ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

OCTOBER 2017

JOB TURNOVER

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Workers from 20 to 34

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& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ALASKA ECONOMIC
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ON THE COVER: Gears at Chena Hot Springs near Fairbanks, photo by Jeremy Buttler

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Better working conditions and lower turnover costs

Heidi Drygas
Commissioner

I'm pleased that our Research and Analysis staff have developed an important new tool to analyze job turnover. This metric can shed light on working conditions and the business environment in Alaska.

As an indicator of working conditions, turnover's implications may not be as self-evident as, say, median wages. However, turnover rates can reveal key attributes of the labor market in different industries and provide guidance to policy makers who want to improve working conditions and the health of our economy.

If you talk to human resources professionals, many will bemoan the high costs of turnover. The Society for Human Resource Management notes that losing a single employee can cost businesses tens of thousands of dollars in lost productivity and transaction costs related to hiring new staff. Clearly, it is in a business' interest to improve employee retention and reduce productivity losses associated with turnover and the related loss of institutional knowledge.

From a worker's perspective, turnover can reveal the quality of working conditions. Good jobs that pay well, provide good benefits, and possess reasonable management practices will tend to have longer worker tenure. Conversely, low-paying jobs with poor benefits and abusive management will have higher turnover rates.

Because high turnover rates are costly to employers and sometimes indicative of poor working conditions, it's reassuring that Alaska's has been on the decline over time. This does not surprise me, because Alaska's high median wages and high unionization rate (which results in jobs with good benefits and fair worker treatment) are other markers of good working conditions.

We can learn more by delving into turnover rates in different sectors, recognizing that the seasonal and itinerant nature of work can complicate interpretation of the data. For example, the construction industry superficially shows a high turnover rate, but that reflects the temporary nature of projects and the hire/lay off process that normally occurs through hiring halls.

As you probably recall from other *Trends* articles, Alaska's construction industry produces high-wage jobs with good benefits, including some of the state's highest paying jobs for younger workers.

I am interested in working with employers and labor unions on workforce development programs that improve employee productivity, reduce turnover, improve profitability, and improve wages and benefits. As turnover data indicate, the workplace doesn't have to be a zero sum game. When workers are on the job longer and learn advanced skills, their productivity goes up to the benefit of workers and employers alike. That is why companies around the world use training programs like registered apprenticeship to build a skilled, stable workforce with resilient succession planning.

If you are an employer who would like to explore ways to reduce your turnover rate, please contact my office. We would appreciate the opportunity to explore training programs that can improve your bottom line through improved employee retention and productivity.

Follow the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development on Facebook (facebook.com/alaskalabor) and Twitter (twitter.com/alaskalabor) for the latest news about jobs, workplace safety, and workforce development.

Job Turnover

Measuring employers' entry and exit rates

By **MALI ABRAHAMSON**

One way to describe job turnover is the flow of workers in and out of a business. One of the reasons this matters is that it creates costs, both in lost sales or productivity while a position is vacant and also in recruitment and training of new workers. Another reason is it tends to create disruptions in the delivery of an employer's goods or services.

Understanding and measuring turnover can help employers assess not just its costs but the consequences of changes to working conditions, wage and benefit packages, or new management. With several important caveats, an increase in turnover can show that an employer has become less appealing to workers relative to their other options.

Not all turnover is bad, though. Workers and employers both benefit when people leave a job that isn't a good match for their skills and are replaced by someone who's a better fit. So employers may not want to reduce their turnover to zero, but they likely want to monitor and constrain it.

Turnover has two components: the entry rate and the exit rate.

About the data

The turnover data produced for this article come from quarterly employment and wage reports that nearly all Alaska employers are required to file under state unemployment insurance laws.

A worker is identified as an entrant if he or she shows up on an employer's quarterly payroll but wasn't there in the prior quarter. Workers are identified as exiters when they are no longer on the payroll of an employer for whom they showed up in the previous quarter.

Turnover isn't routinely measured

As relevant as turnover is to employers who want to reduce costs and maximize productivity, it's not one of the standard labor market measures produced by state or federal statistical agencies. Unlike jobs or wages, turnover is surprisingly complicated to measure and there are a variety of ways to do it.

Metropolitan Life Insurance Company initiated the first wide-scale effort in the U.S. to measure turnover, using a 1926 survey. Met Life saw a need to provide personnel managers in manufacturing plants with national benchmark turnover rates, presumably so managers could compare their own rates and adjust wages or working conditions, for example, to minimize turnover.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics took over the survey in 1930, and while BLS still produces national and regional turnover estimates with its Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey, or JOLTS, it stopped producing data at the state level in 1981. Just one state, Wyoming, regularly produces its own turnover estimates.

Ways to define turnover

Depending on the objective, turnover can be measured at the occupational, industry, location, or employer level. An example of measuring turnover at the occupational level is assessing how many nurses or school teachers are coming from and going into those occupations. Turnover at the industry level would ex-

