



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



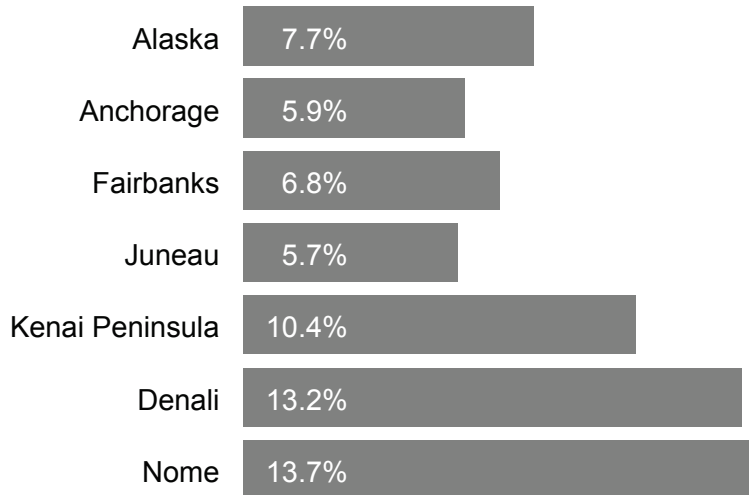
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

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Unemployment rate falls to 7.7 percent in March

March Unemployment for Selected Areas



Sources: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Alaska's unemployment rate fell five-tenths of a percentage point in March to 7.7 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The March rate was two-tenths of a percentage point higher than March 2005's rate of 7.5 percent, marking the first time in 24 months that the unemployment rate hasn't shown an over-the-year decline.

It will take several more months of data, however, before any conclusions can be drawn about a change in the downward trend of unemployment rates. The statistics are in large part based on a survey of only about 1,000 Alaska households and are prone to considerable month-to-month variability.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	Preliminary 03/06	Revised 02/06	Revised 03/05	Changes from	
				02/06	03/05
Total Nonfarm Employment	301,400	298,400	296,100	3,000	5,300
Natural Resources and Mining	11,400	11,000	10,500	400	900
Oil and Gas	9,200	9,000	8,500	200	700
Construction	15,700	15,300	15,300	400	400
Manufacturing	11,500	11,500	11,800	0	-300
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	59,900	59,400	58,900	500	1,000
Retail Trade	34,500	34,400	33,900	100	600
Information	6,800	6,800	6,900	0	-100
Financial Activities	14,600	14,600	14,200	0	400
Professional and Business Services	22,900	22,800	22,300	100	600
Educational ¹ and Health Services	36,600	36,100	35,900	500	700
Health Care	26,400	26,100	25,800	300	600
Leisure and Hospitality	27,500	27,000	26,700	500	800
Accommodation	6,200	6,100	6,100	100	100
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	17,500	17,200	17,000	300	500
Other Services	11,300	11,200	11,100	100	200
Government ²	83,200	82,700	82,500	500	700

¹ Private education only

² Government includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities.
Sources: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Total nonfarm employment rose by 3,000 in March to 301,400. The gains were scattered across a variety of industries as the state's seasonal employers continued their gradual build toward the peak months of summer.

Also contributing to the monthly gains were industries such as oil and gas and health care, both of which have been growing at a healthy rate unrelated to seasonal trends. Oil and gas employment increased by 200 in March and health care employment by 300.

The March job count was 5,300 higher than in March 2005, an over-the-year growth rate of 1.8 percent. Growth in that range continues the trend from 2005, which saw a modest acceleration in job growth from the two previous years. In 2005 the state added jobs at an average rate of 1.9 percent compared to 1.6 percent in 2004 and 1.4 percent in 2003.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

March 2006:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	4.7%
February 2006:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	4.8%
March 2005:	Alaska	6.8%	U.S.	5.1%

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Research and Analysis Web site: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us>

