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## **COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN ALASKA – SECOND QUARTER 2011**

Employment rose in Alaska's only large county, Anchorage Borough, from June 2011 to June 2012, 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 2010 annual average employment.) Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that employment in Anchorage Borough advanced 1.5 percent over the year, a rate higher than the national increase of 0.9 percent. (See table 1.)

Nationally, employment grew in 215 of the 322 large U.S. counties. Ottawa, Mich., experienced the largest percentage increase in employment, up 4.7 percent over the year. San Joaquin, Calif., had the largest employment decrease, down 4.0 percent.

Anchorage Borough employment totaled 152,500, and accounted for 45.4 of total employment within the state. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.5 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 130.5 million in June 2011.

The average weekly wage in Anchorage Borough was \$992 in the second quarter of 2011, an increase of 2.2 percent from the second quarter of 2010. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 3.0 percent over the year to \$891 in the second quarter of 2011. (See table 1.)

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for 28 boroughs in Alaska with employment below 75,000. Average weekly wages in these counties ranged from \$1,726 to \$494 during the second quarter of 2011. (See table 2.)

### **Large County Wage Changes**

Anchorage Borough's 2.2-percent wage gain placed in the bottom-half of the national ranking for large counties at 196<sup>th</sup>. Of the 322 largest counties nationwide, 307 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Williamson, Texas, led the nation in average weekly wage growth with an increase of 18.0 percent from the second quarter of 2010. Middlesex, Mass., was second with a gain of 10.2 percent, followed by the counties of Harford, Md. (8.8 percent), Santa Clara, Calif. (8.5 percent), and Butler, Pa. (7.5 percent).

Nationwide, 11 large counties recorded decreases in average weekly wages over the year, with 5 declining 1.0 percent or more. Champaign, Ill., had the largest decrease in wages with a decline of 3.6

percent from the second quarter of 2010. Smaller declines were reported in Benton, Ark. (-2.7 percent), Rutherford, Tenn. (-2.2 percent), New York, N.Y. (-1.1 percent), and Elkhart, Ind. (-1.0 percent).

### **Large County Average Weekly Wages**

Anchorage Borough's \$992 average weekly wage placed within the top 20 percent in the nation, ranking 58<sup>th</sup> in the second quarter of 2011. Nationwide, 107 large counties registered weekly wages above the U.S. average of \$891. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,743. New York, N.Y., was second at \$1,645, followed by the counties of Arlington, Va. (\$1,553), Washington, D.C. (\$1,541), and Fairfield, Conn. (\$1,469).

Two-thirds of the largest U.S. counties (215) reported weekly wages below the national average. Horry County, S.C., reported the lowest wage (\$526), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$571), Cameron, Texas (\$572), Yakima, Wash. (\$610), and Webb, Texas (\$616).

### **Average Weekly Wages in Alaska's Smaller Counties**

Alaska consists of 17 smaller boroughs, 11 census areas, and 1 municipality, which are similar to a county in other states. Twenty-four of the 28 counties in Alaska with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$891. The exceptions were North Slope Borough (\$1,726), Southeast Fairbanks Census Area (\$1,198), Northwest Arctic Borough (\$1,071), and Fairbanks North Star Borough (\$919). The Wade Hampton Census Area reported the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, averaging \$494. (See table 2.)

When all 29 counties in Alaska were considered, 9 had wages above \$800. Among the other counties, 14 had average weekly wages ranging from \$700 to \$799, 4 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 1 had wages from \$500 to \$599, and 1 reported wages under \$500.

### **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 <http://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 2010 edition of this publication, which was published in November 2011, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2011 version of the national news release. This web-only publication has replaced the print version of the annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages Annual Averages*. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online, 2010* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm). The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in 2012.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the West Information Office in San Francisco at 415-625-2270.

### **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 9.1 million employer reports covered 130.5 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/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the BLS 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 (1) employment and wages in the United States and the largest county in Alaska, second quarter 2011 (2)**

| Area                      | Employment            |                                  |  | Average Weekly Wage [3] |                               |                                      |  |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
|                           | June 2011 (thousands) | Percent change, June 2010-11 [4] | National ranking by percent change [5] | Average weekly wage     | National ranking by level [5] | Percent change, second quarter 2010- | National ranking by percent change [5] |
| United States [6]         | 130,469.9             | 0.9                              | --                                     | \$891                   | --                            | 3.0                                  | --                                     |
| Alaska                    | 335.9                 | 1.6                              | --                                     | 941                     | 9                             | 2.6                                  | 27                                     |
| Anchorage Borough, Alaska | 152.5                 | 1.5                              | 82                                     | 992                     | 58                            | 2.2                                  | 196                                    |

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

[2] Data are preliminary.

