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STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
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Press Release

November 19, 2010

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

No. 10-72

Unemployment rate at 7.9 percent in October



Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October inched up to 7.9 percent. September's rate was revised down slightly, from 7.8 percent to 7.7 percent.

The comparable national jobless rate for October was 9.6 percent, unchanged from September. Exactly a year ago, the national unemployment rate was 10.1 percent, compared to 8.4 percent for Alaska. The improvement in Alaska's jobless rate has been similar to the nation's, but October marks the second straight year that Alaska's unemployment rate has been lower than the national rate.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

	Preliminary 10/10	Revised 9/10	Revised 10/09	Year-over-year change		
				10/09	90% confi- dence interval ²	
Total Nonfarm Employment ³	319,000	333,100	320,000	-1,000	-8,383	6,383
Mining and Logging	14,600	14,600	15,000	-400	-1,193	393
Oil and Gas	11,800	11,600	12,500	-700	-	-
Construction	16,700	18,400	17,400	-700	-3,283	1,883
Manufacturing	11,700	16,300	10,400	1,300	306	2,294
Seafood Processing	7,400	11,800	6,400	1,000	-	-
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	60,900	64,000	62,600	-1,700	-4,072	672
Retail Trade	34,800	35,600	35,700	-900	-2,928	1,128
Information	6,400	6,300	6,500	-100	-681	481
Financial Activities	14,600	14,900	15,000	-400	-2,343	1,543
Professional and Business Services	25,200	26,200	25,600	-400	-2,193	1,393
Educational ⁴ and Health Services	41,900	41,600	39,900	2,000	732	3,268
Health Care	30,400	30,400	28,900	1,500	-	-
Leisure and Hospitality	28,900	32,500	29,700	-800	-2,837	1,237
Accommodations	6,400	8,900	6,000	400	-	-
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	18,700	19,000	17,900	800	-	-
Other Services	11,800	11,700	11,600	200	-2,976	3,376
Government ⁵	86,300	86,600	86,300	0	-	-

Not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in most of the state's regions in October. This is typical in October, when Alaska's labor market enters its winter slump. Fishing declines, the visitor industry is nearly shuttered, and the construction industry buttons down for mostly indoor work.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has implemented a change to the method used to produce statewide wage and salary employment estimates. That change has resulted in increased monthly volatility in the wage and salary estimates for many states, including Alaska. Therefore, one should be very cautious in interpreting any over-the-year or month-to-month change for these monthly estimates. The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages series may be a better source of information for trends analysis (<http://labor.alaska.gov/qcew.htm>).

Contact: Neal Fried, Economist (907) 269-4861
Research and Analysis' Web site: <http://laborstats.alaska.gov>

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	10/10	9/10	10/09
Alaska	7.9%	7.7%	8.4%
U.S.	9.6%	9.6%	10.1%

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

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	10/10 ^P	9/10	10/09	Number			Rate		
				10/10 ^P	9/10	10/09	10/10 ^P	9/10	10/09
Alaska Statewide	361,040	363,641	360,169	27,267	26,481	28,807	7.6	7.3	8.0
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	200,196	196,443	199,777	13,723	13,638	14,510	6.9	6.9	7.3
Municipality of Anchorage	157,381	154,650	156,965	10,178	10,343	10,714	6.5	6.7	6.8
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	42,815	41,793	42,812	3,545	3,295	3,796	8.3	7.9	8.9
Gulf Coast Region	38,163	40,546	37,727	3,446	3,186	3,705	9.0	7.9	9.8
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,452	27,307	26,391	2,535	2,410	2,753	9.6	8.8	10.4
Kodiak Island Borough	6,716	7,172	6,427	439	390	470	6.5	5.4	7.3
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,995	6,067	4,909	472	386	482	9.4	6.4	9.8
Interior Region	54,132	55,037	53,871	3,974	3,753	4,241	7.3	6.8	7.9
Denali Borough	946	2,068	888	138	85	153	14.6	4.1	17.2
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,494	46,346	46,487	3,081	2,942	3,316	6.6	6.3	7.1
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,650	3,677	3,570	350	333	349	9.6	9.1	9.8
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	3,042	2,946	2,926	405	393	423	13.3	13.3	14.5
Northern Region	12,355	11,953	12,445	1,163	1,176	1,141	9.4	9.8	9.2
Nome Census Area	4,197	3,995	4,080	500	504	494	11.9	12.6	12.1
North Slope Borough	5,002	5,035	5,407	273	274	285	5.5	5.4	5.3
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,156	2,923	2,958	390	398	362	12.4	13.6	12.2
Southeast Region	38,880	41,575	39,177	2,872	2,588	3,068	7.4	6.2	7.8
Haines Borough	1,403	1,848	1,262	113	89	122	8.1	4.8	9.7
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ²	951	1,347	1,113	131	135	204	13.8	10.0	18.3
City and Borough of Juneau	18,013	18,253	18,332	1,044	975	1,139	5.8	5.3	6.2
Ketchikan Gateway Borough ²	7,988	8,905	8,072	597	532	592	7.5	6.0	7.3
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area ²	2,367	2,349	2,396	309	311	335	13.1	13.2	14.0
City and Borough of Sitka	4,492	4,814	4,432	278	264	306	6.2	5.5	6.9
Skagway Municipality ²	603	738	613	123	29	81	20.4	3.9	13.2
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ²	2,765	2,977	2,613	252	230	260	9.1	7.7	10.0
Yakutat Borough	298	344	344	25	23	29	8.4	6.7	8.4
Southwest Region	17,313	18,086	17,170	2,089	2,141	2,140	12.1	11.8	12.5
Aleutians East Borough	1,040	1,135	1,057	84	88	105	8.1	7.8	9.9
Aleutians West Census Area	2,558	2,460	2,949	208	192	292	8.1	7.8	9.9
Bethel Census Area	7,369	7,023	7,041	990	1,039	933	13.4	14.8	13.3
Bristol Bay Borough	585	1,157	484	37	35	31	6.3	3.0	6.4
Dillingham Census Area	1,897	2,289	1,926	193	196	201	10.2	8.6	10.4
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,094	1,244	1,064	75	71	72	6.9	5.7	6.8
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,770	2,778	2,649	502	520	506	18.1	18.7	19.1

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 Skagway Municipality and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area (previously the Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area) became available in 2010. Data for the Wrangell Borough, and Petersburg and Prince of Wales-Hyder 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