe (2.8 percent, 76th).

Nationally, employment rose in 292 of the 334 largest U.S. counties from December 2012 to December 2013. Weld, Colo., posted the largest percentage increase, up 6.0 percent over the year, led by a gain of 1,864 jobs in construction. St. Clair, Ill., experienced the largest over-the-year decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S. with a loss of 3.1 percent.

Among the nine largest counties in Colorado, employment was highest in Denver County (451,200) in December 2013. Three other counties—Arapahoe, El Paso, and Jefferson—had employment levels exceeding 200,000. Together, the nine large counties accounted for 79.6 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average weekly wages rose in 6 of the 9 large counties in Colorado from the fourth quarter of 2012 to the fourth quarter of 2013. Weld had the largest over-the-year increase with a gain of 4.8 percent, though it registered the lowest wage level among the nine counties at \$871. Wages in five of the large counties exceeded the national average of \$1,000 with the highest level among Colorado's large counties recorded in Denver (\$1,224). (See [table 1](#).)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 55 counties in Colorado with employment below 75,000. Of these smaller counties, only Broomfield (\$1,367) and Rio Blanco (\$1,026) had average weekly wages above the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Six of Colorado's 9 large counties recorded wage growth from the fourth quarter of 2012 to the fourth quarter of 2013, while the U.S. average weekly wage was unchanged. (See [table 1.](#)) As mentioned, Weld had the largest wage increase (4.8 percent), placing 8th in the national ranking, followed by Boulder (3.7 percent, 13th). Also placing in the top 100 of the ranking were Adams (2.3 percent, 36th) and Larimer (1.4 percent, 75th). Of the remaining large counties in Colorado, Denver registered wage growth of 1.0 percent and placed 106th in the national ranking followed by El Paso (0.2 percent, 165th). In contrast, three large counties experienced decreases in average weekly wages. Douglas had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages, with a loss of 29.7 percent over the year placing it last (334th) in the national ranking. Average weekly wages also decreased in Arapahoe (-0.9 percent, 250th) and Jefferson (-0.2 percent, 205th).

Among the 334 largest counties, 185 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Santa Cruz, Calif., had the largest wage increase among the largest U.S. counties (6.5 percent). Average weekly wages decreased in 140 of the largest counties. As mentioned, Douglas, Colo., registered the largest average weekly wage decline with a loss of 29.7 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Five of the state's large counties had average weekly wages that were above the national average of \$1,000, placing them in the top 100 among the 334 largest counties in the United States in the fourth quarter of 2013. Denver recorded the highest weekly wage at \$1,224 and ranked 29th followed by the counties of Boulder (\$1,174, 42nd), Arapahoe (\$1,145, 50th), Douglas (\$1,123, 52nd), and Jefferson (\$1,005, 95th). The average weekly wages in Colorado's four other large counties ranged from \$871 to \$946.

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than average in 98 of the 334 largest U.S. counties. San Mateo, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,724. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,041, followed by Santa Clara, Calif. (\$1,972). Among the 235 large counties with average weekly wages below the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2013, Horry, S.C. (\$587) reported the lowest wage.

Average weekly wages in Colorado's smaller counties

Of the 55 counties in Colorado with employment below 75,000, only Broomfield (\$1,367) and Rio Blanco (\$1,026) had average weekly wages above the national average of \$1,000. Baca County reported the lowest weekly wage in the state with an average of \$516 in the fourth quarter of 2013. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 64 counties in Colorado were considered, 7 had wages above \$1,000. Six of these high-wage counties were concentrated in the vicinity of the major metropolitan areas of Denver and Boulder. (See [chart 1.](#)) Among the remaining counties, 9 had wages under \$600, 22 reported wages from \$600 to \$699, 13 had wages from \$700 to \$799, 8 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 5 had wages from \$900 to \$999.

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly 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 the QCEW Web site at 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 2012 edition of this publication, which was published in September 2013, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2013 version of the national news

release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2012* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2012/home.htm. The 2013 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2014.

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.

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 9.3 million employer reports cover 136.1 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.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 9 largest counties in Colorado, fourth quarter 2013

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	136,129.4	1.8	--	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Colorado.....	2,383.9	3.1	--	1,023	13	-0.9	43
Adams, Colo.....	177.1	4.6	11	946	143	2.3	36
Arapahoe, Colo.....	300.5	2.8	76	1,145	50	-0.9	250
Boulder, Colo.....	167.6	3.0	61	1,174	42	3.7	13
Denver, Colo.....	451.2	4.0	29	1,224	29	1.0	106
Douglas, Colo.....	106.3	5.2	3	1,123	52	-29.7	334
El Paso, Colo.....	246.4	2.0	122	887	189	0.2	165
Jefferson, Colo.....	218.3	1.8	139	1,005	95	-0.2	205
Larimer, Colo.....	138.3	2.9	72	900	177	1.4	75
Weld, Colo.....	93.2	6.0	1	871	207	4.8	8

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: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Colorado, fourth quarter 2013

