The average weekly wage for the Southwestern WIA area in third quarter of 2009 was $622. This would be equivalent to $15.55 per hour or $32,344 per year, assuming a 40-hour week worked the year around. The average weekly wage statewide was $722, which is equivalent to $18.05 per hour or $37,544 per year.

As a part of the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, employment figures are calculated based on the number of residents working. The total civilian labor force in the Southwestern WIA for February 2010 was 136,920, of which 123,042 people were employed and 13,878 were unemployed. The unemployment rate was 10.1 percent as compared to the statewide unadjusted rate of 8.9 percent.

The Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program also calculates an employment number, but this number is based on a employer payroll survey and reports the number of jobs in an area regardless of where the employees live. QCEW data is currently available for the third quarter of 2009. The largest major industry sector was Health Care & Social Assistance (with 16 percent of the employment), followed by Retail Trade (with 11 percent), and Public Administration (with 10 percent).

The largest major occupational group was Office & Administrative Support Occupations (with 14 percent of the estimated employment), followed by Sales & Related Occupations (with 10 percent), and Education, Training & Library Occupations (with 9 percent).