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Unemployment rate at 8.4 percent in May



Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose five-tenths of a percentage point in May to 8.4 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. April's rate was revised down one-tenth of a percentage point to 7.9 percent.

The state's unemployment rate has climbed 2.4 percentage points since early 2007's low of 6.0 percent, but that increase is relatively mild compared to the U.S. rate, which has increased a full 5 percentage points over the same period.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

	Preliminary 5/09	Revised 4/09	Revised 5/08	Changes from	
				4/09	5/08
Total Nonfarm Employment ²	327,600	314,100	328,800	13,500	-1,200
Natural Resources and Mining	15,500	15,400	15,100	100	400
Oil and Gas	13,100	13,100	12,500	0	600
Construction	16,800	15,000	17,800	1,800	-1,000
Manufacturing	10,900	10,400	10,900	500	0
Seafood Processing	6,600	6,400	6,800	200	-200
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	65,300	61,800	66,900	3,500	-1,600
Retail Trade	36,100	34,900	36,700	1,200	-600
Information	7,100	7,000	7,100	100	0
Financial Activities	14,800	14,500	15,000	300	-200
Professional and Business Services	27,700	25,600	26,800	2,100	900
Educational ³ and Health Services	38,700	38,600	37,700	100	1,000
Health Care	27,900	27,800	27,100	100	800
Leisure and Hospitality	33,500	28,800	34,700	4,700	-1,200
Accommodations	8,500	6,800	9,000	1,700	-500
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	20,300	17,900	20,500	2,400	-200
Other Services	11,500	11,200	11,600	300	-100
Government ⁴	85,800	85,800	85,200	0	600

¹ Not seasonally adjusted

² Excludes the self-employed, fishermen and other agricultural workers, and private household workers

³ Private education only

⁴ Includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	5/09	4/09	5/08
Alaska	8.4%	7.9%	6.6%
U.S.	9.4%	8.9%	5.5%

The state's payroll job count shows a similar pattern. Over-the-year growth in Alaska has consistently slowed in 2009 and May estimates show a decline of 1,200 jobs from May 2008's level. But national job losses have been much more severe. From May 2008 to May 2009, the nation's payroll job count fell by 4 percent compared to a loss of just 0.4 percent for Alaska.

From April to May, the state added 13,500 jobs as the state's very seasonal job market continued to build toward the peak employment months of July and August. The over-the-month growth came from a variety of industries including construction, retail trade, restaurants, and hotels and lodges.

But seasonal increases have been smaller than in recent years. From 2006 to 2008, the average gain from January to May was about 28,000 jobs. This year, the state has added about 23,000 jobs over those four months.

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Research and Analysis' Web site: laborstats.alaska.gov

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployment					
	5/09 ^P	4/09	5/08	Number			Rate		
				5/09 ^P	4/09	5/08	5/09 ^P	4/09	5/08
Alaska Statewide	359,754	354,242	356,989	29,291	29,339	22,791	8.1	8.3	6.4
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	194,768	195,863	192,707	14,392	14,190	10,826	7.4	7.2	5.6
Municipality of Anchorage	154,011	154,649	152,619	10,591	10,198	8,002	6.9	6.6	5.2
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	40,757	41,214	40,088	3,801	3,992	2,824	9.3	9.7	7.0
Gulf Coast Region	38,812	36,527	38,602	3,656	3,811	2,933	9.4	10.4	7.6
Kenai Peninsula Borough	27,292	25,594	26,780	2,718	2,852	1,940	10.0	11.1	7.2
Kodiak Island Borough	6,148	6,167	6,390	477	443	590	7.8	7.2	9.2
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	5,372	4,766	5,432	461	516	403	8.6	10.8	7.4
Interior Region	55,881	53,176	55,660	4,313	4,261	3,337	7.7	8.0	6.0
Denali Borough	2,362	1,075	2,254	98	134	59	4.1	12.5	2.6
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,772	45,469	46,895	3,386	3,254	2,611	7.2	7.2	5.6
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,792	3,754	3,639	369	404	289	9.7	10.8	7.9
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,955	2,878	2,872	460	469	378	15.6	16.3	13.2
Northern Region	12,095	12,320	11,708	1,202	1,160	1,008	9.9	9.4	8.6
Nome Census Area	4,057	4,074	3,973	524	522	422	12.9	12.8	10.6
North Slope Borough	5,118	5,281	4,894	264	245	220	5.2	4.6	4.5
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,920	2,965	2,841	414	393	366	14.2	13.3	12.9
Southeast Region	41,132	39,182	41,495	3,036	3,302	2,399	7.4	8.4	5.8
Haines Borough	1,359	1,207	1,394	120	154	112	8.8	12.8	8.0
Juneau Borough	18,979	18,628	19,155	1,107	1,132	820	5.8	6.1	4.3
Ketchikan Gateway Borough ²	8,559	7,844	8,515	597	653	436	7.0	8.3	5.1
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area ²	2,394	2,331	2,291	365	409	288	15.2	17.5	12.6
Sitka Borough	4,589	4,501	4,737	301	278	266	6.6	6.2	5.6
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ²	2,298	1,634	2,309	218	318	174	9.5	19.5	7.5
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ²	2,612	2,703	2,748	299	327	285	11.4	12.1	10.4
Yakutat Borough	342	334	346	29	31	18	8.5	9.3	5.2
Southwest Region	17,064	17,172	16,820	2,689	2,614	2,288	15.8	15.2	13.6
Aleutians East Borough	842	1,280	830	111	109	109	13.2	8.5	13.1
Aleutians West Census Area	2,245	2,622	2,303	285	253	317	12.7	9.6	13.8
Bethel Census Area	6,958	6,930	6,866	1,155	1,141	974	16.6	16.5	14.2
Bristol Bay Borough	1,085	538	1,092	57	63	46	5.3	11.7	4.2
Dillingham Census Area	1,981	2,013	1,922	265	259	198	13.4	12.9	10.3
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,155	984	1,140	107	115	79	9.3	11.7	6.9
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,798	2,805	2,667	709	674	565	25.3	24.0	21.2

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 new borough and census areas will be available in 2010. 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