Area	Employment December 2013	Average weekly wage (1)		Area	Employment December 2013	Average weekly wage (1)
United States (2)	136,129,407	\$1,000		Kiowa	459	608
Colorado	2,383,920	1023		Kit Carson	3,220	652
Adams	177,088	946		Lake	2,174	639
Alamosa	7,361	663		La Plata	24,710	927
Arapahoe	300,489	1,145		Larimer	138,299	900
Archuleta	3,372	630		Las Animas	4,999	715
Baca	1,123	516		Lincoln	2,085	661
Bent	1,114	601		Logan	8,220	680
Boulder	167,566	1,174		Mesa	59,033	811
Broomfield	34,470	1,367		Mineral	521	586
Chaffee	6,619	702		Moffat	4,912	854
Cheyenne	731	840		Montezuma	8,913	671
Clear Creek	3,266	854		Montrose	13,559	728
Conejos	1,323	570		Morgan	12,152	733
Costilla	775	529		Otero	6,146	677
Crowley	1,079	699		Ouray	1,552	699
Custer	794	594		Park	2,037	683
Delta	8,326	674		Phillips	1,639	689
Denver	451,190	1,224		Pitkin	17,589	913
Dolores	486	737		Prowers	4,438	632
Douglas	106,336	1,123		Pueblo	56,689	756
Eagle	31,642	833		Rio Blanco	3,054	1,026
Elbert	3,193	726		Rio Grande	3,820	654
El Paso	246,363	887		Routt	15,088	887
Fremont	12,609	707		Saguache	1,419	644
Garfield	24,866	926		San Juan	229	529
Gilpin	5,153	746		San Miguel	5,007	717
Grand	7,315	617		Sedgwick	783	591
Gunnison	7,687	703		Summit	21,069	705
Hinsdale	238	526		Teller	6,394	673
Huerfano	1,648	562		Washington	1,195	663
Jackson	543	628		Weld	93,165	871
Jefferson	218,274	1,005		Yuma	3,944	722

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: 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, fourth quarter 2013

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2013 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2012-13	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2012-13	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	136,129.4	1.8	\$1,000	--	0.0	--
Alabama	1,866.5	1.0	851	34	-0.5	39
Alaska	315.1	0.0	1,022	14	1.6	7
Arizona	2,571.0	2.4	906	23	-0.5	39
Arkansas	1,154.3	-0.5	771	47	0.4	22
California	15,650.3	2.8	1,175	6	-0.9	43
Colorado	2,383.9	3.1	1,023	13	-0.9	43
Connecticut	1,661.2	0.3	1,238	4	-1.3	49
Delaware	419.6	1.8	1,035	9	-0.6	41
District of Columbia	727.3	0.6	1,638	1	-3.9	51
Florida	7,739.5	2.7	883	29	0.2	27
Georgia.....	3,986.9	2.5	924	21	-0.1	32
Hawaii.....	632.9	1.7	871	30	0.3	25
Idaho	634.5	2.6	754	50	3.0	2
Illinois	5,758.9	1.0	1,060	8	0.2	27
Indiana.....	2,896.9	1.6	814	40	-0.2	35
Iowa	1,510.9	1.4	834	38	1.6	7
Kansas	1,359.5	1.6	832	39	-0.4	38
Kentucky.....	1,818.0	1.2	804	42	0.2	27
Louisiana	1,911.6	0.9	889	26	0.5	20
Maine.....	586.8	0.8	786	46	1.7	5
Maryland.....	2,555.1	0.4	1,076	7	-0.9	43
Massachusetts	3,332.9	1.5	1,258	3	0.8	17
Michigan	4,072.4	2.0	952	20	-0.2	35
Minnesota	2,720.6	1.7	988	16	0.3	25
Mississippi	1,108.1	1.1	729	51	1.3	11
Missouri	2,670.4	1.1	861	32	-0.2	35
Montana	440.0	1.3	760	48	0.4	22
Nebraska	944.3	1.4	796	43	-0.1	32
Nevada	1,180.5	3.0	884	28	0.7	18
New Hampshire.....	629.3	1.4	1,017	15	-0.8	42
New Jersey.....	3,887.5	1.2	1,186	5	1.1	14
New Mexico	796.2	-0.1	814	40	1.4	10
New York	8,888.6	1.7	1,266	2	-1.1	48
North Carolina	4,045.5	1.9	860	33	0.7	18
North Dakota	435.0	3.3	980	17	3.8	1
Ohio	5,175.4	1.4	887	27	0.0	30
Oklahoma	1,581.3	0.6	851	34	-0.1	32
Oregon	1,699.6	2.5	894	25	2.6	3
Pennsylvania.....	5,650.3	0.4	976	18	0.4	22
Rhode Island	462.7	1.4	960	19	1.5	9
South Carolina.....	1,875.8	2.3	793	44	1.0	15
South Dakota.....	407.1	1.3	759	49	1.3	11
Tennessee	2,758.3	1.8	895	24	-0.9	43
Texas	11,246.3	2.6	1,027	12	0.0	30
Utah	1,284.7	3.1	836	37	-0.9	43
Vermont.....	308.5	0.6	848	36	2.3	4
Virginia.....	3,670.0	0.1	1,028	11	-1.3	49
Washington.....	2,976.0	2.5	1,034	10	1.7	5
West Virginia	710.1	-0.6	792	45	0.5	20
Wisconsin	2,751.8	1.0	865	31	1.2	13
Wyoming	279.2	0.6	917	22	1.0	15
Puerto Rico.....	958.3	-2.3	551	(3)	0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	-3.6	754	(3)	2.4	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