1 Turnover Rates by Industry

AVERAGE AND QUARTERLY, AS PERCENT OF TOTAL WORKFORCE, 2016

	Average entry rate	Average exit rate	Quarterly entry rate				Quarterly exit rate			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total, all industries	**17%**	**18%**	**15%**	**22%**	**18%**	**14%**	**14%**	**16%**	**23%**	**19%**
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	37%	37%	27%	51%	40%	22%	18%	27%	53%	41%
Mining	8%	12%	6%	10%	8%	7%	11%	14%	11%	12%
Utilities	7%	7%	6%	11%	6%	6%	6%	6%	8%	9%
Construction	25%	27%	20%	36%	25%	16%	21%	21%	29%	36%
Manufacturing	32%	32%	36%	36%	37%	10%	14%	17%	56%	24%
Wholesale Trade	11%	12%	11%	11%	14%	9%	9%	13%	14%	14%
Retail trade	18%	19%	15%	22%	19%	18%	17%	18%	22%	20%
Transportation and Warehousing	16%	16%	12%	28%	14%	10%	10%	11%	22%	21%
Information	9%	10%	10%	11%	8%	9%	10%	9%	10%	9%
Real Estate, Rentals and Leasing	9%	9%	7%	8%	11%	9%	8%	8%	12%	10%
Financial Services	19%	20%	14%	25%	23%	13%	13%	16%	30%	18%
Professional and Business Services	18%	19%	17%	23%	17%	16%	16%	19%	22%	21%
Education and Health Services	13%	13%	12%	13%	14%	14%	11%	12%	14%	16%
Health Care	12%	12%	11%	11%	12%	13%	11%	10%	12%	16%
Leisure and Hospitality	30%	30%	24%	43%	28%	23%	25%	23%	39%	32%
Other Services	20%	20%	18%	23%	18%	20%	16%	19%	24%	20%
Local Government	14%	13%	11%	13%	15%	17%	11%	18%	13%	12%
State Government	7%	8%	4%	11%	6%	5%	4%	7%	12%	7%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

amine similar coming and going from any oil and gas employer, regardless of the job or employer. Measuring turnover by location would assess the coming and going of workers within a geographic area — the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, for example — without regard to their specific employer, industry, or job.

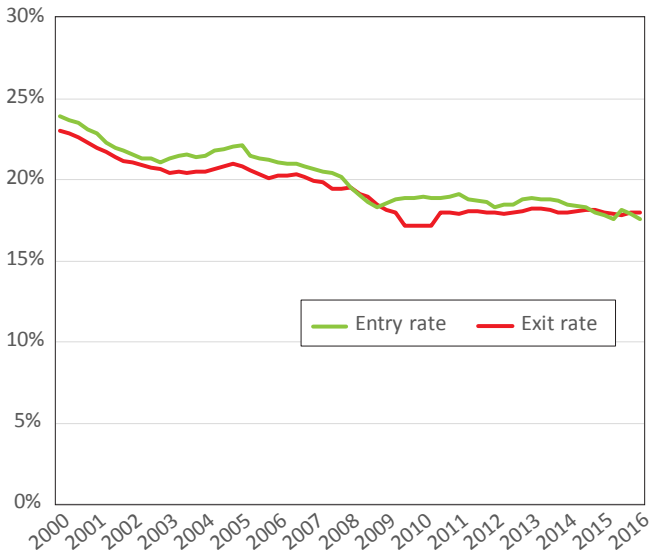
For this article, turnover is measured at the employer level. It is divided into two parts: workers who started working for an employer — entrants — and those who stopped working for that employer — exiters. The entry and exit rates are calculated separately by dividing the number of entrants and exiters by the total number of workers on the employer's quarterly payroll.

So if an employer has 10 new workers in a quarter and 100 total workers on its payroll, its entry rate for that quarter is 10 percent. And if out of that 100, 20 who work in that quarter are absent in the next, its exit rate is 20 percent.

This method has a few important limitations. Using the employer to measure turnover excludes internal hires, promotions, or lateral transfers within a business, which can greatly understate job churn for large employers such as the State of Alaska or a large hospital. A hospital manager who loses a worker to a different unit or hires from elsewhere in the hospital incurs many of the same turnover costs as a manager who loses a worker to or hires someone from a different hospital, but those internal movements aren't

2 Decrease in Overall Rates

4-QTR MOVING AVERAGE, 2000 TO 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

captured here.

This method also can't distinguish re-hires from new hires, both of which are counted here as entrants. Finally, this method doesn't differentiate between workers who quit and those who are laid off or fired.

What entry and exit rates can show

Exhibit 1 on the previous page shows entry and exit rates for employers sorted by major industry sectors. At the low end are sectors like utilities; state government; real estate, rentals and leasing; and education and health services.

Within the education and health services sector, health care employers' average entry and exit rates are 12 percent. There's a lot happening behind those rates, including entry rates that are pushed higher by broad and sustained growth — something many employers wouldn't consider turnover.

Health care exit rates, though low compared to other sectors, may be similar to entry rates because of everything from strong demand for workers, which makes changing employers easier, to burnout associated with the ever-growing demand for health care services.

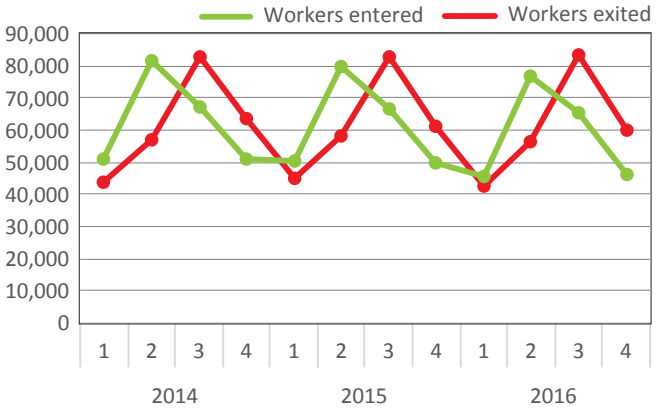
State government technically has the lowest turnover at 8 percent for entry and 7 percent for exit, but as mentioned earlier, those rates are understated because workers who switch jobs within state government are not counted as entrants or exiters.

At the other end of the spectrum, entry and exit rates are especially high in sectors such as leisure and hospitality and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting. Those sectors have strong seasonal patterns, which create significantly more churn than in more stable, year-round employers.

Manufacturing employers, which in Alaska are predominantly seafood processers, have especially dynamic turnover rates. In peak quarters, some seafood processors have entry rates as high as 70 percent, as they hold job fairs all over the U.S. and transport workers to remote processing plants. At the end of the season, the bulk of the year's workers become exiters. In 2016, more than 23,500 people worked in seafood processing. Of that number, more than 15,000 were counted as exiters in the third quarter when most of the fishing seasons wrapped up.

