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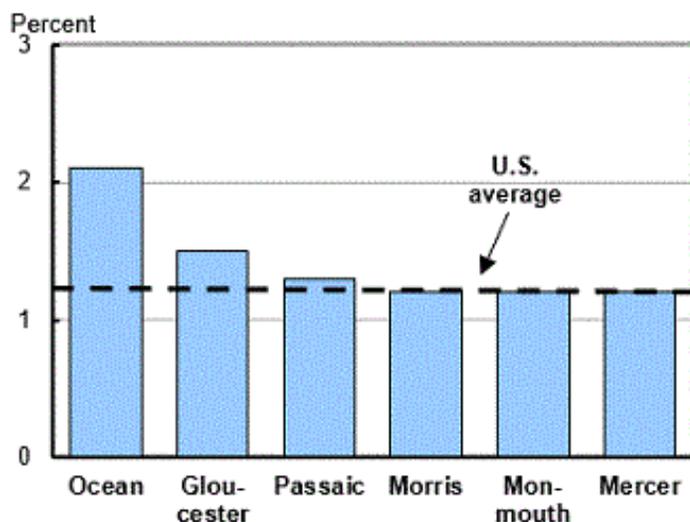
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County Employment and Wages in New Jersey — Fourth Quarter 2019

Employment rose in 13 of the 15 largest counties in New Jersey from December 2018 to December 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are those with 2018 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Chief Regional Economist Martin Kohli noted that employment rose 2.1 percent over the year in Ocean County, 1.5 percent in Gloucester County, and 1.3 percent in Passaic County. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

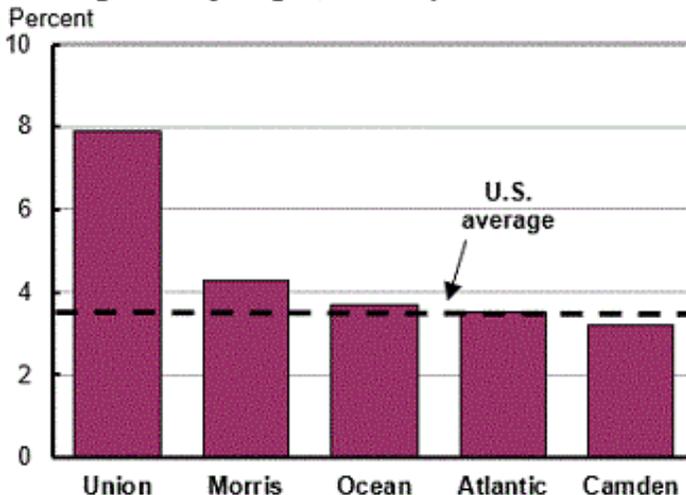
Nationally, employment increased 1.2 percent over the year with 285 of the 355 largest U.S. counties reporting increases. Cleveland, OK, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.8 percent over the year. Ector, TX, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment with a loss of 4.2 percent.

Chart 1. Highest-ranked large counties in New Jersey by percent increase in employment, December 2018-19



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Chart 2. Highest-ranked large counties in New Jersey by percent increase in average weekly wages, fourth quarter 2018-19



Among the 15 largest counties in New Jersey, employment was highest in Bergen County (457,000) in December 2019. Middlesex had an employment level of 440,400, followed by Essex with 353,000. Altogether, New Jersey's largest counties accounted for 91.1 percent of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 355 largest counties made up 73.7 percent of total U.S. employment.

Wages increased in 14 of the 15 largest counties in New Jersey from the fourth quarter of 2018 to the fourth quarter of 2019, with the fastest rate of increase in Union County at 7.9 percent. Morris County had the highest average weekly wage among the state's largest counties at \$1,691, followed by Somerset at \$1,628. Nationally, the average weekly wage increased 3.5 percent from a year ago to \$1,185 in the fourth quarter of 2019. (See [chart 2](#).)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the six counties in New Jersey with employment below 75,000. Hunterdon (\$1,294) was the only small county to report an average weekly wage above the U.S. average of \$1,185. Cape May County reported the lowest average weekly wage, \$840. (See [table 2](#).)