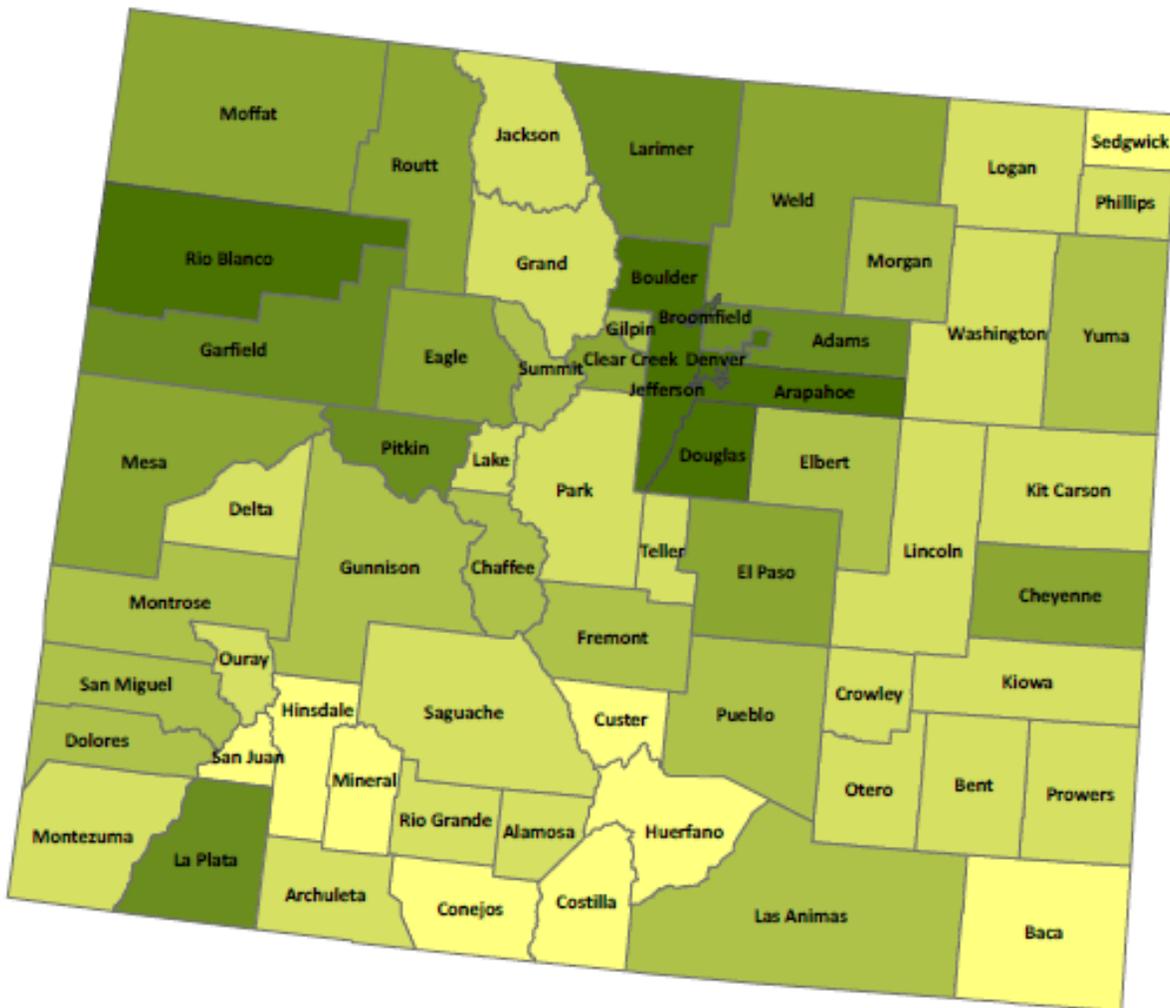
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

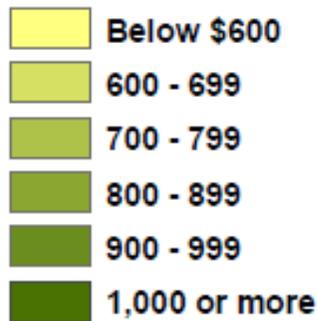
(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

NOTE: Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages for counties in Colorado, fourth quarter 2013



**Average weekly wages
(National average = \$1,000)**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.