3 Job Turnover is Seasonal

Quarterly patterns, Alaska, 2014 to 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

State's turnover rates have dropped slightly overall

The state's total number of workers has grown by about 20 percent over the last 15 years, and while turnover has varied by industry and seasonality, aggregate turnover has trended downward. (See Exhibit 2.)

In 2000, entry and exit rates were both slightly above 23 percent. By 2016, those rates had steadily declined to about 18 percent.

This is largely because the bulk of the growth in workers was in lower-turnover industries such as health care. An aging workforce — a powerful trend for Alaska and the nation as a whole — probably also played a role, as older workers are less likely to job hop than their younger counterparts.

In a growing economy, the job entrant rate often exceeds the exit rate. In a weak economy, the exit rate is higher than the entry rate.

Whether declining turnover rates for an economy are a positive or a negative depends on what's driving the change. Higher exit rates can indicate a hot market for workers who feel secure enough to leave their jobs voluntarily because they believe they can find a more desirable job quickly. In a weak economy, workers are less likely to quit, although they're more likely to be laid off.

When an economy is growing, entry rates tend to exceed exit rates. That relationship is visible during most of the 2000 to 2016 period, when the state was adding jobs at a modest but consistent rate.

The relationship flipped in 2016, reflecting Alaska's

current recession. Although the aggregate exit rate has remained about the same, it now slightly exceeds the entry rate.

Employers may have grown more reluctant to hire because of the state's economic uncertainty and because industries that are project-based, such as construction and oil and gas, have seen more projects end than begin in the last few years.

Seasonal patterns have remained steady

While Alaska's overall exit and entry rates have declined, the seasonal patterns have been remarkably consistent, and dramatic, year after year. (See Exhibit 3.)

In the last three years, more than 80,000 people have been identified as either entrants or exiters in the peak second and third quarters of each year. In 2016, a whopping 22 percent of all workers were either entering or exiting workers. For further context, 80,000 workers equates to more than 10 percent of Alaska's total population and about 15 percent of the state's population over age 16.

Oil and gas troubles create higher exit rates

A look at exit and entry rates for the mining sector, which includes Alaska's large and important oil and gas employers, shows revealing changes over the last few years. (See Exhibit 4.)

Following a fairly consistent pattern of seasonal entries and exits from 2012 to 2015, exit rates spiked in 2016 and entry rates dropped, a large gap that coincides with big reductions in the oil and gas workforce.

For the sector as a whole, which is a combination of oil and gas employers and other mining activity, 2,594 workers exited in the fourth quarter of 2015 and only 960 entered. Even in the midst of large-scale layoffs, a certain number of workers were still being added to those employers' payrolls. This highlights the fact that turnover is a constant regardless of whether an economy is expanding or contracting, though the flows can change significantly under different economic conditions.

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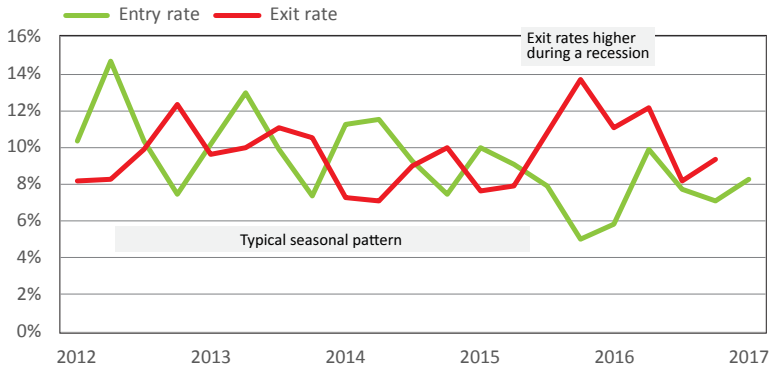
Mining Pattern Shows Recent Losses

Alaska, 2012 to 2017



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Young Adults in ALASKA

A snapshot of workers between ages 20 and 34

By **ALYSSA RODRIGUES**

While people between ages 20 and 34 make up just 22.5 percent of the state's population, they are 32 percent of Alaska's workforce.

In many ways, Alaskans in this age group mirror their national counterparts — they are more racially diverse than older age groups (see Exhibit 1) and they earn less on average. In other ways, younger Alaskans stand out from their age group nationally and from previous generations in Alaska.

Where they live

People between ages 20 and 34 make up more than 24 percent of the population in cities with large university and military populations, such as Anchorage and Fairbanks, and also in the North Slope Borough and the Kusilvak Census Area. (See Exhibit 2.)

Majority Alaska Native areas such as Kusilvak and North Slope have historically higher birth rates and a lower median age than the rest of the state, plus smaller populations over age 65.

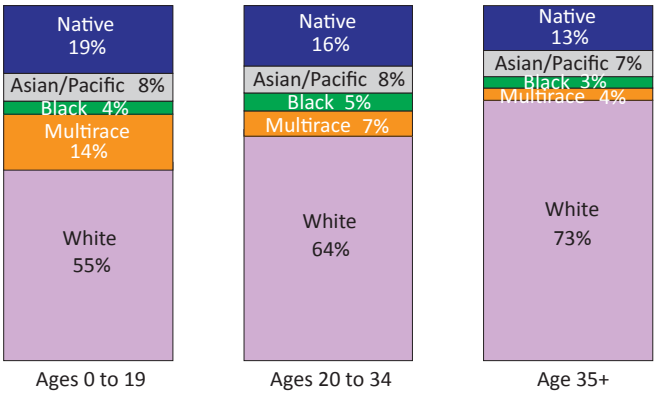
Areas with the lowest concentrations of young adults are all in Southeast Alaska, the region with the highest median age in the state.

They are more racially diverse

The biggest difference between Alaskans from 20 to 34 and older Alaskans is their racial and ethnic diversity, as 36 percent identify as nonwhite compared to 27 percent of those over age 35. They're also twice as likely to identify as multiracial, a trend that's likely to continue.

1 More Racially Diverse

ALASKA AGE GROUPS BY RACE, 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Alaskans who are 19 and younger are even more racially diverse, and twice as likely as the 20-to-34 group to identify as multiracial.

