INTRODUCTION

This report is part of a series of reports that provide information on the structure, function, finances, taxation, employment, and pension systems of the United States’ over 90,000 state and local governments. The U.S. Census Bureau currently produces the Census of Governments quinquennially for the years ending in “2” and “7.” Additionally, associated intercensal surveys provide data quarterly and annually. These surveys provide a wealth of data on the economic activity of state and local governments.

For Census Bureau statistical purposes, a government is defined as an organized entity subject to public accountability, whose officials are popularly elected or are appointed by public officials, and which has sufficient discretion in the management of its affairs to distinguish it as separate from the administrative structure of any other government unit. Types of governments canvassed include states, counties, cities, townships, special districts, and school districts.

This report presents data on state and local government employment and payroll based on information collected by the 2012 Census of Governments: Employment component for the month of March and historical data collected by prior surveys and censuses of government units. Data are published in tables at the federal, state, and local levels. Tables describing state- and local-level activities are aggregated into national, as well as individual state totals. Employment figures are available for full- and part-time workers, as well as full-time equivalent employees. Total pay amounts are also available separately for full- and part-time employees.

DID YOU KNOW?

Uses of the Survey of Public Employment & Payroll include the following:

- Development of the government component of the gross domestic product (GDP) estimates
- Development of the national income accounts
- Development of personal income estimates for state and county areas
- Legislative research
- Comparative studies of state and local government employment

The Census of Governments: Employment component collects employment and payroll data broken out by functional category or type of job. The survey has maintained definitions consistently over the years, adding new services to definitions of functions as these services came to exist among state and local governments.

In addition to basic functional categories, three umbrella categories group functional categories together: Total Education, Total Police Protection, and Total Fire Protection. Education is an umbrella category covering all employees that are engaged in the operation, maintenance, and construction of public education facilities. This includes teachers, administrators, clerical, cafeteria, and maintenance workers, among others at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels. Education data are available by component at the elementary/secondary levels, as well as higher education for instructional and noninstructional employees.
Police protection includes employees of police departments who are sworn police officers as well as those in assistance, such as dispatchers, coroners, and crime lab employees. Sworn police officers are counted specifically and can be separated from the wider functional category as shown in Tables 1 and 2. Fire protection is divided between firefighters and other fire protection personnel.

Contracted employees of governments are not included in the employment or payroll amounts shown in this report. Additionally, these data do not account specifically for the effects of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 on public employment and payroll in state and local governments.

**EMPLOYMENT**

In March 2012, federal, state, and local governments employed 22.0 million people. This is a decrease of 75,913 employees from the last Census of Governments conducted in 2007. The number of state government employees increased by 85,755, or 1.6 percent. Local governments employed 224,354 fewer people, or 1.6 percent, while federal employment increased by 62,686 employees, or 2.3 percent (see Figure 1).

State and local governments in the United States employed 14.4 million full-time and 4.9 million part-time employees in March of 2012. In March 2007, there were 14.7 million full-time and 4.7 million part-time employees of state and local governments. This was a decrease of 0.3 million full-time employees, or 2.1 percent, working in March 2012. Part-time employment increased by 169,335, or 3.6 percent, during this period. A comparison between the numbers of full-time and total employees for the three levels of government can be found in Figure 2.

Full-time employment decreased at both the state government and local government level, with losses of 45,907 employees, or 1.2 percent, and 262,027 employees, or 2.4 percent, respectively. However, part-time employment saw an increase with 37,673 more employees, or 1.1 percent, at the local level and an increase of 131,662 employees, or 9.2 percent, at the state level.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Full-time employees are defined to include those persons whose hours of work represent full-time employment in their employer government. Because this can vary across governments, the Survey of Public Employment & Payroll asks respondents to choose between six categories that best describe the reported full-time employees: 40 hours or more; 37.5 to 39.9 hours; 34 to 37.4 hours; 32 to 33.9 hours; 30 to 31.9 hours; and No Full-Time Employees.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nationally, local government workers comprised the majority of the state and local government workforce with 14.0 million local government employees, or 72.5 percent, working in March 2012. State governments employed 5.3 million, or 27.5 percent. Full-time employees form the majority of the state and local government workforce. Local governments employed 10.6 million full-time employees, or 76.2 percent of all workers. There were 3.7 million, or 70.6 percent of state government employees working in full-time positions.

