

# News Release

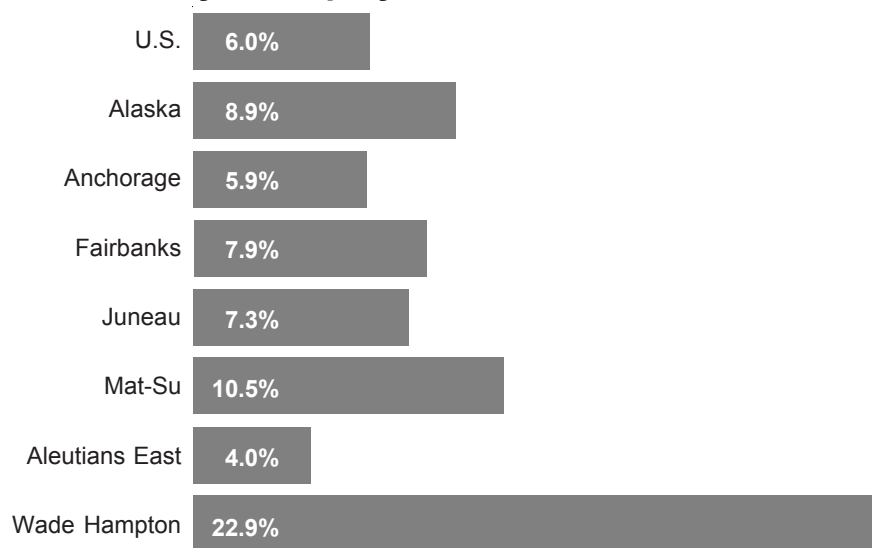
Frank H. Murkowski, Governor  
Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

P.O. Box 21149  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1149  
Telephone: (907) 465-2700  
Fax: (907) 465-2784

March 19, 2004  
No. 04-40

## February Unemployment Unchanged

### February Unemployment for Selected Areas



(Detailed table

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section on reverse)  
All rates not seasonally adjusted

Alaska's unemployment rate remained at 8.9 percent in February. The state's rate typically reaches its highest levels in January and February and then declines steadily to a low point in August that is two to three percentage points lower than the winter level.

The comparable national rate (not seasonally adjusted) was 6.0 percent. The much less seasonal national economy rarely sees unemployment rate fluctuations of greater than one percentage point over the course of a year. Dan Robinson, an economist with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, reported the numbers.

At the regional level, unemployment rates generally held steady, the most notable exception being in Southwest Alaska where activity in the Bering Sea ground fishery picked up in February.

### Alaska Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	02/04	01/04	02/03	01/04	02/03
Total Nonfarm Employment	288,700	284,800	285,200	3,900	3,500
Natural Resources & Mining	9,700	9,500	10,200	200	-500
Construction	13,300	13,700	12,700	-400	600
Manufacturing	11,900	9,200	11,800	2,700	100
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	57,400	57,800	56,900	-400	500
Information	6,900	6,900	6,800	0	100
Financial Activities	14,100	14,200	13,600	-100	500
Professional & Business Services	22,000	21,700	22,000	300	0
Education & Health Services	33,900	33,700	32,300	200	1,600
Leisure & Hospitality	26,200	26,000	25,600	200	600
Other Services	11,200	11,100	11,200	100	0
Government	82,200	81,000	82,100	1,200	100

The Northern Region, impacted over the last several years by lower oil industry employment and tax revenue, saw an over-the-month increase of five-tenths of a percentage point. The North Slope Borough has seen its unemployment rate rise from 5.2 percent in 1998 to 13.8 percent in 2003.

Anchorage's February unemployment rate was 5.9 percent, a full three percentage points lower than the statewide level. Fairbanks reported 7.9 percent unemployment in February and Juneau 7.3 percent. All three cities saw little change from January to February.

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities.

Benchmark date: March 2003

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

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate

February 2004:	Alaska 7.4%	U.S. 5.6%
January 2004:	Alaska 7.3%	U.S. 5.6%
February 2003:	Alaska 8.0%	U.S. 5.9%

The number of wage and salary jobs has increased by an estimated 3,500 since February 2003. If job growth continues through 2004, it would be the seventeenth consecutive year of employment gains. Not since 1987 has the state experienced annual job losses.