[3] Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

[4] Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

[5] Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

[6] Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

[7] Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

**Table 2. Covered<sup>1</sup> employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Alaska, second quarter 2011<sup>2</sup>**

| Area                                     | Employment June 2011 | Average Weekly Wage (3) |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>United States (4)</b>                 | 130,469,924          | \$891                   |
| <b>Alaska</b>                            | 335,907              | 941                     |
| <b>Aleutian East Borough</b>             | 1,886                | 642                     |
| <b>Aleutian West Census Area</b>         | 3,716                | 839                     |
| <b>Anchorage Borough</b>                 | 152,545              | 992                     |
| <b>Bethel Census Area</b>                | 6,749                | 728                     |
| <b>Bristol Bay Borough</b>               | 2,882                | 752                     |
| <b>Denali Borough</b>                    | 3,331                | 725                     |
| <b>Dillingham Census Area</b>            | 2,712                | 719                     |
| <b>Fairbanks North Star Borough</b>      | 37,971               | 919                     |
| <b>Haines Borough</b>                    | 1,075                | 583                     |
| <b>Hoonah-Angoon Census Area</b>         | 821                  | 612                     |
| <b>Juneau Borough</b>                    | 18,491               | 865                     |
| <b>Kenai Peninsula Borough</b>           | 21,254               | 815                     |
| <b>Ketchikan Gateway Borough</b>         | 8,131                | 780                     |
| <b>Kodiak Island Borough</b>             | 6,693                | 746                     |
| <b>Lake and Peninsula Borough</b>        | 908                  | 731                     |
| <b>Mantanuska-Susitna Borough</b>        | 21,097               | 735                     |
| <b>Nome Census Area</b>                  | 3,804                | 797                     |
| <b>North Slope Borough</b>               | 13,807               | 1,726                   |
| <b>Northwest Arctic Borough</b>          | 2,927                | 1,071                   |
| <b>Petersburg Census Area</b>            | 1,564                | 729                     |
| <b>Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area</b> | 2,062                | 735                     |
| <b>Sitka Borough</b>                     | 4,451                | 781                     |
| <b>Skagway Municipality</b>              | 1,093                | 661                     |
| <b>Southeast Fairbanks Census Area</b>   | 2,790                | 1,198                   |
| <b>Valdez-Cordova Census Area</b>        | 5,624                | 880                     |
| <b>Wade Hampton Census Area</b>          | 2,281                | 494                     |
| <b>Wrangell City and Borough</b>         | 840                  | 722                     |
| <b>Yakutat Borough</b>                   | 380                  | 653                     |
| <b>Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area</b>         | 2,407                | 762                     |

Footnotes

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

(2) Data are preliminary.

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

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

[SOURCE: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages](#)

