

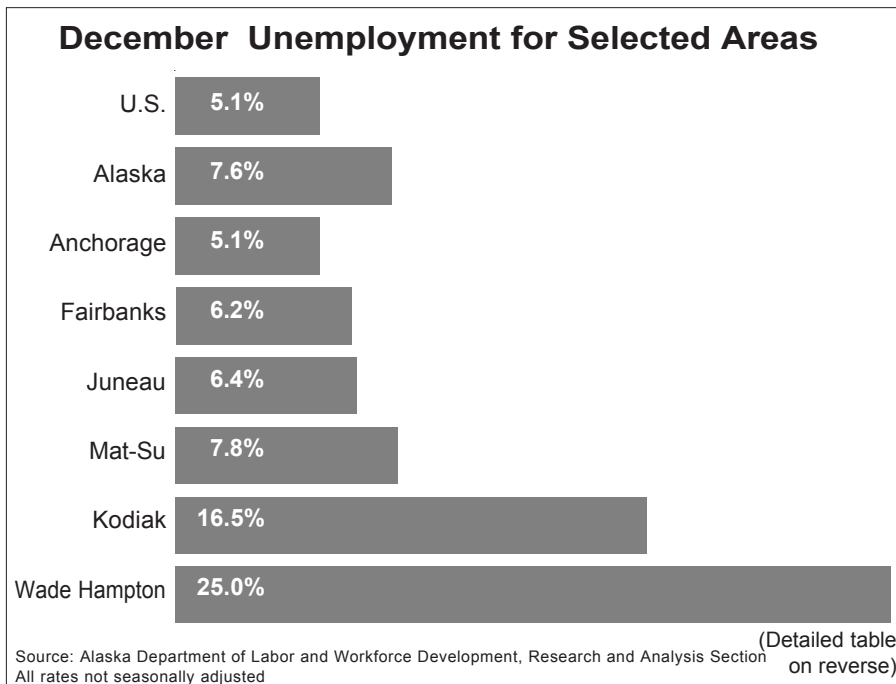
News Release

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Unemployment Rate Follows Seasonal Trend



Alaska's unemployment rate rose six-tenths of a percentage point in December to 7.6 percent, according to Dan Robinson, an economist at the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The rate typically rises by about that amount in December as seafood processing employment drops to its low point for the year. Employment in construction also fell noticeably in December, following expected seasonal patterns that generally result in further declines through January or February.

Anchorage's rate rose slightly to 5.1 percent while both Fairbanks and Juneau saw more marked increases of six-tenths of a percentage point to 6.2 and 6.4 percent, respectively. For the second month in a row, Anchorage's rate was the lowest in the state. Wade Hampton recorded the state's highest December unemployment rate at 25.0 percent.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 12/04	revised 11/04	revised 12/03	changes from	
				11/04	12/03
Total Nonfarm Employment	292,900	295,200	290,200	-2,300	2,700
Natural Resources & Mining	10,300	10,200	10,000	100	300
Construction	16,000	17,200	15,300	-1,200	700
Manufacturing	5,700	7,700	5,900	-2,000	-200
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	60,600	60,500	59,700	100	900
Information	6,900	6,900	7,000	0	-100
Financial Activities	14,500	14,500	14,400	0	100
Professional & Business Services	22,500	22,400	22,300	100	200
Education & Health Services	35,500	35,300	33,900	200	1,600
Leisure & Hospitality	27,500	27,300	27,300	200	200
Other Services	10,800	10,900	11,200	-100	-400
Government	82,600	82,300	83,100	300	-500

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 Rates

December 2004:	Alaska 7.3%	U.S. 5.4%
November 2004:	Alaska 7.2%	U.S. 5.4%
December 2003:	Alaska 8.1%	U.S. 5.7%

Next month's unemployment press release will not be available on the usual third Friday of the month due to year-end revisions and the introduction of a new procedure for calculating the unemployment rate. January data is scheduled to be released on Friday, March 4th.

