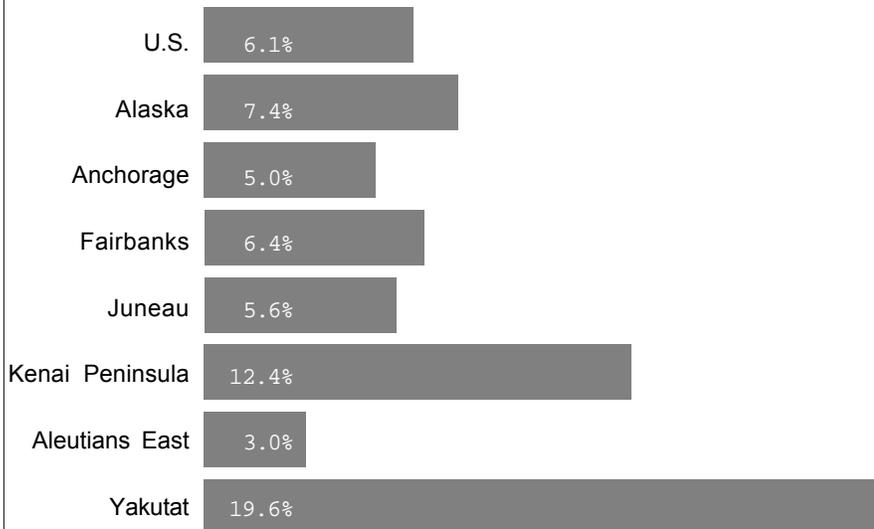


Department of Labor and Workforce Development

News Release

April 19, 2002

No. 02-24

March Unemployment Rate Up Slightly**March Unemployment for Selected Areas**

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section
CA indicates census area; other areas are boroughs. All rates not seasonally adjusted

(Detailed table on reverse)

Alaska's unemployment rate showed little change in March, increasing one-tenth of a percentage point to 7.4%. Alaska typically sees its unemployment rate begin to fall in March as some of the state's many seasonal jobs are added back into the economy. The comparable national unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.1%. Dan Robinson, a labor economist with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, reported the numbers.

The number of unemployed Alaskans in March grew by 325 to 24,012, an increase of 1.4% over the month and 5.3% over the year.

Initial claims for unemployment increased by almost 3,700 in March to 11,121, a jump of 49.6% from last month, and 39% from March 2001. Part of the reason for the significant increase was federal legislation that temporarily extended unemployment benefits and created new eligibility for certain unemployed persons.

The regional breakdown saw Anchorage's unemployment rate mirror the movement of the state as a whole, increasing a tenth of a percentage point to 5.0%. Fairbanks saw a slight decline over the month, from 6.6% in February to 6.4% in March. Juneau's unemployment rate fell more noticeably, dropping from 6.0% in February to 5.6% in March. The Southeast Region as a whole saw a decrease from 9.7% to 9.2%. In contrast, the Southwest Region's rate increased a full percentage point from 9.8% to 10.8%, and the Northern Region saw an increase of 1.4 percentage points from 11.2% in February to 12.6% in March.

Wage and salary employment figures for March show very modest growth. The state has added about 3,800 jobs since March 2001, a growth rate of 1.4%. Approximately 3,000 of the new jobs have come from retail trade and the services industries. Those areas, combined with growth in state and local government, have compensated for some over-the-year job loss in the oil industry and seafood processing.

Alaska Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Employment

	preliminary 03/02	revised 02/02	Changes 03/01	from 02/02	03/01
Total Nonagricultural Employment	281,500	279,100	277,600	2,400	3,900
Mining	10,200	10,200	11,500	0	-1,300
Construction	12,100	11,700	12,000	400	100
Manufacturing	13,300	13,200	13,500	100	-200
Transportation, Commun. & Utilities	26,400	26,100	26,400	300	0
Trade	55,100	54,700	53,700	400	1,400
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	12,500	12,500	12,300	0	200
Services & Misc.	70,700	70,200	69,200	500	1,500
Government	81,200	80,500	79,000	700	2,200

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities.
Benchmark date: March 2001

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

March 2002:	Alaska 6.5%	U.S. 5.7%
February 2002:	Alaska 5.7%	U.S. 5.5%
March 2001:	Alaska 6.3%	U.S. 4.3%

