Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

News Release

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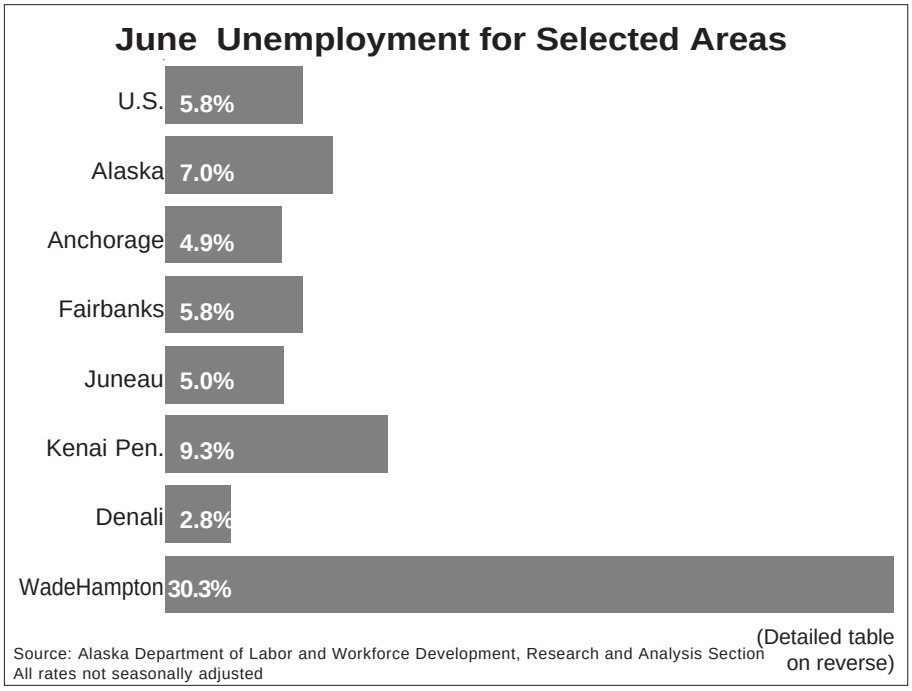
June Unemployment Holds Steady



Alaska Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	preliminary 06/04	revised 05/04	revised 06/03	changes from 05/04	changes from 06/03
Total Nonfarm Employment	317,200	305,600	313,800	11,600	3,400
Natural Resources & Mining	10,100	10,000	10,200	100	-100
Construction	19,700	17,600	19,200	2,100	500
Manufacturing	14,000	9,600	13,800	4,400	200
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	65,500	63,100	64,400	2,400	1,100
Information	7,000	7,000	7,100	0	-100
Financial Activities	15,300	14,700	14,800	600	500
Professional & Business Services	24,600	23,700	24,600	900	0
Education & Health Services	34,600	34,600	32,900	0	1,700
Leisure & Hospitality	34,600	31,200	34,000	3,400	600
Other Services	11,600	11,500	11,500	100	100
Government	80,200	82,700	81,300	-2,500	-1,100

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities.
Benchmark date: March 2003
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate

June 2004:	Alaska 7.3%	U.S. 5.6%
May 2004:	Alaska 7.3%	U.S . 5.6%
June 2003:	Alaska 7.9%	U.S . 6.3%

URL Address: http://almis.labor.state.ak.us

Contact: Neal Fried (907) 269-4861

Alaska's unemployment rate was unchanged in June, remaining at 7.0 percent. The comparable national rate (not seasonally adjusted) rose five-tenths of a percentage point to 5.8 percent. Dan Robinson, an economist with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, reported the numbers.

Because of two competing influences, the state's unemployment rate typically changes very little from May to June. On the one hand, the number of seasonal jobs increases, putting downward pressure on the unemployment rate. On the other hand, a significant number of students enter the labor force in June looking for summer work, or for new graduates, permanent employment. Until they find work, the students are counted as unemployed.

Nationally, the June influx of students into the labor market is large enough to create a seasonal increase in the unemployment rate, which occurred this year as expected. Alaska is one of the few states with enough seasonal job creation in June to counteract the effect of the student job seekers.

Anchorage and Juneau saw no change in unemployment rates in June, while Fairbanks saw a small increase from 5.6 percent to 5.8. The Wade Hampton Census Area recorded the state's highest rate at 30.3 percent, while the Denali Borough had the lowest at 2.8 percent.

Preliminary wage and salary employment estimates for June show over-the-year growth of about 3,400 jobs. The education and health services sector has added 1,700 jobs over the twelve-month period. Most of the growth within the category has come from the health care and social services industries. The trade, transportation, and utilities sector has added 1,100 jobs.

The number of government jobs in June was down 1,100 over June 2003, but nearly half of that decline was due to the timing of temporary hires to fight fires in the interior region. Fires began earlier last year, leading to a jump in June employment in 2003.