URL Address: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us>

Contact: Dan Robinson (907) 465-6036

# Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	2/04	1/04	2/03*	2/04	1/04	2/03*	2/04	1/04	2/03*	2/04	1/04	2/03*
Alaska Statewide	339,225	338,111	325,202	30,121	30,235	31,296	8.9	8.9	9.6	309,104	307,876	293,906
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	190,651	192,702	180,866	12,950	13,078	13,722	6.8	6.8	7.6	177,701	179,624	167,144
Municipality of Anchorage	153,989	154,524	147,109	9,113	9,202	9,663	5.9	6.0	6.6	144,876	145,322	137,446
Mat-Su Borough	36,662	38,178	33,757	3,837	3,876	4,059	10.5	10.2	12.0	32,825	34,302	29,698
Gulf Coast Region	33,136	32,575	32,511	4,489	4,468	4,759	13.5	13.7	14.6	28,647	28,107	27,752
Kenai Peninsula Borough	22,018	21,684	21,664	3,244	3,264	3,477	14.7	15.1	16.0	18,774	18,420	18,187
Kodiak Island Borough	6,101	6,018	5,882	460	483	417	7.5	8.0	7.1	5,641	5,535	5,465
Valdez-Cordova CA	5,017	4,872	4,965	785	720	865	15.6	14.8	17.4	4,232	4,152	4,100
Interior Region	50,457	50,040	49,032	4,727	4,709	5,018	9.4	9.4	10.2	45,730	45,331	44,014
Denali Borough	1,272	1,259	1,210	238	234	215	18.7	18.6	17.8	1,034	1,025	995
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	44,133	43,836	42,958	3,465	3,523	3,816	7.9	8.0	8.9	40,668	40,313	39,142
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,696	2,641	2,583	505	469	474	18.7	17.8	18.4	2,191	2,172	2,109
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,356	2,304	2,280	519	483	512	22.0	21.0	22.5	1,837	1,821	1,768
Northern Region	9,474	9,524	9,251	1,539	1,492	1,417	16.2	15.7	15.3	7,935	8,032	7,834
Nome Census Area	3,566	3,572	3,442	614	584	527	17.2	16.3	15.3	2,952	2,988	2,915
North Slope Borough	3,470	3,513	3,352	463	469	383	13.3	13.4	11.4	3,007	3,044	2,969
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,438	2,439	2,458	462	439	507	18.9	18.0	20.6	1,976	2,000	1,951
Southeast Region	37,569	36,922	36,235	4,082	4,143	4,073	10.9	11.2	11.2	33,487	32,779	32,162
Haines Borough	1,247	1,204	1,216	214	193	224	17.2	16.0	18.4	1,033	1,011	992
Juneau Borough	16,405	16,084	15,763	1,202	1,202	1,161	7.3	7.5	7.4	15,203	14,882	14,602
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,070	6,955	6,844	802	820	824	11.3	11.8	12.0	6,268	6,135	6,020
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,713	2,696	2,681	515	544	570	19.0	20.2	21.3	2,198	2,152	2,111
Sitka Borough	4,433	4,352	4,242	389	394	358	8.8	9.1	8.4	4,044	3,958	3,884
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	2,010	2,010	1,927	343	379	326	17.1	18.9	16.9	1,667	1,631	1,601
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,362	3,310	3,238	536	544	524	15.9	16.4	16.2	2,826	2,766	2,714
Yakutat Borough	328	310	325	80	67	86	24.4	21.6	26.5	248	243	239
Southwest Region	17,939	16,347	17,309	2,335	2,345	2,308	13.0	14.3	13.3	15,604	14,002	15,001
Aleutians East Borough	1,839	1,679	1,766	73	94	68	4.0	5.6	3.9	1,766	1,585	1,698
Aleutians West Census Area	3,014	2,811	2,921	201	287	217	6.7	10.2	7.4	2,813	2,524	2,704
Bethel Census Area	7,100	6,448	6,906	975	952	1,018	13.7	14.8	14.7	6,125	5,496	5,888
Bristol Bay Borough	582	527	555	79	75	71	13.6	14.2	12.8	503	452	484
Dillingham Census Area	2,145	1,943	2,082	264	255	274	12.3	13.1	13.2	1,881	1,688	1,808
Lake & Peninsula Borough	686	620	641	155	144	131	22.6	23.2	20.4	531	476	510
Wade Hampton CA	2,573	2,320	2,439	588	538	530	22.9	23.2	21.7	1,985	1,782	1,909

*Benchmark: March 2003 Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. \* Comparisons with previous year's numbers are of very limited use because of the magnitude of year-end revisions. 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. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search. They are considered not in the labor force.*