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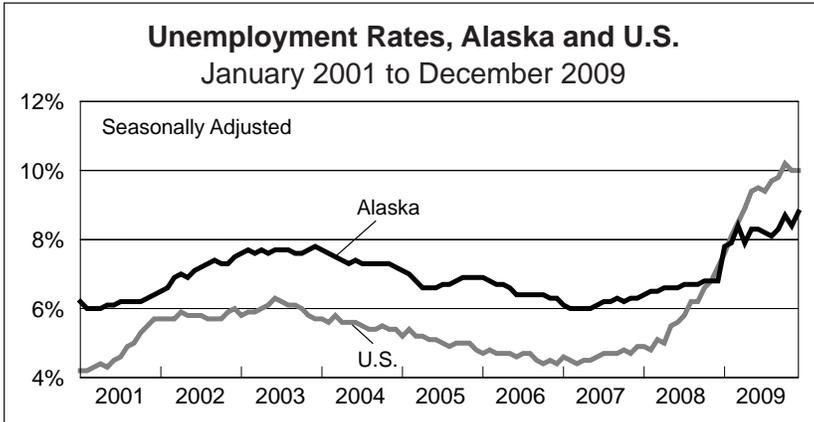
Press Release

January 22, 2010

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

No. 10-06

Unemployment rate at 8.8 percent in December



Alaska's December seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.8 percent. November's preliminary rate was revised down three-tenths of a percentage point to 8.4 percent.

The comparable national unemployment rate for December was 10.0 percent.

That marks the 12th month Alaska's rate has remained below the nation's. The last time that happened was in the early 1980s when the U.S. was in the midst of a very deep recession and Alaska was in the middle of an economic boom.

All the state's regions saw higher over-the-year unemployment rates in December. In Southeast, the rates were higher because of employment losses in leisure and hospitality, construction and retail. In the Gulf Coast, it was losses in the oil, and leisure and hospitality industries. In the Northern region, declines in the oil industry took their toll. In the Interior and Anchorage/Mat-Su regions, a long list of industries contributed to higher unemployment.

Another factor contributing to the rising jobless rate is the growth in the number of job seekers. Because Alaska's relative employment picture remains better than most of the nation's, fewer Alaskans are leaving the state looking for employment prospects elsewhere in the country and more job seekers are coming north looking for employment opportunities.

In December, over-the-month and over-the-year wage and salary employment were down. The seasonal losses in December are typical, led by seasonal losses in seafood processing, construction, and leisure and hospitality.

December marks the ninth month in a row of over-the-year employment losses. As 2009 progressed, the number of industries with employment losses grew. By December only educational and health services – more specifically health care and social assistance – and government remained positive.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

| | Preliminary 12/09 | Revised 11/09 | Revised 12/08 | Changes from | |
|--|----------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|--------|
| | | | | 11/09 | 12/08 |
| Total Nonfarm Employment ² | 306,500 | 310,500 | 309,200 | -4,000 | -2,700 |
| Mining and Logging | 15,100 | 15,200 | 15,700 | -100 | -600 |
| Oil and Gas | 12,900 | 12,800 | 13,100 | 100 | -200 |
| Construction | 14,000 | 15,000 | 15,200 | -1,000 | -1,200 |
| Manufacturing | 6,600 | 9,500 | 7,200 | -2,900 | -600 |
| Seafood Processing | 3,300 | 5,000 | 3,400 | -1,700 | -100 |
| Trade, Transportation and Utilities | 61,900 | 61,700 | 63,200 | 200 | -1,300 |
| Retail Trade | 35,500 | 35,500 | 36,500 | 0 | -1,000 |
| Information | 6,800 | 6,800 | 7,100 | 0 | -300 |
| Financial Activities | 14,200 | 14,300 | 14,600 | -100 | -400 |
| Professional and Business Services | 24,500 | 24,700 | 24,700 | -200 | -200 |
| Educational ³ and Health Services | 39,600 | 39,500 | 37,600 | 100 | 2,000 |
| Health Care | 28,700 | 28,600 | 27,300 | 100 | 1,400 |
| Leisure and Hospitality | 26,600 | 27,000 | 28,200 | -400 | -1,600 |
| Accommodations | 6,000 | 6,100 | 6,600 | -100 | -600 |
| Food Svcs. and Drinking Places | 16,800 | 17,000 | 17,800 | -200 | -1,000 |
| Other Services | 11,400 | 11,500 | 11,400 | -100 | 0 |
| Government ⁴ | 85,800 | 85,300 | 84,300 | 500 | 1,500 |

¹ Not seasonally adjusted

² Excludes the self-employed, fishermen and other agricultural workers, and private household workers

³ Private education only

⁴ Includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

| | 12/09 | 11/09 | 12/08 |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Alaska | 8.8% | 8.4% | 6.8% |
| U.S. | 10.0% | 10.0% | 7.4% |