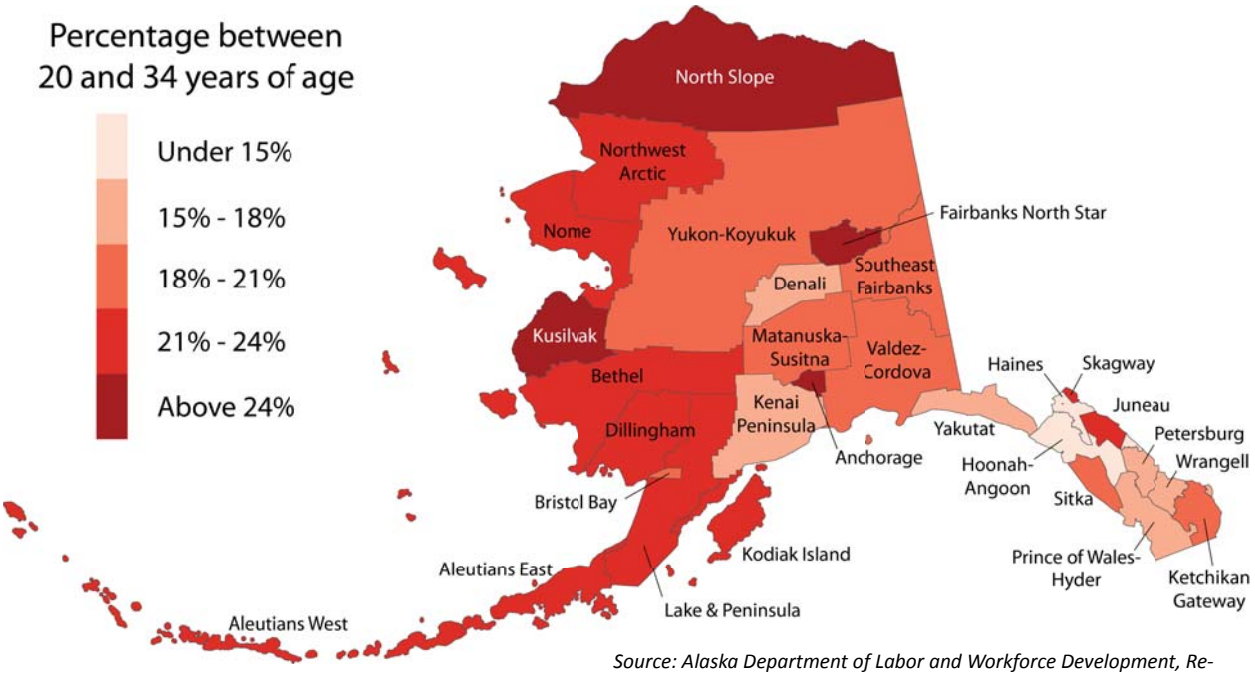
Common jobs and earnings

Wages tend to grow with age (see Exhibit 3), and younger Alaska workers earn less than their older counterparts in every industry and occupation, and in every part of the state.

Young workers earn the most in the North Slope Borough, where the oil and gas industry dominates. (See Exhibit 4 on page 14.) Oil and gas was the industry where young adults earned the most on average in 2016, with an average annual wage of $75,000 — nearly two-and-a-half times the statewide average of $30,725

2 Share of Area Populations Between Ages 20 and 34

ALASKA BOROUGHS AND CENSUS AREAS, 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

for this age group.

Earnings are lowest in the Kusilvak Census Area, where young workers earned less than half the statewide average for their age group in 2016 and five times less than those on the North Slope. This follows the overall trend of low wages and fewer employment opportunities in the Kusilvak Census Area.

While the typical occupational mix is similar between young and older Alaskans, the most common occupation among people between 20 and 34 is retail sales worker (see Exhibit 5), and they are slightly more likely than older people to work in retail. Retail sales is a common entry-level job for young workers because it doesn't require much experience or education.

While construction trades worker is the most common occupation among older age groups, it's second for those between 20 and 34.

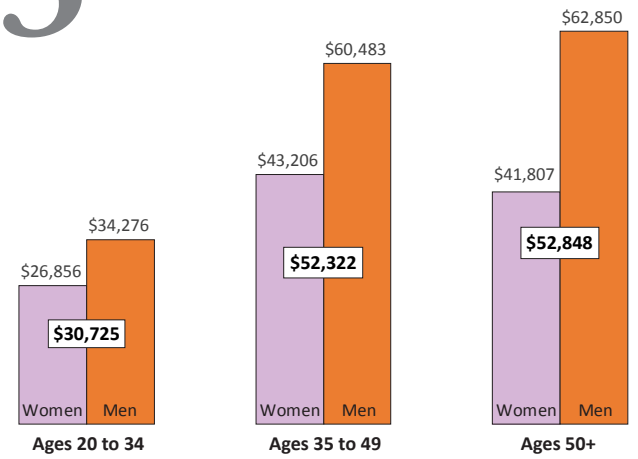
Food and beverage server is the third most common occupation for young adults, as it also requires little experience or education and often offers flexible hours. Accommodation and food services was also one of the lowest wage sectors for this group in 2016. (See Exhibit 6.)

More married than U.S. age group

Compared to their national counterparts, younger Alaskans are more likely to be married and to have given birth recently.

