

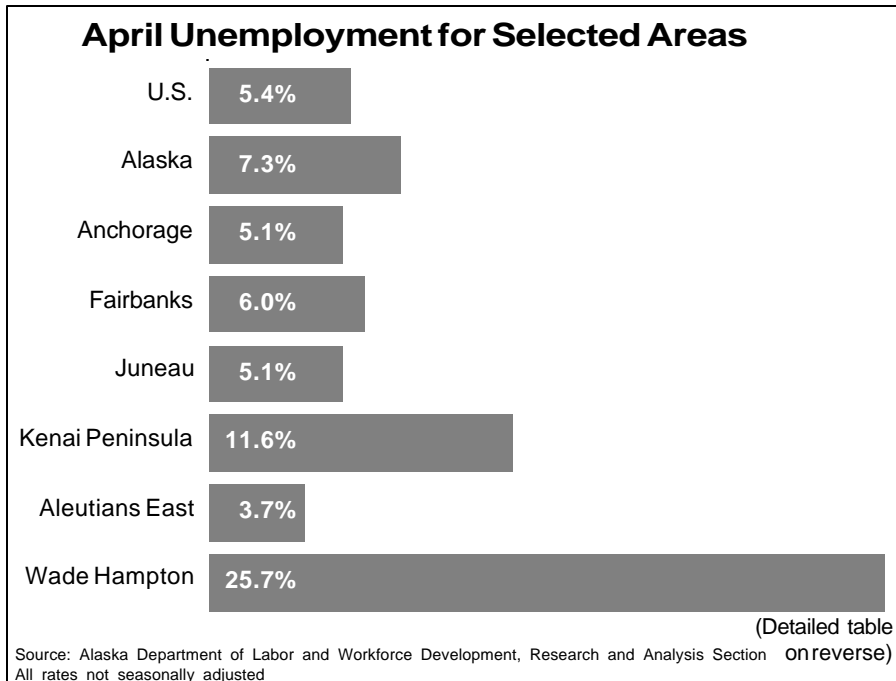
# News Release

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## April Unemployment Declines



Alaska's unemployment rate fell five-tenths of a percentage point in April to 7.3 percent and the state added about 1,800 wage and salary jobs. The comparable national rate (not seasonally adjusted) fell six-tenths of a percentage point to 5.4 percent. Dan Robinson, an economist with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, reported the numbers.

Four of the state's six economic regions recorded noticeably lower unemployment rates in April, with the biggest decline coming in Southeast where the rate fell from 9.0 percent to 7.4 percent. The Anchorage/Mat-Su, Gulf Coast, and Interior regions all saw smaller declines.

The Northern region's unemployment rate changed very little in April, falling one-tenth of a percentage point from 15.1 percent to 15.0 percent. Unemployment jumped from 12.2 percent to 14.9 percent in the Southwest region due to a normal seasonal lull in the groundfish fisheries.

Claims for unemployment insurance, one of the inputs used to calculate the unemployment rate, were down from 15,115 in March to 13,310 in April. The April claims number was also down from the year-ago level of 14,139.

Wage and salary employment growth was widespread in April, with the biggest increases coming in construction and the leisure and hospitality sector. Specifically, the accommodations industry added about 200 jobs while food services and drinking places added 800. Employment in the trade, transportation and utilities sector grew by about 1,300 in April while manufacturing had a large seasonal decline of 2,800 jobs due to seasonal fluctuations in fishing and seafood processing.

Over-the-year growth has been strongest in health care and social services and in retail trade. Jobs in the natural resources and mining sector were down 300 from April 2003 and government employment was unchanged.

### Alaska Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	preliminary 04/04	revised 03/04	revised 04/03	changes from	
				03/04	04/03
Total Nonfarm Employment	294,100	292,300	290,000	1,800	4,100
Natural Resources & Mining	9,900	9,800	10,200	100	-300
Construction	14,800	13,700	14,600	1,100	200
Manufacturing	9,300	12,100	9,200	-2,800	100
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	60,000	58,700	58,600	1,300	1,400
Information	6,800	6,800	6,900	0	-100
Financial Activities	14,400	14,200	14,000	200	400
Professional & Business Services	22,600	22,400	22,400	200	200
Education & Health Services	34,200	34,200	32,700	0	1,500
Leisure & Hospitality	27,800	26,700	27,100	1,100	700
Other Services	11,400	11,200	11,400	200	0
Government	83,100	82,500	83,100	600	0