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

| | Civilian Labor Force | | | Unemployed | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 12/09 ^P | 11/09 | 12/08 | Number | | | Rate | | |
| | | | | 12/09 ^P | 11/09 | 12/08 | 12/09 ^P | 11/09 | 12/08 |
| Alaska Statewide | 354,603 | 355,153 | 356,301 | 31,842 | 29,275 | 27,051 | 9.0 | 8.2 | 7.6 |
| Anchorage/Mat-Su Region | 199,925 | 199,402 | 200,875 | 15,383 | 14,368 | 12,715 | 7.7 | 7.2 | 6.3 |
| Municipality of Anchorage | 157,710 | 157,531 | 158,621 | 10,978 | 10,407 | 9,012 | 7.0 | 6.6 | 5.7 |
| Matanuska-Susitna Borough | 42,215 | 41,871 | 42,254 | 4,405 | 3,961 | 3,703 | 10.4 | 9.5 | 8.8 |
| Gulf Coast Region | 36,205 | 36,603 | 35,764 | 4,559 | 4,113 | 3,752 | 12.6 | 11.2 | 10.5 |
| Kenai Peninsula Borough | 25,944 | 25,881 | 25,308 | 3,191 | 2,901 | 2,524 | 12.3 | 11.2 | 10.0 |
| Kodiak Island Borough | 5,939 | 6,217 | 5,802 | 831 | 713 | 711 | 14.0 | 11.5 | 12.3 |
| Valdez-Cordova Census Area | 4,322 | 4,505 | 4,654 | 537 | 499 | 517 | 12.4 | 11.1 | 11.1 |
| Interior Region | 52,081 | 52,458 | 53,277 | 4,760 | 4,381 | 4,194 | 9.1 | 8.4 | 7.9 |
| Denali Borough | 846 | 824 | 927 | 162 | 150 | 144 | 19.1 | 18.2 | 15.5 |
| Fairbanks North Star Borough | 44,727 | 44,850 | 45,830 | 3,718 | 3,439 | 3,255 | 8.3 | 7.7 | 7.1 |
| Southeast Fairbanks Census Area | 3,586 | 3,723 | 3,666 | 416 | 365 | 365 | 11.6 | 9.8 | 10.0 |
| Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area | 2,922 | 3,061 | 2,854 | 464 | 427 | 430 | 15.9 | 13.9 | 15.1 |
| Northern Region | 12,666 | 12,591 | 12,370 | 1,144 | 1,096 | 923 | 9.0 | 8.7 | 7.5 |
| Nome Census Area | 4,133 | 4,133 | 4,010 | 487 | 460 | 413 | 11.8 | 11.1 | 10.3 |
| North Slope Borough | 5,553 | 5,468 | 5,376 | 279 | 286 | 199 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 3.7 |
| Northwest Arctic Borough | 2,980 | 2,990 | 2,984 | 378 | 350 | 311 | 12.7 | 11.7 | 10.4 |
| Southeast Region | 38,078 | 37,682 | 38,123 | 3,627 | 3,191 | 3,197 | 9.5 | 8.5 | 8.4 |
| Haines Borough | 1,091 | 1,122 | 1,102 | 142 | 127 | 134 | 13.0 | 11.3 | 12.2 |
| Juneau Borough | 18,077 | 17,861 | 18,238 | 1,187 | 1,114 | 1,087 | 6.6 | 6.2 | 6.0 |
| Ketchikan Gateway Borough ² | 7,768 | 7,676 | 7,762 | 772 | 646 | 587 | 9.9 | 8.4 | 7.6 |
| Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area ² | 2,347 | 2,271 | 2,215 | 395 | 346 | 363 | 16.8 | 15.2 | 16.4 |
| Sitka Borough | 4,403 | 4,362 | 4,350 | 347 | 302 | 286 | 7.9 | 6.9 | 6.6 |
| Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ² | 1,520 | 1,489 | 1,499 | 374 | 336 | 368 | 24.6 | 22.6 | 24.5 |
| Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ² | 2,578 | 2,615 | 2,675 | 373 | 288 | 339 | 14.5 | 11.0 | 12.7 |
| Yakutat Borough | 294 | 286 | 282 | 37 | 32 | 33 | 12.6 | 11.2 | 11.7 |
| Southwest Region | 15,648 | 16,419 | 15,893 | 2,371 | 2,126 | 2,271 | 15.2 | 12.9 | 14.3 |
| Aleutians East Borough | 684 | 919 | 641 | 138 | 115 | 145 | 20.2 | 12.5 | 22.6 |
| Aleutians West Census Area | 2,016 | 2,474 | 2,101 | 277 | 196 | 290 | 13.7 | 7.9 | 13.8 |
| Bethel Census Area | 6,981 | 6,977 | 7,026 | 1,033 | 954 | 983 | 14.8 | 13.7 | 14.0 |
| Bristol Bay Borough | 480 | 486 | 587 | 65 | 48 | 60 | 13.5 | 9.9 | 10.2 |
| Dillingham Census Area | 1,768 | 1,786 | 1,812 | 213 | 200 | 198 | 12.0 | 11.2 | 10.9 |
| Lake and Peninsula Borough | 1,001 | 1,070 | 960 | 93 | 81 | 80 | 9.3 | 7.6 | 8.3 |
| Wade Hampton Census Area | 2,718 | 2,707 | 2,766 | 552 | 532 | 515 | 20.3 | 19.7 | 18.6 |

P = Preliminary. As more information becomes available, data are revised every month for the previous month and again at the end of every calendar year.

Note: 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.

¹ Unemployment rates that are not seasonally adjusted should not be compared with those that are.

² Because of the creation of new boroughs, this borough or census area has been changed or no longer exists. Data for the new Skagway Borough and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area will be available in 2010. Data for the other new boroughs and census areas will be available in 2011. Until then, data will continue to be published for the old areas.

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