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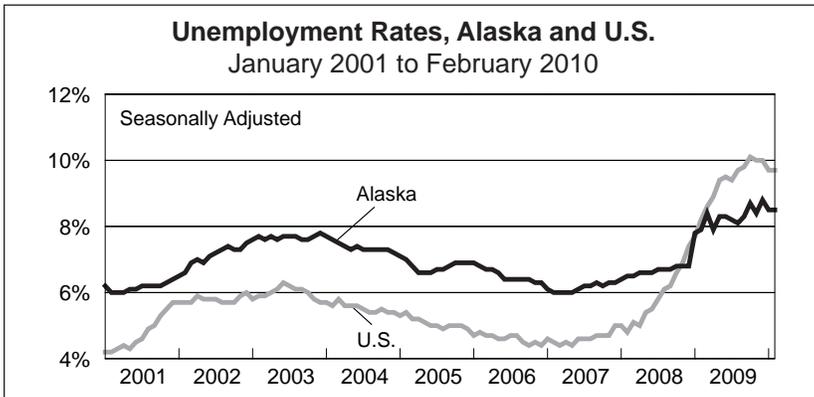
Press Release

March 24, 2010

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

No. 10-19

Unemployment rate at 8.5 percent in February



Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

	Preliminary 2/10	Revised 1/10	Revised 2/09	Year-over-year change		
				2/09	90% confidence interval ⁶	
				low	high	
Total Nonfarm Employment ²	308,500	306,900	307,700	800	-6,583	8,183
Mining and Logging	14,600	14,300	15,600	-1,000	-1,793	-207
Oil and Gas	12,400	12,200	13,600	-1,200	-	-
Construction	13,300	12,300	13,300	0	-2,583	2,583
Manufacturing	13,500	12,100	11,800	1,700	706	2,694
Seafood Processing	8,900	8,100	8,300	600	-	-
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	58,900	60,600	59,500	-600	-2,972	1,772
Retail Trade	33,600	34,900	33,600	0	-2,028	2,028
Information	6,300	6,400	6,800	-500	-1,081	81
Financial Activities	14,000	14,100	14,300	-300	-2,243	1,643
Professional and Business Services	24,700	23,600	25,500	-800	-2,593	993
Educational ³ and Health Services	39,700	40,100	38,300	1,400	132	2,668
Health Care	28,700	29,000	27,600	1,100	-	-
Leisure and Hospitality	26,100	27,500	27,100	-1,000	-3,037	1,037
Accommodations	5,700	6,100	6,100	-400	-	-
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	16,600	17,600	17,200	-600	-	-
Other Services	11,200	11,500	11,300	-100	-3,276	3,076
Government ⁴	86,200	84,400	84,200	2,000	-	-

A dash indicates that confidence intervals are not available at this level of detail.

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

⁵ Based on the margin of error of the estimate, a 90 percent confidence interval statistically determines a range of values within which the "true" value falls with a 90 percent level of confidence. For more information, go to <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/c-i.pdf>.

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	2/10	1/10	2/09
Alaska	8.5%	8.5%	7.3%
U.S.	9.7%	9.7%	8.2%

Sources for graph and tables: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged in February, holding at 8.5 percent. January's revised unemployment rate of 8.5 percent was the same as its preliminary rate.

The comparable national rate for February was 9.7 percent and it too was unchanged from January.

The unemployment rates for both Alaska and the U.S remain higher than they were a year ago but Alaska's picture is still better than the nation's – it remains below the national rate. The year 2009 was the first year since 1982 that Alaska had an annual unemployment rate that came in below the nation's. It appears Alaska is on track to repeat that in 2010.

That said, Alaska's February jobless rate is the highest rate for the month of February since 1992. There are plenty of indications that continue to point to a very competitive job market for Alaskans. For example, the number of weeks filed for regular unemployment claims was 9 percent higher in February than in January and 25 percent higher than year-ago.

The not seasonally adjusted jobless rates around the state inched up slightly in February, which is a typical seasonal occurrence. With the exception of Anchorage/Mat-Su, all the other regions in the state remained in the double digits in February. The highest rate for that month was recorded in the Skagway Municipality, where nearly a third of its labor force was unemployed. The lowest was in the Aleutians West Census Area.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics has implemented a change to the method used to produce statewide wage and salary employment estimates. That change has resulted in increased monthly volatility in the wage and salary estimates for many states, including Alaska.