Large County Wage Changes

Union County's 7.9-percent annual wage increase came in at more than twice the national rate of 3.5 percent. Morris and Ocean Counties, at 4.3 percent and 3.7 percent respectively, were the only other large counties in the state with gains that exceeded the national average. Atlantic County's 3.5-percent increase matched the national rate, followed by Camden County at 3.2 percent. Five counties—Bergen, Burlington, Essex, Gloucester, and Hudson—had over-the-year gains ranging from 2.7 percent to 2.0 percent. Wage gains ranged from 1.9 percent to 0.1 percent in four additional counties. Conversely, Mercer County (-0.8 percent) experienced an over-the-year loss and ranked 348th nationwide.

Nationally, 341 of the 355 largest counties had over-the-year wage increases. Santa Cruz, CA, had the largest percentage wage increase (20.7 percent). The remaining 14 large counties had wage declines during the period. Linn, IA, had the largest over-the-year percentage decrease (-7.1 percent).

Large County Average Weekly Wages

Eight of New Jersey's large counties reported average weekly wages above the national average of \$1,185 in the fourth quarter of 2019. The state's five highest-paying counties—Morris, Somerset, Hudson, Union and Mercer—ranked among the nation's top 30. Ocean County had an average weekly wage of \$944, the lowest of New Jersey's large counties, and ranked 286th nationwide.

Nationally, 93 large counties reported average weekly wages at or above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2019. Santa Clara, CA, had the highest average weekly wage at \$2,825. Average weekly wages were below the national average in 262 counties. At \$701 a week, Cameron, TX, had the lowest average weekly wage.

Average Weekly Wages in New Jersey's Smaller Counties

Of the six smaller counties in New Jersey—those with employment below 75,000—Hunterdon (\$1,294) was the only small county to report an average weekly wage above the U.S. average of \$1,185. The remaining five smaller counties had average weekly wages ranging from \$1,150 in Salem to \$840 in Cape May.

When all 21 counties in New Jersey were considered, 9 had an average weekly above \$1,250. All of these counties were clustered in northern and central New Jersey. Eight counties had average weekly wages below \$1,100, five of which were located in the southern half of the state. (See [chart 3](#).)

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, which was published in September 2019, 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 this news release. Tables and additional content from the 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* are now available at www.bls.gov/cew/publications/employment-and-wages-annual-averages/2018/home.htm. The 2019 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2020.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 19, 2020. The County Employment and Wages full data update for first quarter 2020 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 2, 2020.

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 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 15 largest counties in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2019

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Fourth quarter 2019	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2018-19 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	149,857.1	1.2	--	\$1,185	--	3.5	--
New Jersey.....	4,157.4	0.8	--	1,332	7	2.5	42
Atlantic.....	128.1	-0.2	298	970	264	3.5	149
Bergen.....	457.0	0.7	204	1,352	48	2.4	255
Burlington.....	204.5	0.5	231	1,176	98	2.7	226
Camden.....	208.9	0.4	241	1,155	110	3.2	181
Essex.....	353.0	1.0	175	1,403	37	2.3	261
Gloucester.....	118.2	1.5	114	958	279	2.0	289
Hudson.....	276.8	1.1	160	1,482	22	2.7	226
Mercer.....	266.1	1.2	144	1,450	26	-0.8	348
Middlesex.....	440.4	0.1	273	1,312	52	1.3	324
Monmouth.....	267.1	1.2	144	1,153	112	1.9	293
Morris.....	300.1	1.2	144	1,691	12	4.3	79
Ocean.....	171.0	2.1	66	944	286	3.7	133
Passaic.....	169.9	1.3	138	1,091	160	1.2	328
Somerset.....	191.6	-0.6	322	1,628	14	0.1	341
Union.....	232.9	0.1	273	1,462	23	7.9	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: Data are preliminary. 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 New Jersey, fourth quarter 2019