3 Wages Increase With Age

ALASKA, BY AGE AND GENDER, 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

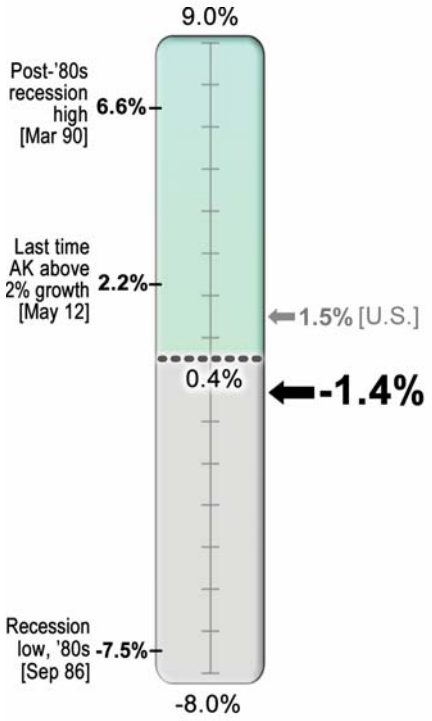
In 2016, 29 percent of Alaska's 20-to-34-year-olds were married compared to 27 percent nationwide. Fewer Alaskans had never been married, at 62 percent versus 65 percent nationally. And although young Alaskans are more likely to be married or have been married before,

Continued on page 14

Gauging Alaska's Economy

Job Growth

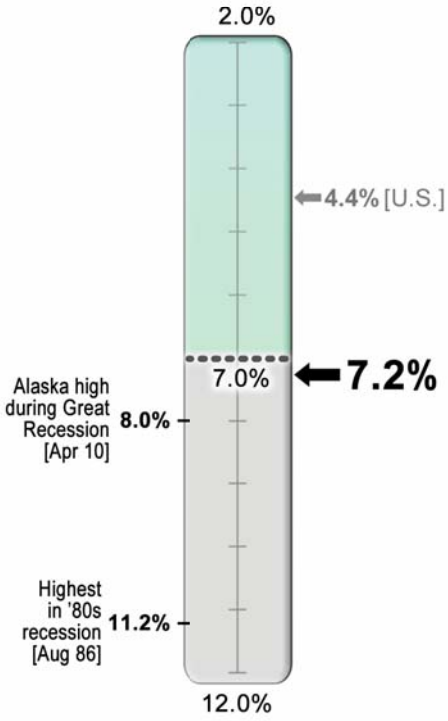
August 2017



- August was the 23rd consecutive month Alaska has recorded job losses.
- Alaska had 25 consecutive months of job losses during the state's 1980s recession, although the magnitude of the losses in the '80s was much larger as a percentage of total jobs.
- Job losses have moderated slightly in recent months.

Unemployment Rate

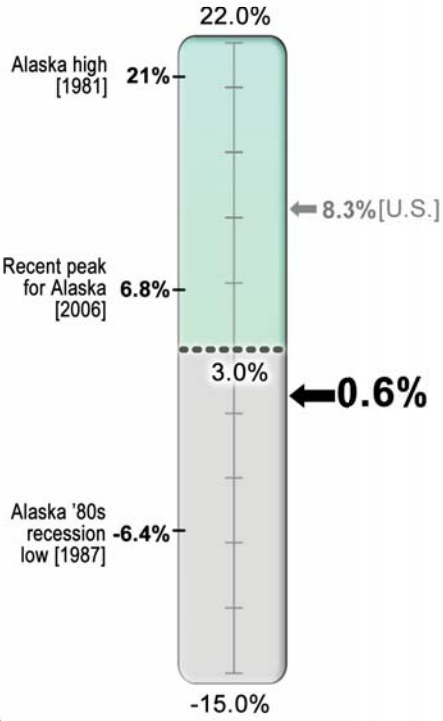
August 2017
Seasonally adjusted



- The unemployment rate is an important measure but more complicated than job growth.
- Unemployment rates can be high, for example, when employment is growing because of migrating job seekers. That's what happened in Alaska in the early 1980s.
- Alternatively, if unemployed workers leave Alaska or people lose their jobs and decide to retire or otherwise not look for a new job, unemployment rates can stay relatively low despite job losses.

Wage Growth

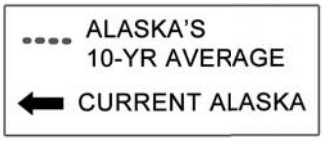
1st Quarter 2017*



- Wage growth or decline is one of the most basic and useful measure of overall economic health.
- Wages were up slightly in the first quarter of 2017 compared to the first quarter of 2016 after four quarters of decline.
- Resumed and sustained wage growth, when it occurs, will be a good indicator that the Alaska recession is over.

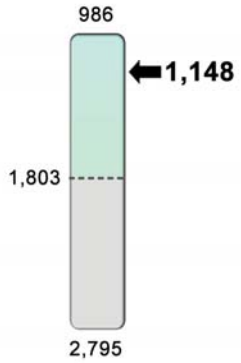
*Four-quarter moving average ending with the specified quarter

Gauging Alaska's Economy



Initial Claims

Unemployment, week ending Aug 12, 2017†

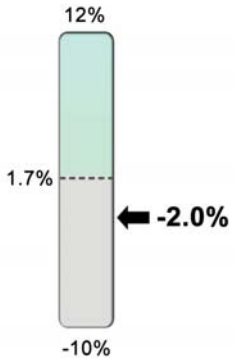


➤ For a variety of reasons, initial claims are well below the 10-year average despite job losses.

†Four-week moving average ending with the specified week

GDP Growth

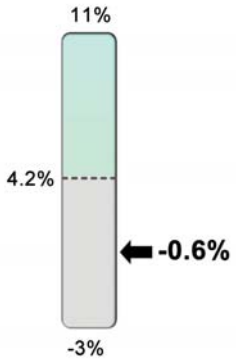
1st Quarter 2017*



➤ Gross domestic product is the market value of all goods and services produced in Alaska.

Personal Income Growth

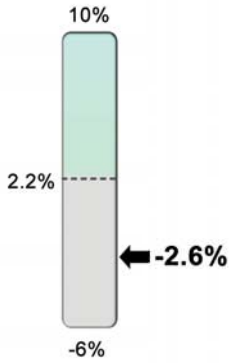
1st Quarter 2017*



➤ Personal income includes wages as well as government transfer payments (such as Social Security, Medicaid, and the PFD) and investment income. Declines during the current recession have been small so far.

