

## Real Earnings – March 2007

---

Every month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases data on real earnings for production or nonsupervisory workers in the private sector. Real earnings reflect the value of workers' paychecks adjusted for inflation. They indicate whether or not wage increases have actually translated into an improved standard of living.

### Real Earnings Stats at a Glance

Year	March Average Hourly Earnings, Private Sector	March Earnings Adjusted for Inflation (March 2007 dollars)
2002	\$14.82	\$17.03
2003	\$15.29	<b>\$17.01</b>
2004	\$15.57	<b>\$17.08</b>
2005	\$15.98	<b>\$17.00</b>
2006	\$16.55	<b>\$16.99</b>
2007	\$17.22	<b>\$17.22</b>

- Average hourly earnings of production/nonsupervisory workers in the private sector were \$17.22 in March 2007 (seasonally adjusted). Hourly pay for manufacturing workers averaged \$17.07.
- With energy prices rising again, inflation outpaced wage gains last month. Inflation-adjusted pay in the private sector was 7 cents an hour lower in March than in February.
- Over the past year, workers' earnings have, on average, risen by more than the rate of inflation; the purchasing power of an hour's pay in March was 1.4% higher than in March 2006.
- Workers in manufacturing continue to fare worse than the average private sector worker. Inflation-adjusted pay for manufacturing workers is down nine cents (0.5%) from March 2006. Current earnings are down a painful 3.4% from their November 2003 peak.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics report can be found at:  
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/realer.toc.htm>