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		
	12/04	11/04	12/03*	12/04	11/04	12/03*	12/04	11/04	12/03*	12/04	11/04	12/03*
Alaska Statewide	342,105	342,678	330,346	26,082	24,020	27,747	7.6	7.0	8.4	316,023	318,658	302,599
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	197,294	196,091	189,025	11,111	10,532	11,906	5.6	5.4	6.3	186,183	185,559	177,119
Municipality of Anchorage	157,482	156,621	151,687	8,014	7,606	8,467	5.1	4.9	5.6	149,468	149,015	143,220
Mat-Su Borough	39,812	39,470	37,338	3,097	2,926	3,439	7.8	7.4	9.2	36,715	36,544	33,899
Gulf Coast Region	32,153	32,969	31,712	4,170	3,699	4,582	13.0	11.2	14.4	27,983	29,270	27,130
Kenai Peninsula Borough	20,803	21,404	20,637	2,465	2,222	2,858	11.8	10.4	13.8	18,338	19,182	17,779
Kodiak Island Borough	6,597	6,649	6,471	1,086	885	1,128	16.5	13.3	17.4	5,511	5,764	5,343
Valdez-Cordova CA	4,753	4,916	4,604	619	592	596	13.0	12.0	12.9	4,134	4,324	4,008
Interior Region	52,068	52,071	50,189	3,733	3,424	4,127	7.2	6.6	8.2	48,335	48,647	46,062
Denali Borough	1,252	1,246	1,254	159	146	213	12.7	11.7	17.0	1,093	1,100	1,041
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	45,811	45,826	44,111	2,826	2,564	3,148	6.2	5.6	7.1	42,985	43,262	40,963
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,696	2,668	2,580	380	337	373	14.1	12.6	14.5	2,316	2,331	2,207
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,311	2,331	2,244	369	377	394	16.0	16.2	17.6	1,942	1,954	1,850
Northern Region	9,325	9,218	9,294	1,320	1,283	1,390	14.2	13.9	15.0	8,005	7,935	7,904
Nome Census Area	3,534	3,413	3,440	556	461	499	15.7	13.5	14.5	2,978	2,952	2,941
North Slope Borough	3,407	3,408	3,474	373	401	479	10.9	11.8	13.8	3,034	3,007	2,995
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,384	2,397	2,379	391	421	411	16.4	17.6	17.3	1,993	1,976	1,968
Southeast Region	36,779	37,429	36,279	3,325	2,929	3,609	9.0	7.8	9.9	33,454	34,500	32,670
Haines Borough	1,173	1,202	1,187	141	138	179	12.0	11.5	15.1	1,032	1,064	1,008
Juneau Borough	16,227	16,628	15,973	1,039	965	1,141	6.4	5.8	7.1	15,188	15,663	14,832
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	6,939	7,063	6,766	677	606	651	9.8	8.6	9.6	6,262	6,457	6,115
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,550	2,560	2,553	354	295	408	13.9	11.5	16.0	2,196	2,265	2,145
Sitka Borough	4,359	4,460	4,346	319	294	401	7.3	6.6	9.2	4,040	4,166	3,945
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	1,979	2,025	1,950	314	308	324	15.9	15.2	16.6	1,665	1,717	1,626
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,223	3,173	3,210	400	262	453	12.4	8.3	14.1	2,823	2,911	2,757
Yakutat Borough	328	317	293	80	61	51	24.4	19.2	17.4	248	256	242
Southwest Region	14,487	14,900	13,848	2,423	2,152	2,133	16.7	14.4	15.4	12,064	12,748	11,715
Aleutians East Borough	1,511	1,517	1,444	145	74	118	9.6	4.9	8.2	1,366	1,443	1,326
Aleutians West Census Area	2,643	2,644	2,402	469	346	290	17.7	13.1	12.1	2,174	2,298	2,112
Bethel Census Area	5,625	5,864	5,484	890	860	886	15.8	14.7	16.2	4,735	5,004	4,598
Bristol Bay Borough	443	463	445	54	52	67	12.2	11.2	15.1	389	411	378
Dillingham Census Area	1,708	1,744	1,624	254	208	212	14.9	11.9	13.1	1,454	1,536	1,412
Lake & Peninsula Borough	512	541	507	101	107	108	19.7	19.8	21.3	411	434	399
Wade Hampton CA	2,046	2,127	1,943	511	505	452	25.0	23.7	23.3	1,535	1,622	1,491

*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.*