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## **Annual Average Wage Grows to \$34,001 in 2007**

**CHARLESTON, WV**--The average West Virginia worker earned \$34,001 in 2007, according to statistics released by WORKFORCE West Virginia, a division of the West Virginia Department of Commerce. The average annual wage in the state rose by \$1,277, about 3.9 percent from 2006. Average annual employment grew to 708,313 from 705,281, an increase of 3,032. The five industries with the highest employment growth over the year were educational and health services (+1,317), professional and business services (+1,310), leisure and hospitality (+921), retail trade (+648), and mining (+605). The three industries with the highest declining employment were manufacturing (-1,879), construction (-593), and other services (-262).

A survey of wages shows federal government health services paid the highest average annual wage among the state's major industry sectors with an average of \$70,874 followed by utilities (\$69,375), mining (\$63,420), management services (\$60,731), and wholesale trade (\$46,721).

Boone County continued to report the highest average annual wage at \$46,319 followed by Mingo (\$40,611), Putnam (\$40,323), Marshall (\$39,787), Clay (\$39,634), Pleasants (\$39,036), Kanawha (\$38,036), Wayne (\$37,652), Mason (\$36,710), and Grant (\$36,476). Tucker County had the lowest annual average wage of \$22,698 followed by Wirt (\$22,746), Summers (\$24,032), Wetzel (\$25,368), and Taylor (\$25,594).

Fastest growing counties in terms of the number of employed were Monongalia (+1,214), Cabell (+1,088), Putnam (+811), Kanawha (+588), and Jefferson (+255). West Virginia covered employers paid over \$24 billion in wages, an increase of just over \$1 billion or 4.3 percent from 2006.

Based on data that include all workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance programs, these statistics appear each year in the West Virginia Employment and Wages. Also included are data on average annual employment, average annual and weekly wages, and the number of employers by detailed industry for the state and each of its 55 counties. West Virginia Employment and Wages can be found online at [www.wvbep.org/bep/lmi/WAGEDATA.htm](http://www.wvbep.org/bep/lmi/WAGEDATA.htm).