Area	Employment December 2019	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾ fourth quarter 2019
United States ⁽²⁾	149,857,130	\$1,185
New Jersey.....	4,157,410	1,332
Atlantic.....	128,087	970
Bergen.....	456,991	1,352
Burlington.....	204,485	1,176
Camden.....	208,893	1,155
Cape May.....	36,573	840
Cumberland.....	59,804	971
Essex.....	353,025	1,403
Gloucester.....	118,246	958
Hudson.....	276,797	1,482
Hunterdon.....	48,364	1,294
Mercer.....	266,142	1,450
Middlesex.....	440,391	1,312
Monmouth.....	267,142	1,153
Morris.....	300,083	1,691
Ocean.....	171,031	944
Passaic.....	169,886	1,091
Salem.....	20,423	1,150
Somerset.....	191,575	1,628
Sussex.....	38,492	973
Union.....	232,906	1,462
Warren.....	32,812	1,056

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, fourth quarter 2019

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2019 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2018-19	Fourth quarter 2019	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2018-19	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	149,857.1	1.2	\$1,185	--	3.5	--
Alabama	2,007.9	1.0	985	36	2.6	39
Alaska	309.9	0.6	1,139	16	3.2	27
Arizona	2,999.8	2.7	1,059	23	4.1	7
Arkansas	1,232.9	0.5	898	50	3.2	27
California	17,836.3	1.5	1,457	4	4.7	4
Colorado	2,772.6	2.2	1,227	9	4.0	8
Connecticut	1,687.4	-0.7	1,383	5	3.8	11
Delaware	455.3	0.8	1,136	17	2.6	39
District of Columbia	782.5	0.8	1,992	1	2.5	42
Florida	9,085.5	2.0	1,044	26	3.6	14
Georgia	4,576.1	1.7	1,090	21	3.6	14
Hawaii	665.1	-0.8	1,053	24	3.5	17
Idaho	756.9	3.1	918	46	3.1	32
Illinois	6,043.5	0.2	1,221	10	2.7	38
Indiana	3,106.0	0.6	969	38	3.0	34
Iowa	1,560.4	0.1	984	37	1.9	47
Kansas	1,410.7	0.6	959	40	3.5	17
Kentucky	1,928.3	0.8	955	41	3.2	27
Louisiana	1,927.7	-0.5	993	34	2.5	42
Maine	620.2	0.7	955	41	5.3	2
Maryland	2,728.1	0.9	1,271	8	3.5	17
Massachusetts	3,660.8	0.9	1,511	2	3.8	11
Michigan	4,385.3	0.4	1,115	18	3.4	22
Minnesota	2,912.8	0.4	1,177	14	3.2	27
Mississippi	1,145.0	0.0	818	51	3.2	27
Missouri	2,846.2	0.9	1,010	32	3.0	34
Montana	474.1	1.1	918	46	3.4	22
Nebraska	990.9	0.7	969	38	4.2	6
Nevada	1,435.5	2.7	1,030	29	2.4	45
New Hampshire	671.3	0.8	1,192	12	2.9	37
New Jersey	4,157.4	0.8	1,332	7	2.5	42
New Mexico	844.0	1.5	942	44	4.0	8
New York	9,691.0	0.8	1,499	3	3.7	13
North Carolina	4,546.9	1.9	1,036	28	2.4	45
North Dakota	424.6	0.5	1,085	22	2.6	39
Ohio	5,477.2	0.5	1,037	27	3.1	32
Oklahoma	1,639.4	0.3	945	43	1.4	49
Oregon	1,969.3	1.6	1,100	19	4.6	5
Pennsylvania	5,985.9	0.8	1,143	15	3.6	14
Rhode Island	489.8	0.6	1,099	20	1.1	50
South Carolina	2,144.8	1.2	931	45	4.0	8
South Dakota	430.7	0.6	916	48	3.5	17
Tennessee	3,085.4	1.6	1,047	25	1.6	48
Texas	12,793.0	2.0	1,187	13	3.4	22
Utah	1,547.8	2.5	1,022	30	5.0	3
Vermont	314.0	-0.4	987	35	3.5	17
Virginia	3,978.7	1.2	1,204	11	3.4	22
Washington	3,457.7	2.2	1,370	6	6.4	1
West Virginia	690.3	-2.0	904	49	-1.4	51
Wisconsin	2,898.0	0.2	1,022	30	3.3	26
Wyoming	276.3	1.4	1,007	33	3.0	34
Puerto Rico	910.7	1.5	575	(3)	-0.2	(3)
Virgin Islands	39.2	10.8	1,065	(3)	13.5	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

