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STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
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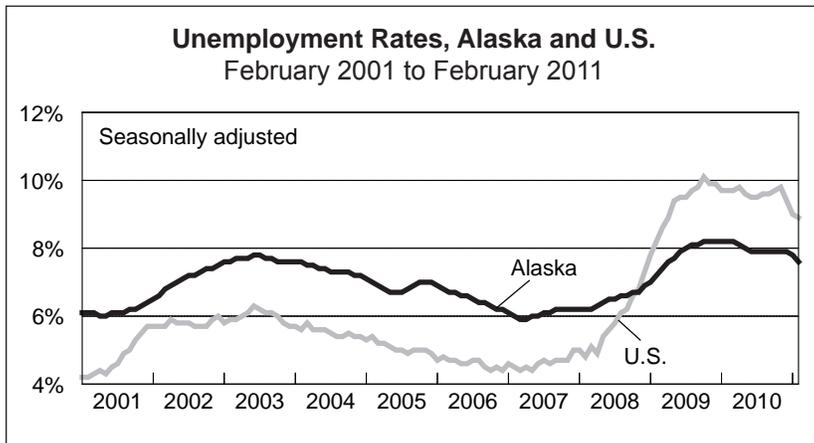
## Press Release

March 23, 2011

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

No. 11-17

### Unemployment rate at 7.6 percent in February



February's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Alaska inched down to 7.6 percent, from January's revised rate of 7.8 percent.

The comparable national jobless rate for February was 8.9 percent, down from 9.0 percent in January. Last year in February, the national unemployment rate was 9.7 percent, compared to 8.2 percent for Alaska.

Jobless rates in both Alaska and the U.S. have steadily improved for the last three months. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, joblessness fell in 282 of the nation's 372 metropolitan areas in January, while it increased in 72 and remained steady in 17.

#### Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment<sup>1</sup>

	Preliminary 2/11	Revised 1/11	Revised 2/10	Year-over-year change		
				2/10	90% confidence interval <sup>2</sup>	
Total Nonfarm Employment <sup>3</sup>	315,800	310,500	307,200	8,600	1,217	15,983
Mining and Logging	15,300	15,100	14,200	1,100	307	1,893
Oil and Gas	12,900	13,000	12,000	900	-	-
Construction	12,200	12,300	12,700	-500	-3,083	2,083
Manufacturing	12,200	11,200	11,600	600	-394	1,594
Seafood Processing	8,700	7,500	8,300	400	-	-
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	60,600	60,600	58,600	2,000	-372	4,372
Retail Trade	34,000	34,200	33,700	300	-1,728	2,328
Information	6,400	6,300	6,300	100	-481	681
Financial Activities	15,200	15,000	14,500	700	-1,243	2,643
Professional and Business Services	25,600	24,800	25,100	500	-1,293	2,293
Educational <sup>4</sup> and Health Services	43,500	42,800	41,200	2,300	1,032	3,568
Health Care	31,200	30,900	29,500	1,700	-	-
Leisure and Hospitality	28,300	27,600	26,900	1,400	-637	3,437
Accommodations	6,200	6,300	6,000	200	-	-
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	18,500	17,400	17,200	1,300	-	-
Other Services	11,400	11,400	10,900	500	-2,676	3,676
Government <sup>5</sup>	85,100	83,400	85,200	-100	-	-

Notes:

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

<sup>1</sup>Not seasonally adjusted

<sup>2</sup>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>.

<sup>3</sup>Excludes the self-employed, fishermen and other agricultural workers, and private household workers

<sup>4</sup>Private education only

<sup>5</sup>Includes public schools, the University of Alaska, and federally recognized tribal entities

#### Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	2/11	1/11	2/10
Alaska	7.6%	7.8%	8.2%
U.S.	8.9%	9.0%	9.7%

From a historical perspective, these numbers remain high — particularly at the national level. This is not surprising, because the recent recession hit the national labor market much harder than it did in Alaska. Excluding the most recent recession, 1983 was the last time the national unemployment rate was as high as 8.9 percent, but in Alaska it was much more recent: 2004.

Compared to January, the not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in February moved very little in most areas of the state.

As with the statewide February unemployment rate, nearly all of the area rates in Alaska are slightly below year-ago levels, an indicator that the state's job market is improving.

The production of state and metropolitan area Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates will transition from state workforce agencies to the BLS with the production of preliminary estimates for March 2011, to be released on April 19, 2011.

Concurrent with this transition, the BLS will implement several methodological changes to standardize the estimation approach across states. While these changes will reduce the potential for statistical bias in state and metropolitan area estimates, they may increase the month-to-month variability of the estimates. More detailed information on the changes to procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>.