**PAYROLL**

In March 2012, the three levels of government in the United States paid their employees a total of $87.9 billion. Compared to the 2007 Census of Governments, total payroll for the federal government increased by 16.9 percent, state government increased by 13.4 percent, and local government total payroll increased by 9.6 percent. The increase in payroll at all three levels of government can be seen in Figure 3. Payroll figures are not adjusted for inflation.

Full-time state and local government employees were paid $65.1 billion, or 91.7 percent of the total state and local government payroll amount. Part-time employees received the remaining $5.9 billion, or 8.3 percent.

During the month of March 2012, full-time state employees were paid $18.0 billion, while their local counterparts earned $47.0 billion. Part-time state employees earned $2.1 billion. Local government part-time employees received $3.8 billion. The number of hours paid can differ greatly between individual governments from year to year. Full-time employees can work from 30 hours to more than 40 hours per week.

Part-time employees are classified as those working less than 30 hours per week. Some government employees, like town council members, may earn a wage that is larger than that of an average full-time employee; however, because their wage is earned over fewer hours, such as to attend monthly meetings, they are classified as part-time.

Nationwide, average pay per state government employee for the month of March was $3,816. Full-time employees averaged $4,838 and part-time employees averaged $1,368.

For local governments, average pay per public employee was $3,640. Full-time local government employees averaged $4,419 and part-time local government employees averaged $1,140.

**FUNCTIONAL DISTRIBUTION**

Education, health and hospitals, and police protection constitute the largest functional categories of public employment nationwide. In March of 2012, 14.1 million, or 63.8 percent of all public employees, were employed on a full- or part-time basis in a capacity related to these functions. The remaining 8.0 million employees, or 36.2 percent of all public workers, worked in other functional categories (see Table 1).

Education, the single largest functional category for all governments, employed 11.0 million people, or 49.8 percent of the total number of federal, state, and local government employees. Among those public education employees, 8.2 million, or 75.1 percent, worked at the local government level.
State governments employed another 2.7 million people, or 24.8 percent. The federal government contributed 10,473 education employees to the total, or 0.1 percent of all education employees.

Nearly half (47.4 percent) of all education employees, 5.2 million, worked as instructional personnel for elementary and secondary schools at the local government level. Instructors comprised 63.1 percent of all local education employees. These local government institutions employed another 2.4 million, or 29.6 percent, who performed other duties. The remaining 0.6 million, or 7.3 percent, were employed by higher education institutions operated by local governments.

Of the 2.7 million employed by state governments to work in education, 1.7 million, or 63.9 percent, worked as noninstructional personnel in higher education. State-administered institutions of higher education employed 0.8 million, or 30.6 percent, as instructional personnel. Another 58,465 employees, or 2.1 percent, worked in state-operated elementary and secondary institutions. The remaining 3.4 percent (or 92,033 employees) in education employed by state governments worked in other education, which includes, but not limited to, state schools for the blind, visually impaired, deaf, or other handicapped, technical or vocational-technical schools, and supervision and administration of services and activities for both local and state education systems.

In March of 2012, 1.9 million public workers, or 8.6 percent of total federal, state, and local government employees, worked in healthcare and hospitals making it the next largest functional category. Of those public employees, 0.9 million, or 47.2 percent, worked at the local government level.

Another 0.6 million, or 33.0 percent, worked at the state government level. The federal government employed the remaining 0.4 million workers, or 19.8 percent. Figure 4 presents a distribution of employment in health and hospitals among the three levels of government.

Police protection accounted for 1.2 million workers, or 5.4 percent of total employees in the United States for federal, state, and local governments. Local level governments employed 0.9 million of all police protection workers, or 74.6 percent. Federal government employees accounted for another 0.2 million people, or 16.2 percent. The remaining 0.1 million, or 9.1 percent, were employed at the state level. Figure 5 shows the year-to-year percentage changes in total police protection employees at the state and local level for the month of March.

The highest compensated functional categories at the national level, across state and local governments, were in electrical power where employees earned an average of $6,512 in March of 2012; followed by police officers who earned an
average of $5,776 in the same month. A complete listing of average pay in March of 2012 for each functional category is available in Table 2.

DATA FOR STATE AREAS

Public employment in state and local governments vary for the state areas. Table 3 shows total state and local government employees by state. At the national level, state and local governments reported a 0.7 percent decrease in employment, declining from 19.4 million employees in 2007 to 19.2 million employees in 2012. However, changes in public employment (state and local governments) among states were mixed.