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	03/06	02/06	03/05	03/06	02/06	03/05	03/06	02/06	03/05	03/06	02/06	03/05
Alaska Statewide	339,339	340,199	333,265	26,291	27,899	25,158	7.7	8.2	7.5	313,048	312,300	308,107
Anchorage/Mat-Su (MSA*)	185,333	186,416	181,214	12,130	12,769	11,282	6.5	6.8	6.2	173,263	173,647	169,932
Municipality of Anchorage	149,490	150,403	146,429	8,747	9,348	8,392	5.9	6.2	5.7	140,743	141,055	138,037
Mat-Su Borough	35,993	36,013	34,785	3,383	3,421	2,890	9.4	9.5	8.3	32,520	32,592	31,895
Gulf Coast Region	34,628	34,542	34,981	3,474	3,819	3,531	10.0	11.1	10.1	31,154	30,723	31,450
Kenai Peninsula Borough	23,993	23,853	24,094	2,497	2,758	2,493	10.4	11.6	10.3	21,496	21,095	21,601
Kodiak Island Borough	6,043	6,160	6,064	425	457	433	7.0	7.4	7.1	5,618	5,703	5,631
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,592	4,529	4,823	552	604	605	12.0	13.3	12.5	4,040	3,925	4,218
Interior Region	51,814	51,831	50,493	4,014	4,222	3,838	7.7	8.1	7.6	47,800	47,609	46,655
Denali Borough	870	827	881	115	137	137	13.2	16.6	15.6	755	690	744
Fairbanks North Star Borough (MSA*)	44,415	44,501	43,560	3,041	3,188	2,871	6.8	7.2	6.6	41,374	41,313	40,689
Southwest Fairbanks Census Area	3,554	3,595	2,964	412	447	424	11.6	12.4	14.3	3,142	3,148	2,540
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,975	2,908	3,088	446	450	406	15.0	15.5	13.1	2,529	2,458	2,682
Northern Region	10,967	11,002	10,654	1,196	1,256	1,199	10.9	11.4	11.3	9,771	9,746	9,455
Nome Census Area	3,901	3,874	4,008	535	548	475	13.7	14.1	11.9	3,366	3,326	3,533
North Slope Borough	3,683	3,691	3,674	313	342	348	8.5	9.3	9.5	3,370	3,349	3,326
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,383	3,437	2,972	348	366	376	10.3	10.6	12.7	3,035	3,071	2,596
Southeast Region	38,069	37,524	37,456	3,249	3,536	3,218	8.5	9.4	8.6	34,820	33,988	34,238
Haines Borough	1,113	1,075	1,088	160	166	163	14.4	15.4	15.0	953	909	925
Juneau Borough	18,183	18,066	17,836	1,045	1,149	1,071	5.7	6.4	6.0	17,138	16,917	16,765
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,109	7,015	7,157	604	653	617	8.5	9.3	8.6	6,505	6,362	6,540
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,483	2,421	2,403	460	474	363	18.5	19.6	15.1	2,023	1,947	2,040
Sitka Borough	4,616	4,505	4,493	281	327	288	6.1	7.3	6.4	4,335	4,178	4,205
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,506	1,554	1,453	326	344	316	21.6	22.1	21.7	1,180	1,210	1,137
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,796	2,625	2,752	329	366	349	11.8	13.9	12.7	2,467	2,259	2,403
Yakutat Borough	263	263	274	44	57	51	16.7	21.7	18.6	219	206	223
Southwest Region	18,469	18,883	18,467	2,229	2,298	2,090	12.1	12.2	11.3	16,240	16,585	16,377
Aleutians East Borough	1,124	1,155	1,195	87	100	97	7.7	8.7	8.1	1,037	1,055	1,098
Aleutians West Census Area	4,120	4,456	4,193	159	166	161	3.9	3.7	3.8	3,961	4,290	4,032
Bethel Census Area	7,142	7,151	6,972	985	1,013	880	13.8	14.2	12.6	6,157	6,138	6,092
Bristol Bay Borough	484	470	476	81	89	72	16.7	18.9	15.1	403	381	404
Dillingham Census Area	2,084	2,111	2,065	233	232	236	11.2	11.0	11.4	1,851	1,879	1,829
Lake and Peninsula Borough	868	864	933	97	107	90	11.2	12.4	9.6	771	757	843
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,647	2,676	2,633	587	591	554	22.2	22.1	21.0	2,060	2,085	2,079

* Metropolitan Statistical Area

Source: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
 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. Many individuals in rural Alaska do not meet the definition because they have not conducted an active job search due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.