



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



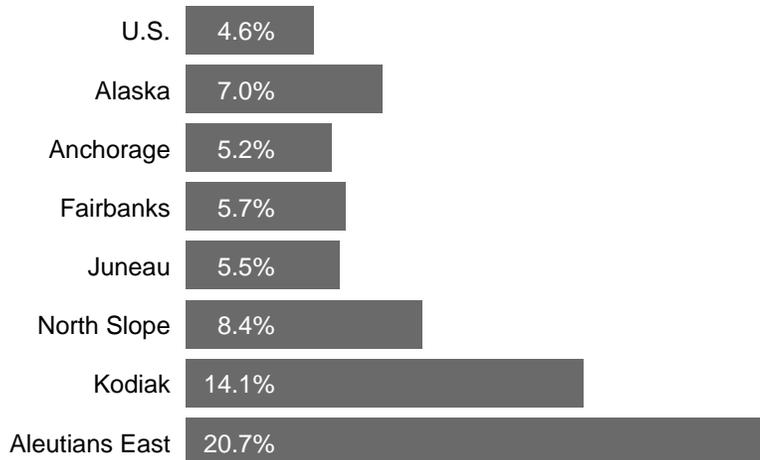
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

January 19, 2006
No. 06-29

Unemployment rate continues seasonal increase in December

December 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 rose two-tenths of a percentage point in December to 7.0 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. In a typical year the unemployment rate increases in December and continues to rise until January or February, the least active months for most of the state's seasonal employers.

The comparable national rate fell two-tenths of a percentage point, also a typical movement for the far less seasonal national economy.

Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau all continue to record unemployment rates well below the statewide rate. Anchorage's 5.2 percent rate in December was the lowest in the state, while Fairbanks' and Juneau's rates were only slightly higher at 5.7 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. The Aleutians East Borough had December's highest unemployment rate at 20.7 percent.

Preliminary estimates of payroll employment show growth of 5,300 jobs from December 2004 to December 2005. Nearly 20 percent of the new jobs are in the health-care industry. The construction, retail trade, food and drinking, and oil and gas industries also contributed significant growth.

The Anchorage/Mat-Su region generated roughly 60 percent of the new jobs. Another 32 percent came from the Interior region where Fairbanks' job market has been growing at a healthy clip. Further contributions to job growth in the Interior came from ongoing work at the Pogo mine site and a high level of activity at Fort Greely.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 12/05	revised 11/05	revised 12/04	changes from	
				11/05	12/04
Total Nonfarm Employment	298,500	300,600	293,200	-2,100	5,300
Natural Resources and Mining	10,700	10,500	10,000	200	700
Oil and Gas	8,600	8,400	8,200	200	400
Construction	16,700	17,700	15,900	-1,000	800
Manufacturing	5,900	7,700	5,800	-1,800	100
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	61,700	61,600	60,800	100	900
Retail Trade	36,000	35,700	35,300	300	700
Information	6,900	7,000	6,900	-100	0
Financial Activities	14,600	14,700	14,500	-100	100
Professional and Business Services	23,400	23,500	22,700	-100	700
Education ¹ and Health Services	36,100	35,800	35,000	300	1,100
Health Care	26,300	26,100	25,300	200	1,000
Leisure and Hospitality	28,200	28,200	27,400	0	800
Accommodation	6,500	6,500	6,500	0	0
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	18,200	18,100	17,500	100	700
Other Services	11,600	11,500	11,700	100	-100
Government ²	82,700	82,400	82,500	300	200

¹ Private education only

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

Benchmark date: March 2004

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

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

December 2005:	Alaska	6.9%	U.S.	4.9%
November 2005:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	5.0%
December 2004:	Alaska	7.6%	U.S.	5.4%

Contact: Dan Robinson, Economist (907) 465-6036
Research and Analysis Web site: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us>