For example, both Utah and North Carolina showed increases in total public employment between 2007 and 2012, adding 19,007 (or 10.9 percent) jobs and 64,159 (or 10.2 percent), respectively. Utah saw a lower percentage increase in state government employment (6.4 percent or 4,242 jobs) than they did in local government employment (13.6 percent or 14,765 workers). Likewise, North Carolina saw an increase in local government employment (53,460 personnel or 11.6 percent) and an increase in state government employment (10,699 employees or 6.4 percent).

Compared to 2007, Michigan reported a decline of 9.8 percent in public employment in March of 2012. The number of local government employees in Michigan decreased by 62,488, or 14.1 percent. However, state government employees increased 0.6 percent, or 1,150, from 2007 to 2012 in Michigan. See Figure 6 for the changes in state and local governments for all 50 states.

Four state areas employed a million or more state and local government workers in March of 2012. Reporting 2.1 million total public employees in 2012, California had the largest state and local government workforce. This was a decrease of 110,891 jobs, or 5.0 percent, from California's

Figure 6.

employment in the 2007 Census of Governments. Texas reported 1.6 million total public employees, with an increase of 90,109 employees, or 6.0 percent from 2007. New York reported 1.3 million total state and local government employees, decreasing by 4.6 percent (64,709 employees) from March of 2007. Florida showed a decrease of 3.2 percent from 2007, reporting 1.0 million total public employees in 2012. Only the District of Columbia employed fewer than 50,000 total public employees, accounting for 45,206 state and local government jobs. Vermont was just above the 50,000-employee threshold, reporting 52,909 state and local government employees.

Full-time employees of state and local governments in the District of Columbia, California, and New Jersey earned the highest salaries in the nation for the month of March 2012, earning an average of $6,113; $6,101; and $5,740, respectively. A complete listing of average monthly pay for full-time employees in each state is available in Table 4.

SOURCE AND ACCURACY OF DATA

The Census of Governments: Employment component is a census of all state and local governments. For the purpose of Census Bureau statistics, the term “state government” refers not only to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of a given state, but also includes agencies, institutions, commissions, and public authorities that operate separately or somewhat autonomously from the central state government, but where the state government maintains administrative or fiscal control over their activities, as defined by the Census Bureau.

These data are not subject to sampling error or any sampling variability. A mail survey of the state and local governments collects these data by law under Title 13, United States Code, Sections 161 and 182.

The Census Bureau develops these data to measure the economic activity of state and local governments in general. The definitions used in the Census Bureau statistics about governments can vary considerably from definitions applied in other standard reports.

NONSAMPLING ERROR

Although every effort is made in all phases of collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize errors, the sample data are subject to nonsampling error, such as the inability to obtain data for every variable from all units in the sample, inaccuracies in classification, response errors, misinterpretation of questions, mistakes in keying and coding, and coverage errors.

OVERALL UNIT RESPONSE RATE

The overall unit response rate to the 2012 Census of Governments: Employment component was 81.3 percent. All of the 50 state governments responded to the survey.

TOTAL QUANTITY RESPONSE RATE (TQRR)

The TQRR was also calculated for the key variables for each state. This response rate is computed separately for each key variable by summing the data provided by the respondents for the key variable and dividing this sum by the sum of the respondent data and the imputed data for the key variable. The result is multiplied by 100.

The Census Bureau’s quality standard on releasing data products requires a 70 percent TQRR for key variables. Although the unit response rates are well above the 60 percent Census Bureau’s quality standard for most states, New Mexico, at the state and local government levels, fell below this standard. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Washington state and local data fail to meet the 70 percent TQRR standard for at least one key item. There are 14 states (Connecticut, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, and Washington) that fall below this level for at least one key item at the local government level. Additionally, there are five states (Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, Oregon, and Rhode Island) that are noncompliant for at least one TQRR key item for the state data. Files of the unit response rates and TQRs for all states are available in the Response Rate Tables section on the survey Web site <www.census.gov/govs/apes>.

ADDITIONAL DATA AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Additional data and documentation are available at <www.census.gov/govs/apes/>.

To contact us, please call 800-242-2184 or e-mail <govs.cms.inquiry@census.gov>.