Change in Home Prices

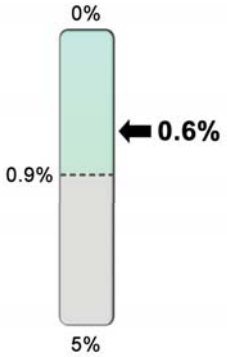
1st Quarter 2017



➤ Home prices include only those for which a commercial loan is used. This indicator tends to be quite volatile from quarter to quarter.

Foreclosure Rate

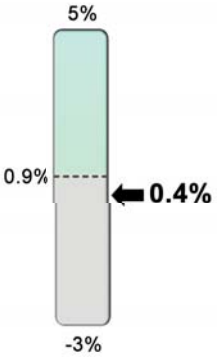
1st Quarter 2017



➤ Foreclosure rates remain very low, highlighting how different the current recession is from the '80s recession when foreclosure rates exceeded 10 percent.

Population Growth

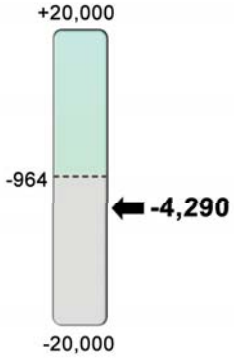
2015 to 2016



➤ The state's population has remained relatively stable despite moderate job losses. Population estimates for 2017 will be released in January 2018.

Net Migration

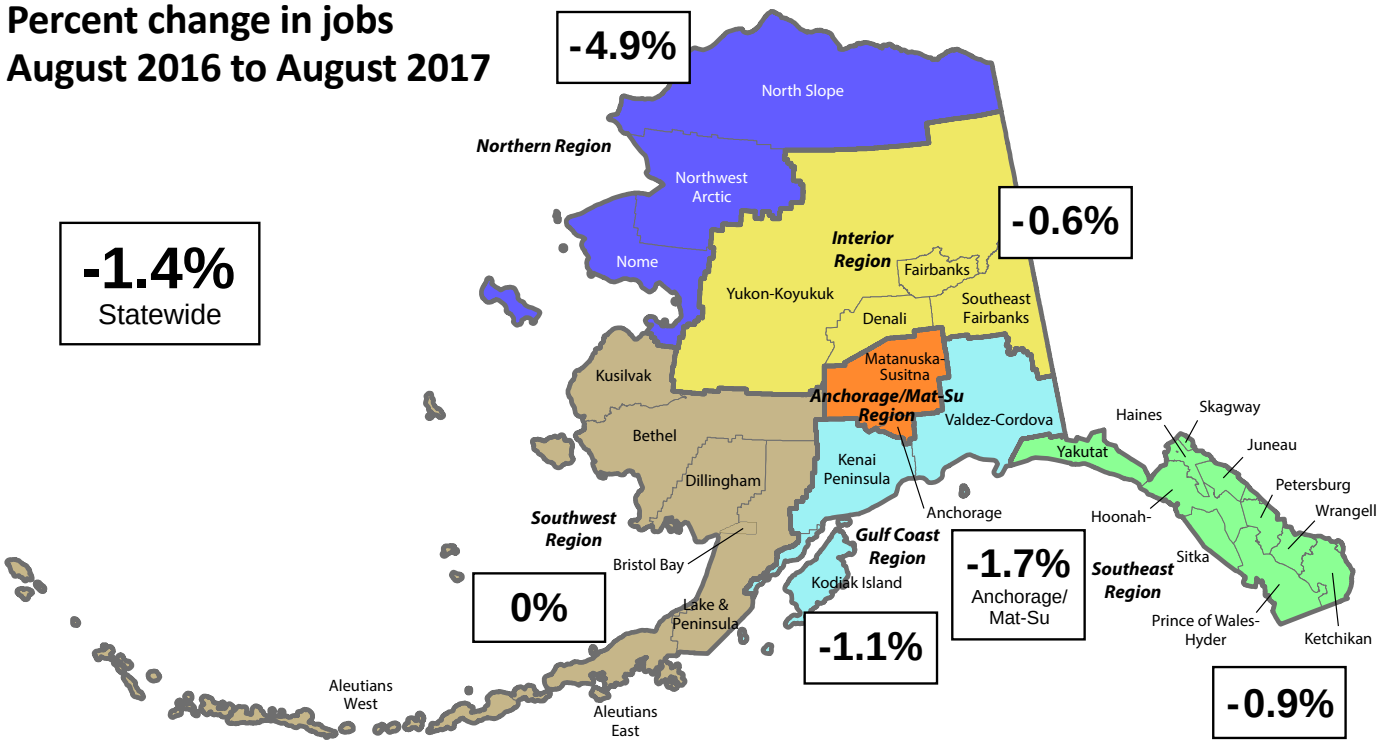
2015 to 2016



➤ More people have left Alaska than have moved here in recent years, but the losses have been relatively small (much smaller than during the 1980s recession).

Employment by Region

Percent change in jobs
August 2016 to August 2017



Unemployment Rates

Seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/17	7/17	8/16
United States	**4.4**	**4.3**	**4.9**
Alaska, Statewide	**7.2**	**7.0**	**6.7**

Not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/17	7/17	8/16
United States	**4.5**	**4.6**	**5.0**
Alaska, Statewide	**6.3**	**6.6**	**5.8**