**Table 3. Covered (1) employment, and wages by state, second quarter 2011 (2)**

| State                | Employment            |                              | Average weekly wage [3] |                           |  |                                    |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
|                      | June 2011 (thousands) | Percent change, June 2010-11 | Average weekly wage     | National ranking by level | Percent change, second quarter 2010-11 | National ranking by percent change |
| United States [4]    | 130,469.9             | 0.9                          | \$891                   | --                        | 3.0                                    | --                                 |
| Alabama              | 1,824.8               | -0.4                         | 767                     | 34                        | 2.3                                    | 41                                 |
| Alaska               | 335.9                 | 1.6                          | 941                     | 9                         | 2.6                                    | 27                                 |
| Arizona              | 2,336.3               | 1.1                          | 842                     | 20                        | 2.7                                    | 26                                 |
| Arkansas             | 1,140.4               | -1.3                         | 703                     | 47                        | 2.6                                    | 27                                 |
| California           | 14,664.6              | 0.3                          | 1,019                   | 6                         | 4.0                                    | 7                                  |
| Colorado             | 2,234.7               | 1.4                          | 900                     | 13                        | 3.4                                    | 16                                 |
| Connecticut          | 1,630.2               | 0.8                          | 1,116                   | 3                         | 3.8                                    | 9                                  |
| Delaware             | 408.4                 | 0.5                          | 926                     | 12                        | 5.9                                    | 2                                  |
| District of Columbia | 711.3                 | 1.4                          | 1,541                   | 1                         | 2.4                                    | 36                                 |
| Florida              | 7,092.3               | 0.8                          | 802                     | 25                        | 2.6                                    | 27                                 |
| Georgia              | 3,803.1               | 1.0                          | 832                     | 21                        | 2.5                                    | 32                                 |
| Hawaii               | 590.5                 | 0.7                          | 799                     | 26                        | 2.4                                    | 36                                 |
| Idaho                | 616.6                 | 0.0                          | 667                     | 49                        | 2.3                                    | 41                                 |
| Illinois             | 5,633.0               | 1.0                          | 939                     | 10                        | 3.2                                    | 17                                 |
| Indiana              | 2,769.2               | 1.3                          | 749                     | 41                        | 2.2                                    | 46                                 |
| Iowa                 | 1,476.9               | 0.7                          | 726                     | 43                        | 2.5                                    | 32                                 |
| Kansas               | 1,313.2               | -0.1                         | 754                     | 40                        | 2.9                                    | 23                                 |
| Kentucky             | 1,751.8               | 0.9                          | 760                     | 38                        | 2.3                                    | 41                                 |
| Louisiana            | 1,844.3               | -0.1                         | 794                     | 28                        | 3.1                                    | 18                                 |
| Maine                | 593.8                 | 0.3                          | 712                     | 46                        | 1.9                                    | 48                                 |
| Maryland             | 2,513.5               | 0.5                          | 987                     | 7                         | 3.1                                    | 18                                 |
| Massachusetts        | 3,230.4               | 0.9                          | 1,120                   | 2                         | 5.6                                    | 3                                  |
| Michigan             | 3,896.9               | 1.8                          | 845                     | 19                        | 2.4                                    | 36                                 |
| Minnesota            | 2,645.4               | 1.4                          | 898                     | 15                        | 3.5                                    | 12                                 |
| Mississippi          | 1,079.4               | -0.6                         | 664                     | 50                        | 1.8                                    | 49                                 |
| Missouri             | 2,617.7               | 0.3                          | 774                     | 31                        | 1.6                                    | 50                                 |
| Montana              | 434.1                 | 0.5                          | 681                     | 48                        | 3.5                                    | 12                                 |
| Nebraska             | 911.6                 | 0.1                          | 714                     | 45                        | 2.4                                    | 36                                 |
| Nevada               | 1,123.0               | 0.5                          | 816                     | 24                        | 2.5                                    | 32                                 |
| New Hampshire        | 615.2                 | 0.4                          | 888                     | 16                        | 2.4                                    | 36                                 |
| New Jersey           | 3,836.2               | -0.3                         | 1,056                   | 5                         | 2.6                                    | 27                                 |
| New Mexico           | 788.7                 | -0.5                         | 763                     | 37                        | 2.8                                    | 24                                 |
| New York             | 8,575.3               | 1.0                          | 1,092                   | 4                         | 1.0                                    | 51                                 |
| North Carolina       | 3,865.9               | 1.5                          | 783                     | 30                        | 2.5                                    | 32                                 |
| North Dakota         | 382.4                 | 5.1                          | 769                     | 33                        | 8.2                                    | 1                                  |
| Ohio                 | 5,009.1               | 0.9                          | 795                     | 27                        | 2.6                                    | 27                                 |
| Oklahoma             | 1,510.3               | 0.7                          | 749                     | 41                        | 4.5                                    | 5                                  |
| Oregon               | 1,637.5               | 0.7                          | 819                     | 22                        | 4.2                                    | 6                                  |
| Pennsylvania         | 5,606.5               | 1.0                          | 875                     | 17                        | 3.1                                    | 18                                 |
| Rhode Island         | 458.1                 | 0.3                          | 862                     | 18                        | 3.5                                    | 12                                 |
| South Carolina       | 1,801.6               | 1.1                          | 726                     | 43                        | 2.3                                    | 41                                 |
| South Dakota         | 404.8                 | 0.8                          | 656                     | 51                        | 3.8                                    | 9                                  |
| Tennessee            | 2,616.9               | 1.3                          | 794                     | 28                        | 2.3                                    | 41                                 |
| Texas                | 10,462.4              | 2.1                          | 900                     | 13                        | 4.0                                    | 7                                  |
| Utah                 | 1,183.9               | 2.0                          | 756                     | 39                        | 3.1                                    | 18                                 |
| Vermont              | 297.0                 | 1.0                          | 773                     | 32                        | 2.8                                    | 24                                 |
| Virginia             | 3,619.7               | 0.9                          | 949                     | 8                         | 2.2                                    | 46                                 |
| Washington           | 2,875.8               | 0.6                          | 928                     | 11                        | 3.5                                    | 12                                 |
| West Virginia        | 702.9                 | 0.3                          | 765                     | 36                        | 5.4                                    | 4                                  |
| Wisconsin            | 2,712.0               | 0.9                          | 767                     | 34                        | 3.0                                    | 22                                 |
| Wyoming              | 284.7                 | 1.2                          | 819                     | 22                        | 3.7                                    | 11                                 |
| Puerto Rico          | 915.1                 | -1.4                         | 496                     | [5]                       | 0.6                                    | [5]                                |
| Virgin Islands       | 44.1                  | 0.6                          | 747                     | [5]                       | 5.5                                    | [5]                                |

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

[2] Data are preliminary.

[3] Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

[4] Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

[5] Data not included in the national ranking.

# Chart 1. Average Weekly Wages in Alaska, Second Quarter 2011

National Average = \$891