Annual data for public employment by state and level of government, from 1992 to 2012, are available on the Web site. Employment and payroll data are available for selected individual governments through individual unit data files, in text file format, from the Web site.
### Table 1.
**Categories of Employees at the Federal, State, and Local Levels by Function: 2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Total March full-time and part-time employment</th>
<th>Percentage of total government employment</th>
<th>Percentage employed at the federal level</th>
<th>Percentage employed at the state level</th>
<th>Percentage employed at the local level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total U.S. Employment</td>
<td>22,040,106</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial administration</td>
<td>532,794</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other government administration</td>
<td>441,516</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial and legal</td>
<td>491,729</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National defense and international relations</td>
<td>790,966</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police protection(^1)</td>
<td>1,183,717</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with power of arrest(^1)</td>
<td>723,427</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other police employees(^1)</td>
<td>267,936</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire protection</td>
<td>426,663</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighters</td>
<td>389,450</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fire employees</td>
<td>37,213</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections</td>
<td>745,862</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
<td>521,254</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air transportation</td>
<td>95,154</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water transport and terminals</td>
<td>18,409</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>48.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public welfare</td>
<td>532,332</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>54.1</td>
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<td>Health</td>
<td>643,795</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>42.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>1,259,049</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Social insurance administration</td>
<td>154,407</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and community development</td>
<td>128,317</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and recreation</td>
<td>418,491</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural resources</td>
<td>369,484</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Solid waste management</td>
<td>116,377</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewerage</td>
<td>129,224</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>178,633</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>99.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric power</td>
<td>81,448</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>94.9</td>
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<td>Gas supply</td>
<td>11,734</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>233,467</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>85.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>10,978,246</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>75.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary and secondary education</td>
<td>7,698,741</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>99.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional—elementary and secondary</td>
<td>5,246,991</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>99.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other employees—elementary and secondary</td>
<td>2,451,750</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>99.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>3,176,999</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional—higher education</td>
<td>1,132,085</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other employees—higher education</td>
<td>2,044,914</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other education</td>
<td>102,506</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>183,812</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space research and technology</td>
<td>18,201</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Postal service</td>
<td>602,920</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State liquor stores</td>
<td>11,824</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other and unallocable</td>
<td>740,281</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The data for “Police protection—persons with power of arrest” and “Police protection—other” reflect only state and local government employees. These categories do not sum to “Police protection total” because a breakout is not available for police protection employees at the federal level.


Note: For information on sampling and nonsampling error or definitions, see <www.census.gov/govs/apes/how_data_collected.html>. Data users who create their own estimates from these tables should cite the U.S. Census Bureau as the source of the original data only.
Table 2.
**Full-Time and Part-Time Average Pay by Functional Categories (State and Local Combined): 2012**
(In dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Average March earnings for all employees</th>
<th>Average March earnings for a full-time employee</th>
<th>Average March earnings for a part-time employee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total U.S Average Pay</strong></td>
<td>3,689</td>
<td>4,528</td>
<td>1,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial administration</td>
<td>4,149</td>
<td>4,537</td>
<td>1,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other government administration</td>
<td>2,892</td>
<td>4,495</td>
<td>681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial and legal</td>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>5,042</td>
<td>1,696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police protection</td>
<td>5,131</td>
<td>5,585</td>
<td>1,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with power of arrest</td>
<td>5,776</td>
<td>6,010</td>
<td>1,279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other police employees</td>
<td>3,389</td>
<td>4,149</td>
<td>979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire protection</td>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>6,097</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firefighters</td>
<td>4,810</td>
<td>6,174</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other fire employees</td>
<td>3,386</td>
<td>5,204</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrections</td>
<td>4,167</td>
<td>4,244</td>
<td>1,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
<td>4,088</td>
<td>4,267</td>
<td>1,629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air transportation</td>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>5,018</td>
<td>1,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water transport and terminals</td>
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<td>All other and unallocable</td>
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<td>749</td>
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Note: For information on sampling and nonsampling error or definitions, see [www.census.gov/govs/apes/how_data_collected.html](http://www.census.gov/govs/apes/how_data_collected.html). Data users who create their own estimates from these tables should cite the U.S. Census Bureau as the source of the original data only.

Table 3.  
Number of Employees at the State and Local Level by State: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total March full-time and part-time employment</th>
<th>Percentage of total government employment</th>
<th>Percentage employed at the state level</th>
<th>Percentage employed at the local level</th>
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<td>44.0</td>
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Table 4.  
**Full-Time and Part-Time Average Pay by State (State and Local Combined): 2012**  
(In dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Average March earnings for all employees</th>
<th>Average March earnings for a full-time employee</th>
<th>Average March earnings for a part-time employee</th>
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