Contact: Dan Robinson, Labor Economist, Juneau (907) 465-6036

Fairbanks toll free number (800) 478-9900

URL Address: <http://www.labor.state.ak.us/research/research.htm>

Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	03/02	02/02	03/01	03/02	02/02	03/01	03/02	02/02	03/01	03/02	02/02	03/01
Alaska Statewide	324,766	322,876	316,295	24,012	23,687	22,794	7.4	7.3	7.2	300,754	299,189	293,501
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	179,283	178,536	173,382	10,267	10,003	9,621	5.7	5.6	5.5	169,016	168,533	163,761
Municipality of Anchorage	147,320	146,691	143,596	7,405	7,172	6,860	5.0	4.9	4.8	139,915	139,519	136,736
Mat-Su Borough	31,963	31,845	29,786	2,862	2,831	2,761	9.0	8.9	9.3	29,101	29,014	27,025
Gulf Coast Region	32,731	32,415	32,049	3,624	3,699	3,592	11.1	11.4	11.2	29,107	28,716	28,457
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,290	21,010	20,814	2,632	2,602	2,572	12.4	12.4	12.4	18,658	18,408	18,242
Kodiak Island Borough	6,445	6,458	6,325	405	499	420	6.3	7.7	6.6	6,040	5,959	5,905
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,996	4,947	4,909	587	598	599	11.7	12.1	12.2	4,409	4,349	4,310
Interior Region	49,349	48,883	48,176	3,721	3,721	3,722	7.5	7.6	7.7	45,628	45,162	44,454
Denali Borough	1,175	1,178	1,141	137	150	129	11.7	12.7	11.3	1,038	1,028	1,012
Fairbanks North Star Borough	43,303	42,925	42,392	2,790	2,826	2,922	6.4	6.6	6.9	40,513	40,099	39,470
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,656	2,609	2,541	369	345	313	13.9	13.2	12.3	2,287	2,264	2,228
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,214	2,171	2,103	424	399	359	19.2	18.4	17.1	1,790	1,772	1,744
Northern Region	9,266	9,078	9,536	1,172	1,016	1,072	12.6	11.2	11.2	8,094	8,062	8,464
Nome Census Area	3,480	3,413	3,588	445	390	415	12.8	11.4	11.6	3,035	3,023	3,173
North Slope Borough	3,457	3,404	3,557	330	290	287	9.5	8.5	8.1	3,127	3,114	3,270
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,330	2,260	2,392	397	335	371	17.0	14.8	15.5	1,933	1,925	2,021
Southeast Region	37,778	37,707	37,125	3,466	3,659	3,143	9.2	9.7	8.5	34,312	34,048	33,982
Haines Borough	1,226	1,210	1,210	190	182	184	15.5	15.0	15.2	1,036	1,028	1,026
Juneau Borough	16,116	16,054	15,920	910	965	860	5.6	6.0	5.4	15,206	15,089	15,060
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,410	7,370	7,209	825	836	687	11.1	11.3	9.5	6,585	6,534	6,522
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan CA	3,087	3,116	3,079	490	539	507	15.9	17.3	16.5	2,597	2,577	2,572
Sitka Borough	4,109	4,078	4,010	286	285	224	7.0	7.0	5.6	3,823	3,793	3,786
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	2,101	2,094	2,063	306	313	286	14.6	14.9	13.9	1,795	1,781	1,777
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,410	3,478	3,332	398	489	349	11.7	14.1	10.5	3,012	2,989	2,983
Yakutat Borough	321	307	300	63	51	45	19.6	16.6	15.0	258	256	255
Southwest Region	16,358	16,256	16,028	1,761	1,588	1,645	10.8	9.8	10.3	14,597	14,668	14,383
Aleutians East Borough	1,642	1,651	1,631	49	50	61	3.0	3.0	3.7	1,593	1,601	1,570
Aleutians West Census Area	2,150	2,143	2,136	139	122	154	6.5	5.7	7.2	2,011	2,021	1,982
Bethel Census Area	6,881	6,839	6,720	741	669	670	10.8	9.8	10.0	6,140	6,170	6,050
Bristol Bay Borough	565	572	536	82	86	60	14.5	15.0	11.2	483	486	476
Dillingham Census Area	1,983	1,967	1,932	204	179	179	10.3	9.1	9.3	1,779	1,788	1,753
Lake & Peninsula Borough	689	692	669	90	90	79	13.1	13.0	11.8	599	602	590
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,446	2,393	2,405	455	392	443	18.6	16.4	18.4	1,991	2,001	1,962

Benchmark: March 2001 Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. • Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series produced by Research and Analysis. • The official definition of unemployment currently in place 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. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska locations, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search. These individuals are considered not in the labor force.