The increased volatility was evident in Alaska's statewide February employment estimates. Therefore, one should be very cautious in interpreting any over-the-year or month-to-month change for these monthly estimates. The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages series may be a better source of information for trends analysis (<http://labor.alaska.gov/qcew.htm>).

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Research and Analysis' Web site: <http://laborstats.alaska.gov>

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	2/10 ^P	1/10	2/09	Number			Rate		
				2/10 ^P	1/10	2/09	2/10 ^P	1/10	2/09
Alaska Statewide	361,562	360,646	356,465	35,407	33,981	30,471	9.8	9.4	8.5
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	201,564	201,997	197,364	17,407	16,620	14,486	8.6	8.2	7.3
Municipality of Anchorage	157,752	158,078	154,482	12,377	11,740	10,117	7.8	7.4	6.5
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	43,812	43,919	42,882	5,030	4,880	4,369	11.5	11.1	10.2
Gulf Coast Region	37,333	37,558	36,841	4,681	4,468	3,992	12.5	11.9	10.8
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,221	26,574	25,803	3,546	3,423	2,977	13.5	12.9	11.5
Kodiak Island Borough	6,618	6,481	6,484	520	474	417	7.9	7.3	6.4
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,494	4,503	4,554	615	571	598	13.7	12.7	13.1
Interior Region	53,459	52,792	52,993	5,367	5,281	4,691	10.0	10.0	8.9
Denali Borough	722	805	834	185	189	168	25.6	23.5	20.1
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,187	45,581	45,771	4,084	4,062	3,575	8.8	8.9	7.8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,632	3,583	3,549	508	485	437	14.0	13.5	12.3
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,918	2,823	2,839	590	545	511	20.2	19.3	18.0
Northern Region	12,609	12,619	12,625	1,384	1,250	1,127	11.0	9.9	8.9
Nome Census Area	4,144	4,199	4,045	609	556	503	14.7	13.2	12.4
North Slope Borough	5,422	5,397	5,607	300	279	247	5.5	5.2	4.4
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,043	3,023	2,973	475	415	377	15.6	13.7	12.7
Southeast Region	37,905	37,865	37,904	4,012	3,965	3,812	10.6	10.5	10.1
Haines Borough	1,116	1,073	1,101	164	156	178	14.7	14.5	16.2
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ²	867	882	926	238	220	288	27.5	24.9	31.1
Juneau Borough	18,133	18,280	18,230	1,341	1,322	1,230	7.4	7.2	6.7
Ketchikan Gateway Borough ²	7,500	7,535	7,450	810	807	735	10.8	10.7	9.9
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area ²	2,357	2,346	2,380	479	475	508	20.3	20.2	21.3
Sitka Borough	4,373	4,330	4,345	366	369	332	8.4	8.5	7.6
Skagway Municipality ²	530	556	488	162	168	114	30.6	30.2	23.4
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ²	2,748	2,575	2,707	406	401	382	14.8	15.6	14.1
Yakutat Borough	281	288	277	46	47	45	16.4	16.3	16.2
Southwest Region	18,689	17,818	18,737	2,553	2,398	2,363	13.7	13.5	12.6
Aleutians East Borough	1,216	1,235	1,243	99	108	90	8.1	8.7	7.2
Aleutians West Census Area	4,228	3,506	4,293	195	226	184	4.6	6.4	4.3
Bethel Census Area	7,152	7,136	7,030	1,186	1,094	1,063	16.6	15.3	15.1
Bristol Bay Borough	413	433	424	56	57	64	13.6	13.2	15.1
Dillingham Census Area	2,089	2,057	2,088	261	237	243	12.5	11.5	11.6
Lake and Peninsula Borough	772	767	883	118	109	118	15.3	14.2	13.4
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,819	2,684	2,776	638	567	601	22.6	21.1	21.6

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 Skagway Municipality and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area (previously the Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area) became available in 2010. Data for the Wrangell Borough, and Petersburg and Prince of Wales-Hyder census areas will be available in 2011. 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