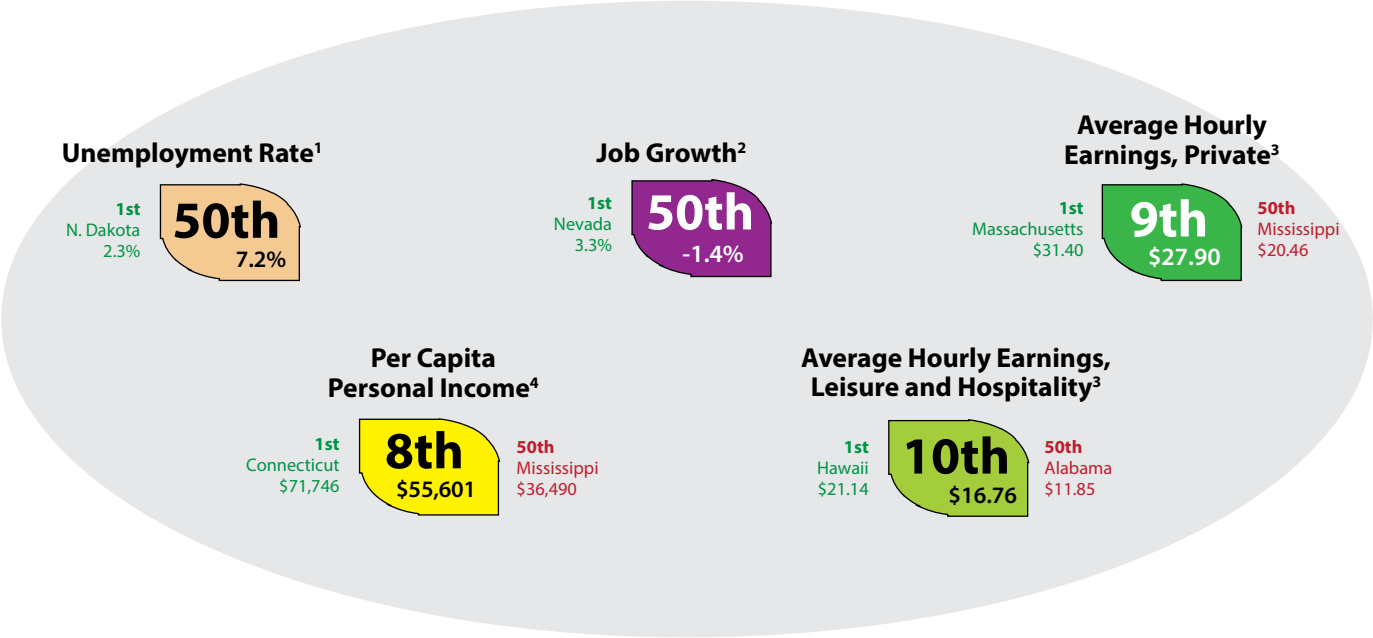
Regional, not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/17	7/17	8/16
Interior Region	**6.1**	**6.4**	**5.4**
Denali Borough	3.4	3.9	3.0
Fairbanks N Star Borough	5.5	5.8	4.8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	8.4	8.5	8.4
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	16.6	17.5	14.9
Northern Region	**12.6**	**13.4**	**11.5**
Nome Census Area	13.7	14.9	13.4
North Slope Borough	7.7	8.0	7.0
Northwest Arctic Borough	17.0	18.2	14.7
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	**6.0**	**6.2**	**5.5**
Anchorage, Municipality	5.5	5.6	4.9
Mat-Su Borough	7.8	8.1	7.2

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/17	7/17	8/16
Southwest Region	**10.0**	**10.1**	**9.4**
Aleutians East Borough	1.7	1.9	1.7
Aleutians West Census Area	2.7	2.8	2.2
Bethel Census Area	14.9	15.4	14.0
Bristol Bay Borough	3.6	1.6	4.3
Dillingham Census Area	7.9	7.9	8.1
Kusilvak Census Area	21.2	24.5	20.9
Lake and Peninsula Borough	11.3	11.5	8.9
Gulf Coast Region	**6.1**	**6.4**	**6.1**
Kenai Peninsula Borough	6.8	7.0	6.7
Kodiak Island Borough	4.1	4.9	4.8
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	5.0	5.2	5.0

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/17	7/17	8/16
Southeast Region	**4.9**	**5.1**	**4.4**
Haines Borough	5.5	5.8	6.1
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	7.7	7.4	7.1
Juneau, City and Borough	4.1	4.4	3.6
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	4.6	4.8	4.3
Petersburg Borough	7.1	7.1	6.1
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	9.7	9.6	9.0
Sitka, City and Borough	3.8	4.0	3.1
Skagway, Municipality	2.8	3.0	2.9
Wrangell, City and Borough	6.4	5.9	5.5
Yakutat, City and Borough	8.2	7.4	6.7

How Alaska Ranks



[1]August seasonally adjusted unemployment rates
[2]August employment, over-the-year percent change
[3]August 2017
[4]First quarter 2017

Other Economic Indicators

	Current		Year ago	Change
Anchorage Consumer Price Index (CPI-U, base yr 1982=100)	218.616	1st half 2017	216.999	+0.75%
Commodity prices				
Crude oil, Alaska North Slope,* per barrel	$51.37	August 2017	$44.17	+16.30%
Natural gas, residential, per thousand cubic ft	$15.98	June 2017	$14.49	+10.28%
Gold, per oz. COMEX	$1,296.90	9/21/2017	$1,344.70	-3.55%
Silver, per oz. COMEX	$17.03	9/21/2017	$19.81	-14.03%
Copper, per lb. COMEX	$292.90	9/21/2017	$215.50	+35.92%
Zinc, per MT	$3,132.00	9/21/2017	$2,276.00	+37.61%
Lead, per lb.	$1.11	9/20/2017	$0.88	+26.14%
Bankruptcies	130	Q2 2017	115	+13%
Business	8	Q2 2017	13	-38%
Personal	122	Q2 2017	102	+20%
Unemployment insurance claims				
Initial filings	4,603	August 2017	5,798	-20.61%
Continued filings	29,284	August 2017	36,865	-20.56%
Claimant count	7,283	August 2017	9,148	-20.39%

*Department of Revenue estimate

Sources for pages 10 through 13 include Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Census Bureau; COMEX; Bloomberg; Infomine; Alaska Department of Revenue; and U.S. Courts, 9th Circuit

4 Average Wages by Area

Alaska, ages 20 to 34, 2016

Borough or Census Area	20-to-34-year-olds Workers*	Avg wages
North Slope Borough	4,839	$57,931
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	843	$39,741
Aleutians West Census Area	670	$37,589
Juneau, City and Borough	5,668	$32,798
Denali Borough	401	$32,592
Anchorage, Municipality	52,766	$31,868
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	1,484	$31,202
Northwest Arctic Borough	1,565	$30,966
Fairbanks North Star Borough	15,188	$29,615
Kenai Peninsula Borough	7,320	$28,126
Aleutians East Borough	303	$27,081
Kodiak Island Borough	1,796	$26,793
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	2,055	$26,310
Skagway, Municipality	195	$26,022
Sitka, City and Borough	1,248	$25,822
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	9,549	$25,803
Nome Census Area	2,027	$25,307
Petersberg Census Area	367	$23,530
Dillingham Census area	939	$23,308
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	1,007	$22,323
Wrangell, City and Borough	290	$21,926
Yakutat, City and Borough	97	$21,790
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	777	$21,699
Bristol Bay Borough	313	$21,462
Bethel Census Area	3,572	$20,910
Haines Borough	253	$20,729
Lake and Peninsula Borough	354	$20,617
Hoonah-Angoon Census area	236	$16,281
Kusilvak Census Area	1,435	$12,395

*By place of work. Includes all workers with age data, including nonresidents.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

YOUNG ADULTS

Continued from page 9

their divorce rate is the same as that of the national age group, at 4 percent.

In Alaska, 9.4 percent had given birth in the last year compared to 8.9 percent of similarly aged U.S. women, a difference that's even more pronounced at the younger end of the age group.

Lower poverty rates in Alaska

Just 11 percent of 20-to-34-year-olds in Alaska fall below the federal poverty line, well below the national average of 17 percent.

Part of the difference is due to Alaska's higher incomes overall. Alaska incomes have exceeded U.S. incomes throughout its modern history, and while the gap has narrowed, Alaska's per capita income of $55,300 remains above the national average of $49,570. Federal poverty standards aren't adjusted for the cost of living, though, which is higher in Alaska.

More mobile than U.S. age group

Alaska's young adults are more likely to move than Americans of the same age. As of 2016, about two-thirds of young Alaskans resided in the same house where they lived the year before, compared to nearly three-quarters for the U.S. Among those who did move in the past year, young Alaskans were twice as likely as the national group to have moved in from another state.

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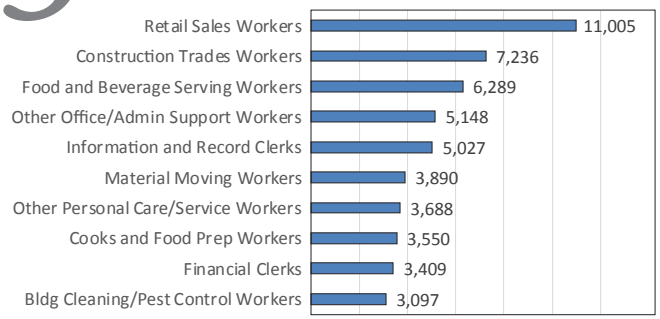
5 Most Common Occupations

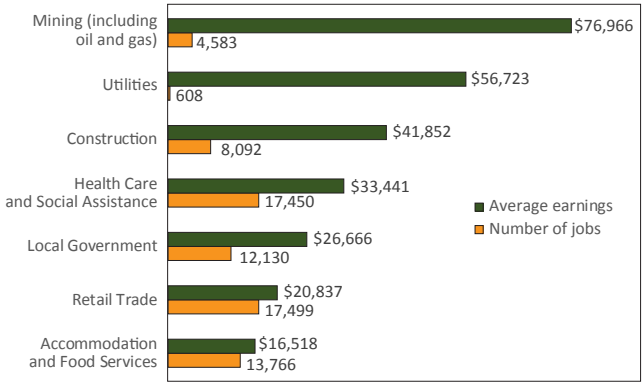
Alaska, ages 20 to 34, 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

6 Wages and Workers

By industry, ages 20 to 34, 2016



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Safety Minute

How to protect young, often temporary workers

Young workers have a higher risk of workplace injury due to their inexperience and earlier stage of emotional development. They often do not know their rights, and they may hesitate to ask questions and fail to recognize workplace dangers.

The generativity of first-line supervisors can influence the habits of young workers for the rest of their lives, even if they are only working at their present position temporarily.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSH Act), employers have a responsibility to provide a safe and healthful work environment and comply with occupational safety and health standards. Make sure all employees understand they have a right to:

- Work in a safe place
- Receive safety and health training in a language they understand
- Ask questions if they don't understand instructions or if something seems unsafe
- Use and be trained on required safety gear such as hard hats, goggles, and ear plugs
- Exercise their workplace safety rights without retaliation or discrimination
- File a confidential complaint with OSHA if they believe there is a serious hazard or their employer is not following OSHA standards

Many young people are also temporary workers. Host employers must treat temporary workers as they treat existing workers, especially in giving young temporary workers adequate training. Temporary staffing agencies and host employers share control over temporary employees and are therefore jointly responsible for their safety and health.

Safety Minute is written by the Labor Standards and Safety Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Employer Resources

Alaska Veterans Job Fair scheduled for Nov. 11 in Anchorage

For many years, Alaska and the nation have honored veterans during November. Veterans Day, observed on Nov. 11, is the anniversary of the World War I armistice that ended hostilities in the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

To support Alaska's veterans, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development will host its annual Alaska Veterans Job Fair on Nov. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University Center Mall, located at 3801 Old Seward Hwy in Anchorage. More than 120 employers and 1,000 job seekers are expected to attend.

This is one of the largest hiring fairs in Alaska, and every year many Alaska employers use this free event to find valuable military talent. See https://2017veteransjobfair.eventbrite.com for more information, including how to register.

For more information about Alaska's veteran services, go to: http://jobs.alaska.gov/veterans/employer/ or call your nearest Alaska Job Center at (877) 724-2539.

Employer Resources is written by the Employment and Training Services Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.