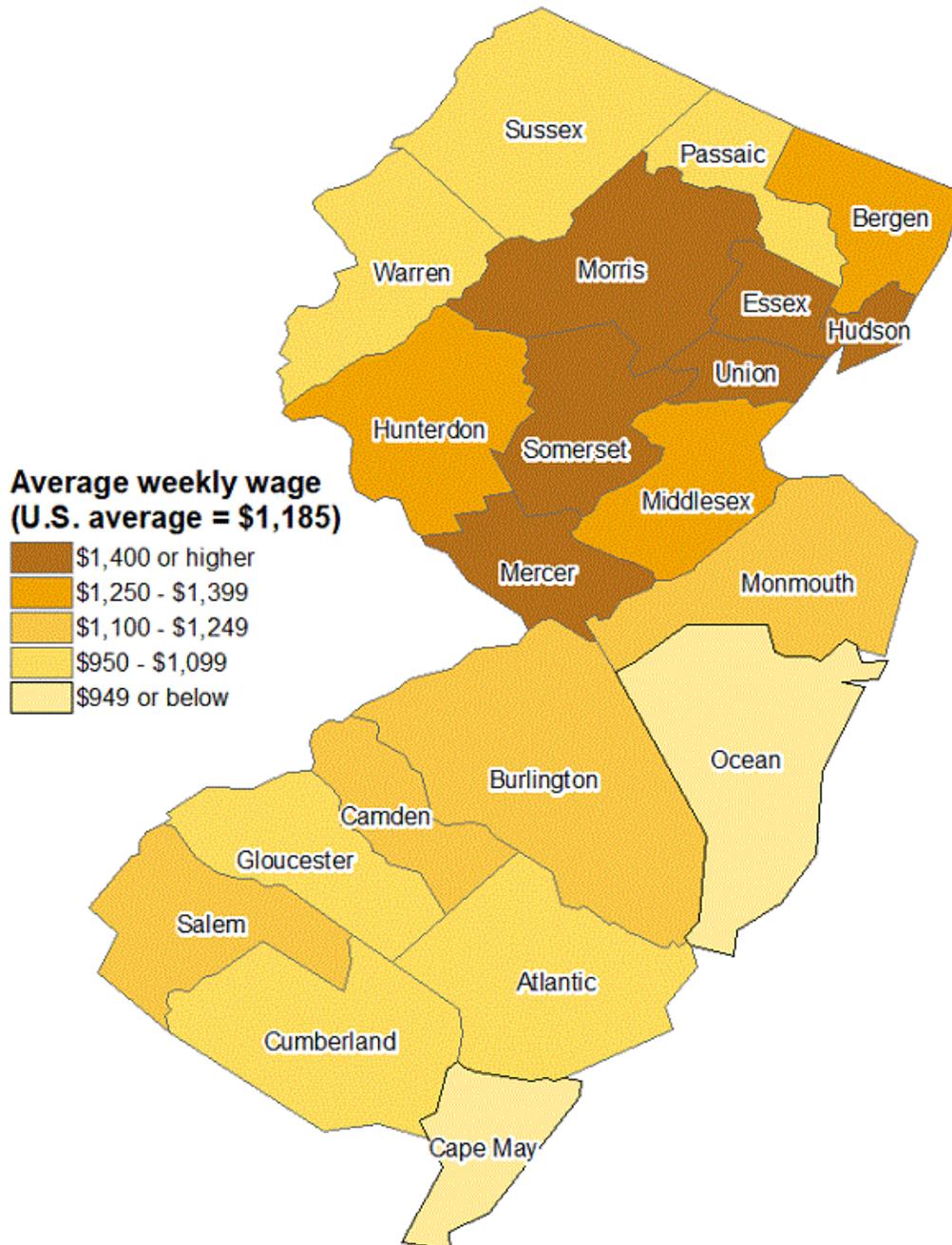
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(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. Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 3. Average weekly wages by county in New Jersey, fourth quarter 2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.