*Covered Employment and Wages: A 2024 Annual Review*

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According to the most recent data published by the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, the number of jobs in Connecticut increased by 0.9 percent during 2024.1 Employment growth slowed in 2024 but continued the upward post-pandemic trend. Total private industry employment, constituting 86.7 percent of the state’s employment total, increased by 0.8 percent. Total government employment increased by 1.6 percent.

 Average annual wages for all Connecticut jobs increased by 4.3 percent, to $87,403. In 2024, private sector wages increased by 4.6 percent to $88,835; government wages increased 2.6 percent to $78,051.

 New business establishments continued to grow, though at a slightly slower pace than in 2023. The establishment counts for 2023 were revised after the publication of last year's article. The revised data can be seen for the 2023 sectors starting on page 3. Overall, establishments rose to 148,376 in 2024, an increase of 2.6 percent over 2023. Total private establishments represented nearly all the increase, reaching 144,956 in 2024. Government worksites were flat, adding only three establishments overall in 2024, to a total of 3,420. New business starts were 14,223 in 2024, compared to 14,586 (revised) in 2023. The boost in business registrations for teleworkers continues to be a driver in business establishment growth. Many of these worksites, often the worker's home, are unlikely to see further employment growth due to the nature of teleworkers.

**Employment**

 2024 continued to show growth with jobs up 14,651 (annual average to annual average) or 0.9 percent, with most sectors showing increases for the year.

 For sectors that increased in 2024, healthcare continued to lead the Connecticut economy, gaining 8,979 in employment. Government employment added 3,507 jobs, split between state and local government. Private educational services saw a large increase at 2,818 in employment, or 4.5 percent. Eleven other sectors saw increases, most between 500 to 2,000 jobs, encompassing most of the economy. See pages 3 and 4 for data on other industry sectors and subsectors.

 Manufacturing, along with the retail trade and the administrative and waste management sectors, were the only sectors with notable declines. Manufacturing declined slightly, losing 1,845 jobs. The decline in manufacturing was spread across many of the manufacturing subsectors, with no single one dominating. Retail trade and administrative and waste management lost 1,337 and 612 jobs, respectively, in 2024.

 As for government employment, federal employment was flat, while both state and local government saw modest increases. State government gains showed up mostly in public administration and healthcare. Local government gains were also mostly in public administration, with some in education and also arts, entertainment, and recreation. The public administration gains were influenced by temporary boosts due to staffing for the 2024 elections.

 The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) aggregates the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) sectors to form the top-level goods-producing and service-providing “domains”. Goods-producing sectors include agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting; mining; construction; and manufacturing. The remaining sectors are aggregated into the service-providing domain.

 For 2024, the goods-producing domain encompassed 13.6 percent of total covered employment, with the remaining 86.4 percent in the service-providing domain. The goods-producing employment sector was essentially flat (down just 31 jobs) with service-providing employment increasing by 1.0 percent, or 14,682 at the same time.

**Wages**

 Connecticut average annual wages varied greatly between industries and within each sector in 2024. It should be noted that much of this difference in pay level can be attributed to factors such as hours worked (full- or part-time), workforce composition, wages, including bonuses or stock options, and seasonal and weather-related influences.

 The highest annual average wage, found in the finance and insurance sector, was $234,169 - 2.6 times the state average. Those in the securities, commodity contracts and investments subsector earned an average of $463,480 in 2024. The management and information sectors were behind finance and insurance at $197,213 and $159,943, respectively.

 At the other end of the spectrum, accommodation and food services workers earned the least, at $31,250. The increase of 4.2% was below the state average, though it remains heavily influenced by part-time workers and is only one-third of the average annual wage in Connecticut. Next were arts, entertainment and recreation at $40,144 and retail trade at $45,375 in annual wages.

 Goods-producing wages showed an increase of 4.9 percent compared to 2023, at $95,415. They are 9.0 percent above the annual average for all industries. Service-providing wages experienced similar growth, $86,141, an increase of 4.3 percent on an annual basis.n

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1 QCEW counts all jobs covered by Connecticut Unemployment Insurance (UI) - over 97 percent of all payroll jobs.