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

April 2004:	Alaska	7.1%	U.S.	5.6%
March 2004:	Alaska	7.1%	U.S.	5.7%
April 2003:	Alaska	8.0%	U.S.	6.0%

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		
	4/04	3/04	4/03*	4/04	3/04	4/03*	4/04	3/04	4/03*	4/04	3/04	4/03*
Alaska Statewide	336,809	336,419	323,033	24,576	26,270	26,450	7.3	7.8	8.2	312,233	310,149	296,583
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	189,523	189,162	179,626	10,823	11,530	11,632	5.7	6.1	6.5	178,700	177,632	167,994
Municipality of Anchorage	152,141	151,910	145,355	7,729	8,194	8,402	5.1	5.4	5.8	144,412	143,716	136,953
Mat-Su Borough	37,382	37,252	34,271	3,094	3,336	3,230	8.3	9.0	9.4	34,288	33,916	31,041
Gulf Coast Region	33,100	32,891	32,613	3,563	3,831	3,803	10.8	11.6	11.7	29,537	29,060	28,810
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,891	21,837	21,572	2,534	2,793	2,692	11.6	12.8	12.5	19,357	19,044	18,880
Kodiak Island Borough	6,271	6,096	6,163	454	373	489	7.2	6.1	7.9	5,817	5,723	5,674
Valdez-Cordova CA	4,938	4,958	4,878	575	665	622	11.6	13.4	12.8	4,363	4,293	4,256
Interior Region	51,582	50,457	49,564	3,691	4,018	4,185	7.2	8.0	8.4	47,891	46,439	45,379
Denali Borough	1,241	1,242	1,172	158	192	146	12.7	15.5	12.5	1,083	1,050	1,026
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	45,319	44,284	43,607	2,729	2,985	3,251	6.0	6.7	7.5	42,590	41,299	40,356
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,690	2,622	2,512	395	397	338	14.7	15.1	13.5	2,295	2,225	2,174
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,334	2,309	2,273	410	444	450	17.6	19.2	19.8	1,924	1,865	1,823
Northern Region	9,313	9,294	9,336	1,398	1,406	1,398	15.0	15.1	15.0	7,915	7,888	7,938
Nome Census Area	3,484	3,487	3,449	539	552	496	15.5	15.8	14.4	2,945	2,935	2,953
North Slope Borough	3,400	3,395	3,396	400	406	388	11.8	12.0	11.4	3,000	2,989	3,008
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,430	2,412	2,491	459	448	515	18.9	18.6	20.7	1,971	1,964	1,976
Southeast Region	37,714	36,905	37,058	2,773	3,316	3,194	7.4	9.0	8.6	34,941	33,589	33,864
Haines Borough	1,220	1,209	1,239	142	173	194	11.6	14.3	15.7	1,078	1,036	1,045
Juneau Borough	16,716	16,295	16,337	853	1,045	963	5.1	6.4	5.9	15,863	15,250	15,374
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,146	6,923	7,051	606	636	713	8.5	9.2	10.1	6,540	6,287	6,338
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,644	2,654	2,568	350	449	345	13.2	16.9	13.4	2,294	2,205	2,223
Sitka Borough	4,466	4,343	4,335	246	287	245	5.5	6.6	5.7	4,220	4,056	4,090
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	1,955	1,944	1,930	216	272	245	11.0	14.0	12.7	1,739	1,672	1,685
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,269	3,225	3,269	321	391	412	9.8	12.1	12.6	2,948	2,834	2,857
Yakutat Borough	297	314	328	38	65	77	12.8	20.7	23.5	259	249	251
Southwest Region	15,578	17,711	14,835	2,328	2,169	2,237	14.9	12.2	15.1	13,250	15,542	12,598
Aleutians East Borough	1,557	1,824	1,498	57	65	72	3.7	3.6	4.8	1,500	1,759	1,426
Aleutians West Census Area	2,727	2,999	2,518	339	198	247	12.4	6.6	9.8	2,388	2,801	2,271
Bethel Census Area	6,117	6,995	5,932	916	895	987	15.0	12.8	16.6	5,201	6,100	4,945
Bristol Bay Borough	487	563	467	60	62	61	12.3	11.0	13.1	427	501	406
Dillingham Census Area	1,858	2,127	1,743	261	254	225	14.0	11.9	12.9	1,597	1,873	1,518
Lake & Peninsula Borough	563	664	539	112	135	110	19.9	20.3	20.4	451	529	429
Wade Hampton CA	2,269	2,538	2,137	583	560	534	25.7	22.1	25.0	1,686	1,978	1,603

*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.*

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