Labor Force By Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	12/05	11/05	12/04	12/05	11/05	12/04	12/05	11/05	12/04	12/05	11/05	12/04
	Alaska Statewide	341,264	341,200	331,573	23,923	23,185	25,266	7.0	6.8	7.6	317,341	318,015
Anchorage/Mat-Su (MSA*)	189,060	188,611	183,869	10,780	10,589	11,244	5.7	5.6	6.1	178,280	178,022	172,625
Municipality of Anchorage	154,089	153,857	149,900	7,940	7,919	8,387	5.2	5.1	5.6	146,149	145,938	141,513
Mat-Su Borough	34,971	34,754	33,969	2,840	2,670	2,857	8.1	7.7	8.4	32,131	32,084	31,112
Gulf Coast Region	33,960	34,590	34,216	3,553	3,378	3,846	10.5	9.8	11.2	30,407	31,212	30,370
Kenai Peninsula Borough	24,033	24,172	23,981	2,299	2,141	2,429	9.6	8.9	10.1	21,734	22,031	21,552
Kodiak Island Borough	5,325	5,816	5,481	751	751	841	14.1	12.9	15.3	4,574	5,065	4,640
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,602	4,602	4,754	503	486	576	10.9	10.6	12.1	4,099	4,116	4,178
Interior Region	53,908	52,747	50,814	3,500	3,400	3,703	6.5	6.4	7.3	50,408	49,347	47,111
Denali Borough	920	933	955	112	112	132	12.2	12.0	13.8	808	821	823
Fairbanks North Star Borough (MSA*)	46,797	45,628	44,005	2,650	2,572	2,829	5.7	5.6	6.4	44,147	43,056	41,176
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,236	3,269	2,748	363	354	359	11.2	10.8	13.1	2,873	2,915	2,389
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,955	2,917	3,106	375	362	383	12.7	12.4	12.3	2,580	2,555	2,723
Northern Region	11,074	10,971	10,656	1,104	1,116	1,124	10.0	10.2	10.5	9,970	9,855	9,532
Nome Census Area	4,149	4,137	4,027	477	452	446	11.5	10.9	11.1	3,672	3,685	3,581
North Slope Borough	3,603	3,593	3,605	301	335	338	8.4	9.3	9.4	3,302	3,258	3,267
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,322	3,241	3,024	326	329	340	9.8	10.2	11.2	2,996	2,912	2,684
Southeast Region	37,704	38,009	36,673	2,988	2,763	3,243	7.9	7.3	8.8	34,716	35,246	33,430
Haines Borough	1,145	1,184	1,061	137	131	140	12.0	11.1	13.2	1,008	1,053	921
Juneau Borough	17,985	17,826	17,454	988	947	1,078	5.5	5.3	6.2	16,997	16,879	16,376
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,241	7,392	7,171	558	518	645	7.7	7.0	9.0	6,683	6,874	6,526
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,402	2,417	2,373	395	327	353	16.4	13.5	14.9	2,007	2,090	2,020
Sitka Borough	4,475	4,603	4,310	262	249	307	5.9	5.4	7.1	4,213	4,354	4,003
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,497	1,565	1,389	304	311	270	20.3	19.9	19.4	1,193	1,254	1,119
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,631	2,711	2,637	301	248	400	11.4	9.1	15.2	2,330	2,463	2,237
Yakutat Borough	328	311	278	43	32	50	13.1	10.3	18.0	285	279	228
Southwest Region	15,558	16,272	15,346	1,998	1,939	2,107	12.8	11.9	13.7	13,560	14,333	13,239
Aleutians East Borough	511	526	575	106	88	123	20.7	16.7	21.4	405	438	452
Aleutians West Census Area	2,026	2,653	1,977	195	182	284	9.6	6.9	14.4	1,831	2,471	1,693
Bathel Census Area	7,124	7,142	7,092	878	862	854	12.3	12.1	12.0	6,246	6,280	6,238
Bristol Bay Borough	608	616	649	64	57	62	10.5	9.3	9.6	544	559	587
Dillingham Census Area	1,846	1,916	1,805	193	195	225	10.5	10.2	12.5	1,653	1,721	1,580
Lake and Peninsula Borough	749	784	670	74	72	90	9.9	9.2	13.4	675	712	580
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,694	2,635	2,578	488	483	469	18.1	18.3	18.2	2,206	2,152	2,109

* Metropolitan Statistical Area

Source: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section • Benchmark: 2004

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.