



# MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



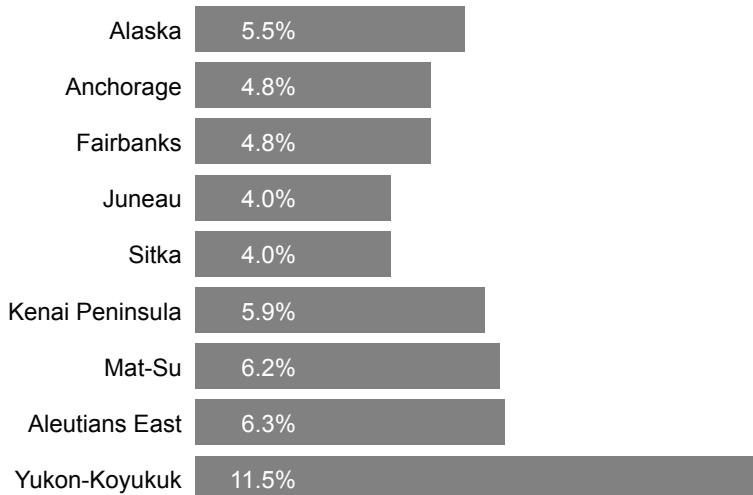
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

September 15, 2006  
No. 07-09

## Unemployment rate falls to 5.5 percent in August

### August Unemployment for Selected Areas



Alaska's unemployment rate fell eight-tenths of a percentage point in August to 5.5 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The reasons for the larger than normal August decline aren't clear and may be due, at least in part, to volatility in the survey that produces the rate.

The 5.5 percent rate is slightly lower than August 2005's 5.8 percent rate. For much of 2006, there has been no discernable trend to the state's unemployment rate, with some months hinting at rising unemployment only to be followed in subsequent months by significant declines. Through August, the rate has averaged 7.1 percent in 2006 compared to 7.0 percent over the same eight months in 2005.

Rates in both Anchorage and Fairbanks fell to 4.8 percent, while Juneau's rate dropped to 4.0 percent. The Denali Borough had the state's lowest August unemployment rate at 2.2 percent and the Wade Hampton Census Area had the highest at 21.9 percent.

### Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	Preliminary	Revised	Revised	Changes from	
	8/06	7/06	8/05	7/06	8/05
Total Nonfarm Employment	337,000	337,000	332,900	0	4,100
Natural Resources and Mining	12,200	12,200	11,200	0	1,000
Oil and Gas	9,700	9,800	8,900	-100	800
Construction	22,900	22,500	22,700	400	200
Manufacturing	18,900	21,200	19,300	-2,300	-400
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	69,600	69,300	68,700	300	900
Retail Trade	38,500	38,300	37,800	200	700
Information	7,000	7,000	6,900	0	100
Financial Activities	15,500	15,400	15,300	100	200
Professional and Business Services	26,300	26,100	25,900	200	400
Educational <sup>1</sup> and Health Services	36,400	36,500	35,600	-100	800
Health Care	26,500	26,400	26,000	100	500
Leisure and Hospitality	38,600	38,700	38,100	-100	500
Accommodation	11,400	11,400	11,300	0	100
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	21,900	22,000	21,400	-100	500
Other Services	11,800	11,800	11,700	0	100
Government <sup>2</sup>	77,800	76,300	77,500	1,500	300

<sup>1</sup> Private education only

<sup>2</sup> Government includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities.

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates<sup>1</sup>

August 2006:	Alaska	6.5%	U.S.	4.7%
July 2006:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	4.8%
August 2005:	Alaska	6.7%	U.S.	4.9%

<sup>1</sup> All other unemployment rates in this press release are not seasonally adjusted.

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

Wage and salary jobs held steady at 337,000 in August as a large seasonal decline in seafood processing largely offset the seasonal increase in local education jobs.

The construction industry added 400 jobs in August, the seasonal high point for building activity, while the state's remaining industries generally saw only small changes in employment levels from July to August.

Over-the-year comparisons continue to show the oil and gas industry as a bright spot, with 800 more jobs in August 2006 than 12 months earlier. Any employment effects of British Petroleum's decision to shut down part of the Prudhoe Bay oil field to repair pipelines would not show up until September's data is released, at the earliest.

According to Dan Robinson, an economist with the department, the state's labor market appears relatively stable. "Through the first two-thirds of 2006, Alaska has continued to generate moderate job growth and unemployment remains low by historical standards," he said.

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Research and Analysis Web site: [almis.labor.state.ak.us](http://almis.labor.state.ak.us)

## Labor Force by Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	8/06	7/06	8/05	8/06	7/06	8/05	8/06	7/06	8/05	8/06	7/06	8/05
<b>Alaska Statewide</b>	<b>351,873</b>	<b>357,524</b>	<b>345,349</b>	<b>19,352</b>	<b>22,566</b>	<b>20,083</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>332,521</b>	<b>334,938</b>	<b>325,266</b>
<b>Anchorage/Mat-Su</b>	<b>183,543</b>	<b>186,324</b>	<b>178,670</b>	<b>9,247</b>	<b>10,711</b>	<b>9,487</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>174,296</b>	<b>175,613</b>	<b>169,183</b>
Municipality of Anchorage	148,683	150,798	144,776	7,101	8,146	7,347	4.8	5.4	5.1	141,582	142,652	137,429
Mat-Su Borough	34,860	35,526	33,894	2,146	2,565	2,140	6.2	7.2	6.3	32,714	32,961	31,754
<b>Gulf Coast Region</b>	<b>38,896</b>	<b>39,935</b>	<b>38,785</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>2,612</b>	<b>2,481</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>36,664</b>	<b>37,323</b>	<b>36,304</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,480	27,594	26,324	1,553	1,827	1,737	5.9	6.6	6.6	24,927	25,767	24,587
Kodiak Island Borough	6,305	6,440	6,304	364	419	381	5.8	6.5	6.0	5,941	6,021	5,923
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	6,111	5,901	6,157	315	366	363	5.2	6.2	5.9	5,796	5,535	5,794
<b>Interior Region</b>	<b>56,373</b>	<b>56,092</b>	<b>55,276</b>	<b>2,921</b>	<b>3,399</b>	<b>2,807</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>53,452</b>	<b>52,693</b>	<b>52,469</b>
Denali Borough	2,874	2,962	2,720	62	72	57	2.2	2.4	2.1	2,812	2,890	2,663
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,826	46,362	46,011	2,244	2,604	2,197	4.8	5.6	4.8	44,582	43,758	43,814
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,944	3,996	3,452	302	352	256	7.7	8.8	7.4	3,642	3,644	3,196
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,729	2,772	3,093	313	371	297	11.5	13.4	9.6	2,416	2,401	2,796
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>10,433</b>	<b>10,595</b>	<b>10,400</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>1,178</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>9,378</b>	<b>9,345</b>	<b>9,222</b>
Nome Census Area	3,526	3,592	3,585	450	536	455	12.8	14.9	12.7	3,076	3,056	3,130
North Slope Borough	3,940	3,918	3,704	280	322	361	7.1	8.2	9.7	3,660	3,596	3,343
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,967	3,085	3,111	325	392	362	11.0	12.7	11.6	2,642	2,693	2,749
<b>Southeast Region</b>	<b>44,668</b>	<b>44,858</b>	<b>43,993</b>	<b>2,104</b>	<b>2,450</b>	<b>2,263</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>42,564</b>	<b>42,408</b>	<b>41,730</b>
Haines Borough	2,290	2,279	2,268	80	97	94	3.5	4.3	4.1	2,210	2,182	2,174
Juneau Borough	18,840	19,111	18,481	754	896	861	4.0	4.7	4.7	18,086	18,215	17,620
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	9,428	9,454	9,083	413	459	425	4.4	4.9	4.7	9,015	8,995	8,658
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,597	2,599	2,687	285	312	272	11.0	12.0	10.1	2,312	2,287	2,415
Sitka Borough	5,139	5,089	5,137	207	241	219	4.0	4.7	4.3	4,932	4,848	4,918
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	2,300	2,452	2,304	145	175	145	6.1	7.1	6.3	2,245	2,277	2,159
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	3,608	3,495	3,672	200	247	229	5.5	7.1	6.2	3,408	3,248	3,443
Yakutat Borough	376	379	361	20	23	18	5.3	6.1	5.0	356	356	343
<b>Southwest Region</b>	<b>17,960</b>	<b>19,722</b>	<b>18,221</b>	<b>1,792</b>	<b>2,166</b>	<b>1,866</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>16,168</b>	<b>17,556</b>	<b>16,355</b>
Aleutians East Borough	1,183	1,318	1,211	74	83	84	6.3	6.3	6.9	1,109	1,235	1,127
Aleutians West Census Area	3,140	3,074	3,229	120	144	131	3.8	4.7	4.1	3,020	2,930	3,098
Bethel Census Area	6,462	6,831	6,559	822	1,009	841	12.7	14.8	12.8	5,640	5,822	5,718
Bristol Bay Borough	1,666	2,733	1,593	44	53	45	2.6	1.9	2.8	1,622	2,680	1,548
Dillingham Census Area	2,166	2,436	2,176	192	214	199	8.8	8.8	9.1	1,994	2,222	1,977
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,102	1,183	1,161	54	68	65	4.9	5.7	5.6	1,048	1,115	1,096
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,221	2,147	2,292	486	595	501	21.9	27.7	21.9	1,735	1,552	1,791

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.