To fight this year's fires, which have already burned 2.3 million acres in Alaska, the state has hired about 600 temporary workers in the Interior, but most won't show up in the employment numbers until July.

Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	6/04	5/04	6/03*	6/04	5/04	6/03*	6/04	5/04	6/03*	6/04	5/04	6/03*
Alaska Statewide	353,267	345,011	336,808	24,772	24,318	24,575	7.0	7.0	7.3	328,495	320,693	312,233
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	192,532	190,830	189,942	10,540	10,405	10,825	5.5	5.5	5.7	181,992	180,425	179,117
Municipality of Anchorage	154,295	153,052	151,984	7,591	7,531	7,728	4.9	4.9	5.1	146,704	145,521	144,256
Mat-Su Borough	38,237	37,778	37,958	2,949	2,874	3,097	7.7	7.6	8.2	35,288	34,904	34,861
Gulf Coast Region	37,312	34,893	33,245	3,480	3,646	3,563	9.3	10.4	10.7	33,832	31,247	29,682
Kenai Peninsula Borough	24,446	22,687	21,986	2,275	2,210	2,534	9.3	9.7	11.5	22,171	20,477	19,452
Kodiak Island Borough	7,457	7,071	6,299	794	917	454	10.6	13.0	7.2	6,663	6,154	5,845
Valdez-Cordova CA	5,410	5,135	4,960	412	519	575	7.6	10.1	11.6	4,998	4,616	4,385
Interior Region	54,873	54,293	51,427	3,530	3,506	3,690	6.4	6.5	7.2	51,343	50,787	47,737
Denali Borough	1,194	1,220	1,237	33	72	158	2.8	5.9	12.8	1,161	1,148	1,079
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	48,454	47,836	45,181	2,794	2,671	2,728	5.8	5.6	6.0	45,660	45,165	42,453
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,733	2,728	2,681	273	295	394	10.0	10.8	14.7	2,460	2,433	2,287
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,493	2,509	2,327	431	469	410	17.3	18.7	17.6	2,062	2,040	1,917
Northern Region	9,430	9,435	9,225	1,677	1,567	1,398	17.8	16.6	15.2	7,753	7,868	7,827
Nome Census Area	3,533	3,547	3,451	648	620	539	18.3	17.5	15.6	2,885	2,927	2,912
North Slope Borough	3,440	3,437	3,366	502	455	400	14.6	13.2	11.9	2,938	2,982	2,966
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,457	2,451	2,408	527	492	459	21.4	20.1	19.1	1,930	1,959	1,949
Southeast Region	41,557	39,882	37,509	2,733	2,591	2,772	6.6	6.5	7.4	38,824	37,291	34,737
Haines Borough	1,282	1,245	1,213	84	95	142	6.6	7.6	11.7	1,198	1,150	1,071
Juneau Borough	18,561	17,818	16,624	935	888	853	5.0	5.0	5.1	17,626	16,930	15,771
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,765	7,515	7,108	498	535	606	6.4	7.1	8.5	7,267	6,980	6,502
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,938	2,749	2,630	389	301	350	13.2	10.9	13.3	2,549	2,448	2,280
Sitka Borough	4,949	4,735	4,441	260	232	246	5.3	4.9	5.5	4,689	4,503	4,195
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	2,085	2,018	1,945	153	162	216	7.3	8.0	11.1	1,932	1,856	1,729
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,661	3,495	3,252	385	348	321	10.5	10.0	9.9	3,276	3,147	2,931
Yakutat Borough	317	308	296	29	31	38	9.1	10.1	12.8	288	277	258
Southwest Region	17,562	15,678	15,460	2,812	2,604	2,328	16.0	16.6	15.1	14,750	13,074	13,132
Aleutians East Borough	1,756	1,559	1,543	86	79	57	4.9	5.1	3.7	1,670	1,480	1,486
Aleutians West Census Area	2,972	2,727	2,706	313	370	339	10.5	13.6	12.5	2,659	2,357	2,367
Bethel Census Area	6,983	6,183	6,071	1,193	1,051	916	17.1	17.0	15.1	5,790	5,132	5,155
Bristol Bay Borough	539	479	484	63	57	60	11.7	11.9	12.4	476	422	424
Dillingham Census Area	2,033	1,813	1,844	255	237	261	12.5	13.1	14.2	1,778	1,576	1,583
Lake & Peninsula Borough	589	539	559	87	94	112	14.8	17.4	20.0	502	445	447
Wade Hampton CA	2,692	2,380	2,254	815	716	583	30.3	30.1	25.9	1,877	1,664	1,671

*Benchmark: March 2003 Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. * Comparisons with previous year's numbers are of very limited use because of the magnitude of year-end revisions. The official definition of unemployment excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search.*

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