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

# Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted<sup>1</sup>

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	2/11 <sup>P</sup>	1/11	2/10	Number			Rate		
				2/11 <sup>P</sup>	1/11	2/10	2/11 <sup>P</sup>	1/11	2/10
<b>Alaska Statewide</b>	<b>360,516</b>	<b>359,660</b>	<b>358,452</b>	<b>30,480</b>	<b>31,039</b>	<b>34,158</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>9.5</b>
<b>Anchorage/Mat-Su Region</b>	<b>199,024</b>	<b>200,134</b>	<b>198,141</b>	<b>14,684</b>	<b>14,905</b>	<b>16,821</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Municipality of Anchorage	155,415	156,242	154,824	10,175	10,302	11,964	6.5	6.6	7.7
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	43,609	43,892	43,317	4,509	4,603	4,857	10.3	10.5	11.2
<b>Gulf Coast Region</b>	<b>37,699</b>	<b>37,465</b>	<b>37,671</b>	<b>4,040</b>	<b>4,072</b>	<b>4,519</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>12.0</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,236	26,172	26,340	3,017	3,064	3,428	11.5	11.7	13.0
Kodiak Island Borough	6,738	6,589	6,680	444	434	502	6.6	6.6	7.5
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,725	4,704	4,651	579	574	589	12.3	12.2	12.7
<b>Interior Region</b>	<b>53,846</b>	<b>53,270</b>	<b>53,412</b>	<b>4,634</b>	<b>4,789</b>	<b>5,177</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>9.7</b>
Denali Borough	836	839	824	173	194	178	20.7	23.1	21.6
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,162	45,883	46,198	3,443	3,567	3,939	7.5	7.8	8.5
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,694	3,548	3,483	456	468	491	12.3	13.2	14.1
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	3,154	3,000	2,907	562	560	569	17.8	18.7	19.6
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>12,878</b>	<b>12,812</b>	<b>12,535</b>	<b>1,249</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>1,334</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>10.6</b>
Nome Census Area	4,200	4,197	4,216	531	526	588	12.6	12.5	13.9
North Slope Borough	5,595	5,515	5,277	248	234	288	4.4	4.2	5.5
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,083	3,100	3,042	470	447	458	15.2	14.4	15.1
<b>Southeast Region</b>	<b>38,255</b>	<b>37,836</b>	<b>33,012</b>	<b>3,448</b>	<b>3,573</b>	<b>2,997</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Haines Borough	1,073	1,074	1,080	140	149	160	13.0	13.9	14.8
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area <sup>2</sup>	856	840	849	224	214	230	26.2	25.5	27.1
Juneau, City and Borough of	18,586	18,379	18,391	1,097	1,111	1,281	5.9	6.0	7.0
Ketchikan Gateway Borough <sup>2</sup>	7,458	7,482	7,469	686	733	775	9.2	9.8	10.4
Petersburg Census Area <sup>2</sup>	1,633	1,659	-	225	272	-	13.8	16.4	-
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area <sup>2</sup>	2,444	2,389	-	468	443	-	19.1	18.5	-
Sitka, City and Borough of	4,462	4,262	4,416	316	336	348	7.1	7.9	7.9
Skagway, Municipality of <sup>2</sup>	539	551	541	150	165	159	27.8	29.9	29.4
Wrangell Borough <sup>2</sup>	936	931	-	102	109	-	10.9	11.7	-
Yakutat, City and Borough of	268	269	266	40	41	44	14.9	15.2	16.5
<b>Southwest Region</b>	<b>18,817</b>	<b>18,146</b>	<b>18,646</b>	<b>2,427</b>	<b>2,494</b>	<b>2,458</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>13.2</b>
Aleutians East Borough	1,253	1,305	1,242	94	122	92	7.5	9.3	7.4
Aleutians West Census Area	4,168	3,671	4,148	168	230	185	4.0	6.3	4.5
Bethel Census Area	7,109	7,079	7,072	1,143	1,136	1,149	16.1	16.0	16.2
Bristol Bay Borough	487	471	458	53	52	53	10.9	11.0	11.6
Dillingham Census Area	2,141	1,989	2,097	243	229	251	11.3	11.5	12.0
Lake and Peninsula Borough	879	890	865	115	110	114	13.1	12.4	13.2
Wade Hampton Census Area	2780	2741	2764	611	615	614	22	22.4	22.2

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 in rural Alaska do not meet the definition because they have not conducted an active job search due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.

<sup>1</sup>Unemployment rates that are not seasonally adjusted should not be compared with those that are.

<sup>2</sup>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 Wrangell Borough, Petersburg Census Area, and Prince of Wales-Hyder went into effect in January 2011. Prior to January 2011, data were published for Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area and Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics