



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**DIVISION OF
EMPLOYMENT
AND TRAINING
SERVICES**



RESOURCE BOOK FY 2022

Available online:
labor.alaska.gov/dets/resources.htm

A Note from the Director

This report provides an overview of programs administered by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Division of Employment and Training Services for the period of July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022.

The content demonstrates each division employee's commitment to carry out our mission through established core values by working with individuals, employers, unions, and industry partners to provide labor exchange, employment and training services, and unemployment insurance to Alaskans and Alaska businesses to advance opportunities for employment and provide economic stability for Alaska's communities.

Division of Employment and Training Services Core Values:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Respect
- Customer service
- Communication
- Excellence
- Training
- Creativity

Although the summaries that follow do not tell the full story of the profound impact our division can have on the lives of Alaskans, they represent the breadth and depth of the programs and services provided by the Division through our three major components: Administration, Workforce Services and Development, and Unemployment Insurance. I am confident you will see that our employees are committed to providing exceptional service to Alaskans.

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Patsy Westcott, Director
Division of Employment and Training Services

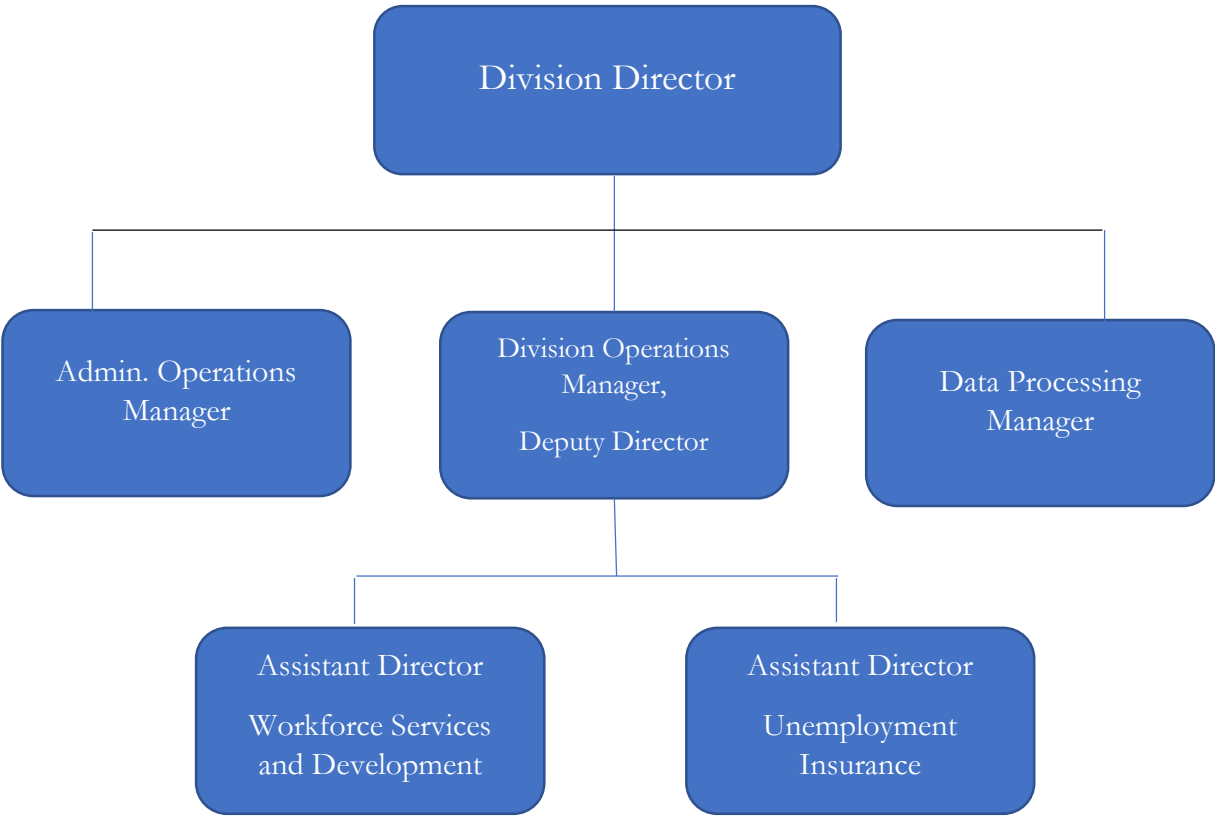
Contents

Division of Employment and Training Services Organization, Component Costs, and Funding Allocation	1
Administration Unit.....	3
Overview	3
Duties of the Administration Unit.....	3
Data Processing Unit.....	4
Overview	4
Duties of the Data Processing Unit.....	4
Workforce Services and Development	5
Overview	5
Programs Administered by Workforce Services and Development.....	5
Alaska Adult Education.....	6
Alaska Career Ready	7
Eligible Training Provider List.....	8
Fidelity Bonding	8
Foreign Labor Certification.....	9
Rapid Response	9
Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment	10
State Monitor Advocate	11
Trade Adjustment Assistance.....	11
Veterans Employment and Training Services.....	12
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Programs.....	13
Adult Program	13
Dislocated Worker Program.....	14
Incumbent Worker Training	14
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services	15
Job Center Locations.....	16
FY 2022 Job Center Activity.....	17
Work Opportunity Tax Credit	18

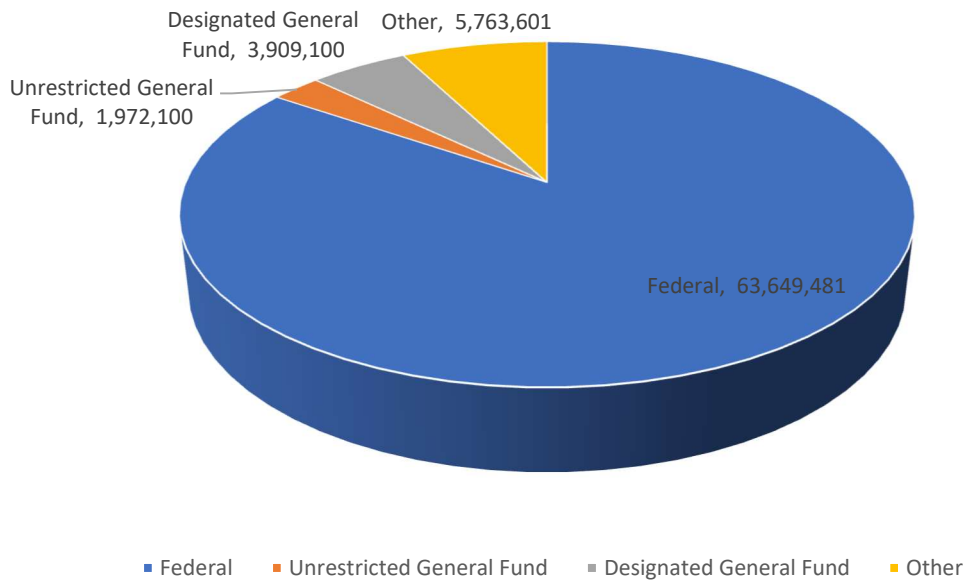
Unemployment Insurance.....	19
Overview	19
UI Performance Management.....	19
Types of UI Benefits	20
UI Organizational Overview	21
Appeal Tribunal	21
Benefit Payment Control (BPC)	22
Claim Centers	22
Data Processing Liaison (DPL)	23
Support	24
Tax	24
Technical	25
Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund FY 2022 Income	26

Division of Employment and Training Services Organization, Component Costs, and Funding Allocation

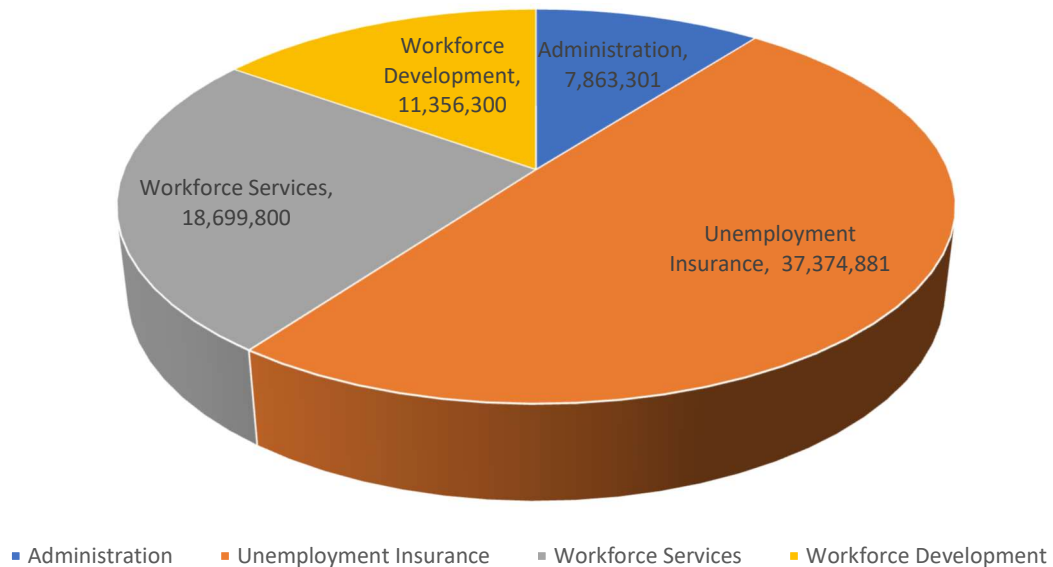
Program Organization



Division of Employment and Training Services SFY 2022 Budget Federal Funds vs. General and Other Funds



Division of Employment and Training Services Cost Per Component Total Costs \$75,294,282



Administration Unit

Erin Heist, Administrative Operations Manager 2

Overview

The Administration Unit is directed by an Administrative Operations Manager 2 with a staff of eight, supporting Unemployment Insurance and Workforce Services and Development. The Administration team prepares the division's annual operating budget, provides financial management, develops and maintains internal controls to ensure compliance with state and federal policies, acts in an oversight capacity for personnel documents, and serves as liaisons to other state agencies.

Duties of the Administration Unit

- Financial management
- Fiscal-related policies and procedures
- Budgetary development and implementation
- Expenditure payment, accounting, structures, and reporting
- Federal compliance
- Office of Management and Budget Performance Missions and Measures
- Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund accounting
- Records management
- Personnel activities

Data Processing Unit

Myron Davis, Systems Programmer 4

Overview

The Data Processing Unit is directed by a Systems Programmer 4 with a staff of 16, supporting Unemployment Insurance and Workforce Services and Development. The Data Processing team provides technical, analytical, and business-specific expertise to assist division programs in efficiently achieving goals.

Duties of the Data Processing Unit

- Data processing system and service delivery
- Division information infrastructure enhancement and support
- Program change development and implementation
- IT contract project management
- Federal compliance
- Unemployment Insurance mainframe maintenance
- Alaska Job Center Network CareerOneStop technology needs and maintenance
- Coordination with the Office of Information Technology

Workforce Services and Development

Demetria Veasy, Assistant Director

Overview

The Workforce Services and Development component administers employment and training programs delivered through Alaska Job Center Network CareerOneStop job centers (AJCN) and subrecipients of state and federal funds. Technical guidance, policy and procedure development, program monitoring, compliance oversight, and ensuring optimal statewide access to labor exchange, employment, and job training services are its key deliverables. The component is responsible for the operation of the AJCN system, state and federal reporting of participant demographics, program activities and associated performance, and maintaining the data systems used for reporting. Additionally, the component may seek and apply for federal and state funding opportunities to better meet the needs of business and industry to create a skilled and trained workforce and provide economic self-sufficiency for Alaskans.

Programs Administered by Workforce Services and Development

- Alaska Adult Education
- Alaska Career Ready - WorkKeys®
- Eligible Training Provider List
- Fidelity Bonding
- Foreign Labor Certification
- Rapid Response
- Reemployment Services and Reemployment Eligibility Assessment
- State Monitor Advocate for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Veterans' Employment and Training Services
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I – Career Support and Training Services
 - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Incumbent Worker Training Programs
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title III - Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Services
 - Employers, Job Seekers, Workers
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Alaska Adult Education

Alaska's Adult Education and Literacy programs provide students with basic skills development, high school equivalency diploma attainment, English language acquisition, workforce preparation, and post-secondary education transition. The program's goal is to identify each student's educational level, provide needed instruction, and facilitate a successful transition to postsecondary education, training, or employment.

Funding from the State of Alaska and U.S. Department of Education is received annually to support Regional Adult Education programs, provide adult education and literacy through an integrated correctional system, and fund an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program.

During FY 2022:

- \$2,560,000 was awarded to organizations to provide Adult Education and Literacy services.
- 2,240 students received instruction and 933 (42 percent) became full-time students.
 - *Full-time is defined as 12 and more hours of direct instruction.*
- The average student age was 33, with 11 percent under age 18.
- 30 percent of students were English language learners.
- 19 percent were residing in a correctional facility, community correctional program, or other institutional setting, a 9 percent increase from FY 2021.

The state Adult Education Office also provides oversight of Alaska's General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program and testing sites. Adult Education and GED have overlapping goals; however, the general principles, program guidance, and funding requirements remain separate. The GED is provided through GED Testing Service and 36 Pearson VUE test sites located around the state. The rigor of the assessments matches the skills needed for success in the workforce or college. Students must score at least 145 on each of the four content-area assessments to obtain their diploma. Individuals who pass mathematics, science, social studies, and reasoning through language arts receive a High School Equivalency Diploma issued by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

During Fiscal Year 2022:

- Alaska Pearson VUE testing sites served 807 in-person and remote test-takers.
 - 89 test-takers were served via remote testing.
 - 2,571 total GED test were taken.
 - 398 High School Equivalency Diplomas were awarded.
- Alaska achieved an 86 percent passing rate, versus the national average of 83 percent of individuals who passed all four tests.

In 2014, GED created College Ready and College Ready + Credit score levels to identify students scoring above the American Council on Education (ACE) Credit program recommended levels of demonstrated college-level skills and knowledge based on the GED test. With these scores, colleges or universities have the option to recognize the students' proficiency and allow them to take higher-level courses. Of all assessments taken in FY 2022, 22 percent of test-takers scored at the College Ready level and seven percent scored at the College Ready + Credit level.

Alaska Career Ready

With the goal of increasing employability of Alaskans, Alaska Career Ready (ACR) measures foundational workplace skills to evaluate work readiness, suggests occupations based on individual strengths, determines areas needing improvement, and provides referrals to the Adult Education program for assistance with skill improvement. The ACR also serves as a tool for employers, who can use National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) results to ensure that applicants demonstrate needed employment skills. The service reduces recruitment costs, speeds up time to full employee productivity by shortening training time, and minimizes turnover costs.

ACR uses nationally recognized assessment and coursework including WorkKeys curriculum, WorkKeys assessments, and the NCRC. They are all available to job seekers and employers at no cost through Alaska job centers, the Alaska Job Corps Center in Palmer, Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) in Seward, Nine Star Education & Employment Services in Anchorage, the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' Alaska Military Youth Academy on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Department of Corrections

facilities, and other sites. The WorkKeys curriculum is also available telephonically and electronically for clients who prefer or require remote delivery. In FY 2022, the Alaska Career Ready program provided 319 WorkKeys assessments to job seekers, and the students in the program earned 238 National Career Readiness Certificates, a fourfold increase over the prior year.

Eligible Training Provider List

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) emphasizes informed consumer choice, job-driven training, performance of training providers, and continual improvement in performance achievement and accountability. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which the division maintains in collaboration with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), is one of the principal tools WIOA programs use to achieve these objectives. The ETPL was established to assist job center career planners and participants to identify programs that have a proven ability to provide valuable training in today's high-growth industries and priority occupations. Training providers and their programs must be on the ETPL to receive WIOA funds for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, with 658 training programs from 77 approved providers on Alaska's ETPL.

Fidelity Bonding

The Fidelity Bonding program provides employers with no-cost, no-deductible protection against job-related theft or financial harm as an incentive to hire, retain, and promote justice-involved and other at-risk individuals, including those who are not otherwise bondable.

In FY 2020, the division began implementation of a four-year federal grant awarded in June 2019. The Fidelity Bonding Re-Entry Program allows for enhanced fidelity bonding opportunities for employers who hire individuals with criminal records, including ex-offenders recovering from opioid and other drug addictions. Opening avenues to employment for these individuals helps Alaska reduce recidivism and keep its communities safe and intact. All bonds issued in FY 2022 covered justice-involved individuals.

Foreign Labor Certification

The Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) program's mission is to fill job openings for temporary agricultural and non-agricultural jobs with Alaskans first and U.S. citizens second, to reduce the number of H-2A (temporary agriculture) and H-2B (temporary non-agricultural) visas issued to foreign workers for those jobs.

The program lead creates job orders through [AlaskaJobs](#), the division's online labor exchange system, and conducts outreach to the Anchorage Job Center's Seafood Office, other Alaska job centers, and additional organizations to recruit qualified applicants. The FLC program also refers qualified workers to employers, and provides quarterly and annual reporting to the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) in accordance with federal regulations. The OFLC determines the number of foreign worker visas issued based on information from Alaska and the recruitment report submitted by employers' representatives. The Alaska FLC program also inspects H-2A worker housing.

Most Alaska H-2B applications are for workers in the seafood industry, while H-2A applications are for workers in nursery, horticulture and hydroponic farming operations. In FY 2022, Alaska's FLC program processed 77 H-2B job orders and three H-2A job orders for a total of 8,019 positions that received temporary labor certification from the OFLC.

Rapid Response

Alaska's Rapid Response coordinator leads a team of specialists housed in four job centers to quickly respond to layoffs, business closures and natural disasters throughout the state. The team works with employers on layoff aversion strategies, provides and coordinates services to help workers facing layoff connect to new, well-paid jobs as soon as possible, and helps employers ensure a smooth transition. The Rapid Response team learns about layoffs, closures and disasters by scanning media, through tips from job center and Unemployment Insurance staff, calls from employers or employees, and from WARN notices submitted by employers which the team posts online. WARN notices, required by the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, are notices that businesses file to give employees 60 days' notice of a layoff, generally when the businesses have 50 or more employees.

Rapid Response informational meetings for workers are tailored to each layoff or closure, and can include

information on unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance, labor market information, on-the-job training, classroom training, Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits, and referral to basic and remedial education. While meetings are normally conducted in person at the worksite or local job center, staff also provided in-depth information by phone, email, and virtually. As Alaska's employers pivoted toward recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, only 15 employers required Rapid Response services, and filed three WARN notices for a total of 356 layoffs during FY 2022.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

The purpose of Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) is to reduce long-term unemployment of Alaska's workforce and decrease the number of weeks claimed against the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Trust Fund. After filing their first bi-weekly claim, up to 105 claimants including recently separated veterans and those deemed most likely to exhaust their benefits who live in close proximity to the intensive services offered at Anchorage Midtown, Matanuska-Susitna, Fairbanks, Kenai, Juneau, and Ketchikan job centers may be selected to participate in RESEA each week. Selected claimants must schedule a 90-minute individual RESEA session with a job center employment specialist and are provided the following reemployment services:

- A review of their job search efforts and evaluation for barriers to employment
- An overview of UI requirements and current labor market conditions
- An orientation to job center resources
- A review of claimants' continued UI benefit eligibility
- Development of an individual reemployment plan
- Participation in at least one reemployment activity identified as the most likely to result in rapid reemployment, such as resume, interviewing, or job search assistance
- Possible referral to support services, veterans services, and/or job training

The personalized, in-depth engagement of RESEA participation to assist unemployed workers in their job search efforts is mandatory for continued UI eligibility. In FY 2022, of 31,751 UI recipients across the state, 2,836 completed RESEA requirements. The RESEA program will add a second interview requirement in 2023 to increase the number of UI claimants returning to work as they receive additional job center staff assistance.

State Monitor Advocate

The Monitor Advocate System is a federal and state monitoring system that ensures migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) have equitable access to career services, skill development, and workforce protections to improve their living and working conditions. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) conducts outreach to MSFWs at their work, living, and gathering places; monitors job center services provided to MSFWs; facilitates the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System to help resolve labor-related complaints; and promotes the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. workers, which connects job seekers with agriculture employers who need workers. Alaska's agriculture primarily includes greenhouse and nursery work, tree farming, and crops such as hay, potatoes, and barley, while cannabis cultivation and harvesting are not covered under this federally funded program. The MSFW definition also includes workers in aquaculture, which is limited to fish hatcheries, aquatic plants like kelp and seaweed, and shellfish such as oysters, mussels, clams, and scallops.

Trade Adjustment Assistance

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides training and employment services to workers who have been laid off or have faced a reduction in hours or pay due to the impact of international trade with U.S. trading partners, including competition from imported goods or work outsourced to a different country. The program conducts outreach to identify potential trade-affected worker groups, and facilitates filing of TAA petitions with the U.S. Department of Labor for certification. At the time a petition is filed, the TAA program coordinates with stakeholders to provide early intervention to workers for Rapid Response, reemployment, and career services.

TAA benefits for eligible individuals include training and training-related services and support, job search and relocation allowances, weekly income support when unemployment insurance is exhausted, and a wage subsidy for workers who are age 50 and older to help bridge the salary gap between old and new employment. In Alaska, most workers eligible for TAA benefits have worked in the petroleum, timber, and fishing industries. While the Trade program awaits reauthorization by Congress expected during 2023 for new petitions, the program continues to serve Alaskans who were workers laid off or threatened with layoff under petitions from all states certified prior to June 30, 2022. Alaska currently has two active petitions.

Veterans Employment and Training Services

Alaska is home to over 65,200 veterans who make up 12.2 percent of the state's adult population, the highest per capita veteran population in the nation. Veterans receive priority for services in all job centers, and veterans and eligible spouses are offered specialized programs and opportunities to maximize training potential, employment, and retention. While all job center staff receive training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, specialized staff including four Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and a Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) are funded through the federal Jobs for Veterans Statewide Grant (JVSG) to provide individualized career and training services to veterans and their eligible spouses with significant barriers to employment, and to help employers hire veterans to fill their workforce needs.

Anchorage Midtown, Mat-Su, and Fairbanks job centers, areas with Alaska's highest veteran populations, house the DVOP specialists. They provide in-depth interviewing and comprehensive assessments to identify employment goals, short-term goals, and the appropriate services that will enable veterans to meet them. Specialists also conduct outreach in places such as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical and veteran centers, homeless shelters, civic and service organizations, veterans' job fairs, and military installations, as well as participating in one- to three-day Veterans Stand Down events in Anchorage and Fairbanks where homeless veterans can find supplies and services ranging from food, shelter and clothing to health screenings and Veteran Administration Social Security benefit counseling.

The LVER, based in the Anchorage Midtown Job Center, establishes relationships with employers to help facilitate the placement of veterans in meaningful employment. This position acts as a bridge between employers and veterans to recruit, hire, promote, and retain veterans. In addition, the LVER coordinates with unions, apprenticeship programs, and businesses to promote and secure credentialing and licensing opportunities along with other employment and training programs for veterans. The LVER also provides education to employers on their responsibilities in the program, such as letting federal contractors know when they want to or need to recruit qualified veterans. Finally, the LVER coordinates the annual Veterans and Military Spouses Job Fair, which is one of the largest in Alaska. Numerous employers discover and recruit valuable military talent who are highly beneficial and profitable to their business or agency at this job fair every year.

The annual Veterans and Military Spouses Job Fair was held in-person in November 2021. Approximately 90 employers, education, training, and apprenticeship providers attended the event, which served over 600 participants. During FY 2022, a total of 1,142 veterans received 4,947 staff-assisted services through Alaska's Veterans Employment and Training Services program.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I Programs

Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers in one-stop job centers provide support for Alaska's WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Incumbent Worker, and National Dislocated Worker Grant programs to transition qualified individuals into high-wage, high-growth, and demand-driven jobs to ensure self-sufficiency and success. CSTS staff work with participants to determine the appropriate set of goals, programs, and assistance to address individual needs via comprehensive assessments, career evaluation, and labor market analysis to develop an individual employment plan and provide referrals for additional resources. Eligible individuals are co-enrolled in WIOA programs to maximize available resources, and may receive pre-vocational, vocational, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, on-the-job, and incumbent worker training, as well as financial support to help meet costs of housing, transportation, tools, clothing, books, and supplies while participating in program services.

Across all titles, WIOA programs prioritize special populations, with a focus on supporting veterans, their eligible spouses, and other displaced homemakers; individuals with barriers to employment including, but not limited to, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster care, long-term unemployed, basic skills deficient individuals; and other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment. Job center staff also collaborate with Registered Apprenticeship programs to promote and enhance the use of apprenticeships.

Adult Program

The WIOA Adult program improves the quality of the adult workforce, reduces welfare dependency, and enhances the productivity and competitiveness of Alaska's workforce. Staff work with individuals age 18 or older in need of workforce services, training or retraining to secure unsubsidized employment. The program provides adults with workforce preparation, career services, training services, and job placement assistance

needed to increase occupational skills, obtain industry-recognized credentials, and secure a good job that provides earnings that lead to self-sufficiency.

In FY 2022, case managers actively worked with 767 participants, 435 of whom were new registrants, while 496 participants exited the program.

Dislocated Worker Program

The WIOA Dislocated Worker Program provides employment and training services to workers who have been laid off, have received a notice of layoff or cannot continue in their employment without additional training or certifications, the spouses of relocated active military service members, and displaced homemakers who have relied on the income of another family member and no longer receive that support. Self-employed individuals who have experienced income reduction or were compelled to close their business due to economic conditions in their community or natural disaster may also be dislocated workers. The program enhances the quality, productivity, and competitiveness of Alaska's workforce while meeting the needs of Alaska's employers. In FY 2022, 197 individuals participated in the dislocated worker program. Of those, 113 were new registrants, while 162 exited the program.

Incumbent Worker Training

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program is designed to increase the productivity, profitability, competitiveness and stability of businesses by assisting employees to acquire the skills and certifications they need to advance in their current company or agency, allowing businesses to grow to fit the changing demands and direction of their industries while averting layoffs and increasing employee retention. Employees, in turn, not only keep their jobs with increased chances for promotion, but can gain industry-recognized transportable credentials and transferable skills to be more competitive in the workforce. Employers help with the cost of training by paying their employees' wages during the training period or covering in-kind expenses, and, most importantly, committing to retaining employees who successfully complete training. The program is flexible regarding the types of training it can support and allows training providers to gear instruction to meet the employers' specific workforce needs.

During FY 2022, the program assisted two employers with incumbent worker training for five employees, with plans to increase focus on this program during 2023.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

Collectively known as the [Alaska Job Center Network](#) (AJCN), Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services are delivered through 14 Alaska job centers across the state. The AJCN collaborates with multiple partner agencies to provide universal access and services to employers, job seekers, and workers to meet their employment and training needs under one roof in central, accessible locations. Labor exchange services include job search assistance, job referral, job placement, reemployment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services for employers. The services are delivered via self-service, facilitated self-help, or with staff assistance.

[AlaskaJobs](#) is at the center of the division's employment and training services. Implemented in June 2020, AlaskaJobs is an online job bank, labor exchange, and case management system which co-locates data from the division's employment and training programs and supports common WIOA participant federal reporting. The system allows individuals to enter core information into one platform when applying for multiple jobs, programs and benefits, and is linked via a single myAlaska sign-on to the Unemployment Insurance program. AlaskaJobs also increases self-service options for all external users, and is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week, allowing staff the ability to provide improved services to customers.

Job center staff assist job seekers by providing help with AlaskaJobs, conducting assessments to determine skill levels and abilities, administering aptitude testing, and providing career guidance. Regular workshops include job seeking tips, resume and cover letter writing, job interviewing skills, and employment after incarceration. Free annual IRS-certified tax services provided through My Free Tax Initiative are also available. When appropriate, job center staff provide referrals to partner agencies, veterans' representatives, and WIOA Title IB programs.

Job Center Locations

Anchorage Midtown

3301 Eagle St., Ste. 101
Anchorage, AK 99503

Juneau

10002 Glacier Hwy., Ste. 100
Juneau, AK 99811-5514

Peninsula (Kenai)

11312 Kenai Spur Hwy., Ste. 2
Kenai, AK 99611

Anchorage Muldoon

1251 Muldoon Road, Ste. 101
Anchorage, AK 99504

Ketchikan

2030 Sea Level Drive, Ste. 220
Ketchikan, AK 99901-6073

Sitka

304 Lake St. Room 101
Sitka, AK 99835-7563

Bristol Bay (Dillingham)

527 Seward St., Rm. 101
Dillingham, AK 99576-1149

Kodiak

211 Mission Road, Ste. 103
Kodiak, AK 99615-6315

Valdez

213 Meals Ave., Room 22
Valdez, AK 99686-0590

Fairbanks

675 Seventh Ave., Station B
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4531

Mat-Su

877 Commercial Drive
Wasilla, AK 99654-6937

YK Delta (Bethel)

460 Ridgecrest Drive, Suite 112
Bethel, AK 99559-1607

Homer

3670 Lake St., Ste. 300
Homer, AK 99603-7655

Nome

214 Front St., Ste. 320
Nome, AK 99762-0280

Job center staff are also trained to serve employers, with dedicated Business Connection representatives at the state's five largest job centers. Alaska's approach to serving employers emphasizes proactive, staff-initiated outreach designed to establish long-term relationships to meet employers' current and future employment and training needs. Staff assist employers with special recruitments, ensure job applicant suitability, conduct job fairs, make referrals for Incumbent Worker Training, and provide information that helps employers comply with state and federal laws. The AJCN also houses apprenticeship specialists who support employers in sponsoring Registered Apprenticeship programs, which allow employers to establish their own standards of proficiency while developing a skilled, local, and loyal workforce. Job centers are often the first line for information about labor market conditions and employer activity, including layoffs and business closures. Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance staff foster a statewide team approach to helping employers and workers throughout a layoff, closure or dislocation process. Both job centers and AlaskaJobs are also

sources for information on hiring incentives such as on-the-job training, wage reimbursement, Fidelity Bonding for at-risk job seekers, the Alaska Veteran Hire Tax Credit, and Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC).

FY 2022 Job Center Activity

	Job Center Visits	Active Registrations AlaskaJobs Veterans Only	Active Registrations AlaskaJobs	Job Orders	Job Openings	Job Referrals
Anchorage Midtown	6,448	387	4,996	6,763	16,887	6,258
Anchorage Muldoon	425	141	1,731	612	3,725	1,460
Bristol Bay	6	8	146	224	343	43
Fairbanks	1,290	244	2,223	2,325	2,824	1,954
Homer	27	32	393	1,640	1,676	906
Juneau	1,004	54	843	4,151	7,065	1,587
Ketchikan	489	35	424	759	1,647	359
Kodiak	453	7	320	818	947	287
Mat - Su	2,585	231	2,474	1,294	2,204	1,986
Nome	134	12	634	1,216	1,314	303
Kenai Peninsula	2,655	144	1,533	2,327	3,767	2,421
Sitka	208	9	137	671	759	194
Valdez	66	26	180	372	776	134
YK Delta	160	27	592	1,290	1,659	221

During FY 2022, the division's employment and training staff have continued to use best practices in virtual and distance delivery developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to expand access to rural areas and for job seekers, workers, and employers who prefer virtual services, while remaining open for in-person assistance. In FY 2022, the number of job seekers who received staff-assisted services in the job centers increased. AlaskaJobs also saw strong use by job seekers, with nearly half of users accessing AlaskaJobs from a mobile phone or device.

AJCN highlights and key accomplishments for FY 2022:

- 15,410 job seekers received 56,014 staff-assisted services
- 19,155 job seekers received 144,250 instances of self-service through AlaskaJobs
- An average of 41,910 users per quarter accessed AlaskaJobs for an average of 104,924 sessions each quarter
- 1,865 employers placed 26,155 job orders in AlaskaJobs, representing 52,693 job openings that resulted in 16,581 job referrals and 37,185 resume views. Job orders from external sources resulted in 7,525 self-service referrals.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program incentivizes employers to hire job seekers who experience obstacles to employment. Eligibility determinations are conducted by program staff and AlaskaJobs interfaces, resulting in certifications issued to employers who claim tax credits through the Internal Revenue Service. The credit amount is calculated by analyzing first year earnings, hours worked, and the new employee's certified target group. Federally determined target groups include:

- Qualified individuals who are a member of a family who received Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Qualified Veterans
- Ex-felons
- Designated Community Residents living in Empowerment Zones or Rural Renewal Counties (geographic areas characterized by high levels of poverty and economic distress)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Referrals
- Recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- Qualified Long-Term Unemployment recipients
- Summer Youth Employees
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients

In FY 2022, the Alaska WOTC program processed 23,087 requests and issued a record 8,745 certifications for \$25,737,000 in potential employer tax credits.

Unemployment Insurance

Clifford Napier, Assistant Director

Overview

The Alaska Unemployment Insurance (UI) program provides partial wage replacement, with full benefits for insured workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own and are actively seeking reemployment. UI operations are comprised of benefit eligibility determinations, payments, the appeals system, employer wage reporting and tax collection, and trust fund management.

To pay benefits, the UI program assesses and collects employer and employee taxes which are deposited into the UI Trust Fund, with Alaska as one of three states where employees also contribute. The program provides a convenient and efficient means for claimants to apply for UI benefits during periods of unemployment and protects the UI Trust Fund by preventing and recovering UI benefit overpayments.

Federal funding for administration of the UI program consists of administrative funds returned to states through a system largely dependent on workload. The Administrative Grant is funded through the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) and may only be used to administer the state's UI program. For the Federal FY 2022, Alaska received \$22,146,950.

UI Performance Management

Federal mandates stipulate the inclusion of two performance-tracking categories. The first is Core Measures, which encompasses oversight on key performance areas representative of the health of the entire UI system. These measure key activities based on uniform national Acceptable Levels of Performance (ALP). The second category is Management Information, which facilitates the analysis of performance and assists in planning corrective activities when necessary. Management Information tracks state performance on subsets of core measures and ancillary activities such as interstate and federal programs. The State Quality Service Plans (SQSP) process addresses performance deficiencies. The SQSP serves as the performance and grant document through which states receive administrative funding.

Types of UI Benefits

Regular UI – State weekly benefits are paid to individuals who have worked in covered employment, earned enough wage credits to qualify, and have met weekly eligibility criteria. The weekly benefit amount is based on wages earned during four calendar quarters. The duration of benefits can range from 16-26 weeks, depending on how wages are disbursed throughout the quarters.

Interstate Benefit Program (IBP) – The program provides a method of payment for unemployed individuals who have qualifying employment and wages, yet could be deprived of their UI benefits due to their absence from the state in which their wages were earned. Individuals who have worked in Alaska and subsequently moved outside the state may receive Alaska UI benefits under the Interstate Agreement.

Unemployment Compensation for Federal Civilian Employees (UCFE) – Individuals separated from civilian employment with the federal government may qualify for UI. The federal government maintains its own trust fund, the Federal Employees Compensation Account (FECA), to fund UCFE benefits for federal employees. The state administers this program under Title 5 Chapter 85 United States Code and 20 CFR part 609.

Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Military Personnel (UCX) – Individuals who have served on active military duty in the last 18 months may be eligible for UI. UI benefits are determined based on the ex-service member's DD214. UCX benefits are also paid from FECA rather than Alaska's UI Trust Fund.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) – If an individual is unemployed because of a disaster, the individual may be eligible for up to 26 weeks of disaster unemployment assistance. Once the federal government declares a major disaster and offers individual assistance, the state DUA Coordinator and Federal Emergency Management Agency personnel issue DUA information to affected individuals in the designated areas. The last time the federal government declared a major disaster and offered individual assistance was for the Southcentral Alaska earthquake in the winter of 2018.

State Extended Benefits (EB) – The EB program pays additional benefits when individuals have

exhausted all of their regular UI. Costs for the program are split equally between the state and federal governments. In Alaska, these additional benefits are triggered during periods of high unemployment, when the Insured Unemployment Rate (IUR) reaches six percent or higher. Once generated, the state is federally mandated to trigger on a minimum of 13 weeks of extended benefits.

Two formulas control when a state can pay EB:

- The IUR exceeds 120 percent of the previous three-month average for the preceding two calendar years, or if the IUR rises above six percent.
- The total unemployment rate (TUR) exceeds 110 percent of the previous three-month average for the preceding two calendar years and the TUR rises above 6.5 percent. Furthermore, if the TUR reaches an eight percent average for three months, the state reaches a High Unemployment Period (HUP), which changes the EB amount from 50 percent to 80 percent of regular benefits for up to an additional seven weeks. Alaska last paid HUP in SFY 2021 due to business shutdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UI Organizational Overview

With offices located in Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Kenai and Wasilla, the UI program consists of eight units.

Appeal Tribunal

Any determination that affects a claimant's right to benefits or an employer's tax may be appealed. As mandated under AS 23.20.410-470, the Appeal Tribunal provides due process hearings and issues decisions in contested UI benefit and tax cases. The tribunal conducts fair, impartial de novo hearings on determinations issued by the agency, with parties presenting testimony and evidence. The second level of the program affords a commissioner review in which a senior hearing officer examines the tribunal level record and prepares a proposed decision for the commissioner. Federal Performance Standards require that at least 60 percent of lower authority appeal determinations be issued within 30 days of filing, and at least 80 percent within 45 days. The Appeals Unit issued 1,937 lower authority decisions and 182 higher authority decisions during FY 2022.

Benefit Payment Control (BPC)

Benefit Payment Control (BPC) is a federally mandated program with a mission to protect the integrity of the UI Trust Fund by preventing, detecting, and recovering overpaid UI benefits. The program consists of two units: Audit and Recovery, and Fraud Investigations.

Audit and Recovery oversees quarterly wage audits and runs cross-matches on weekly UI claims against the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) to detect newly hired workers who continue to file for UI and do not report earnings. This crossmatch has proven to be extremely successful in detecting claimants that have returned to work and continue to file. This unit also performs collection activities, which includes garnishment of Permanent Fund Dividends.

Detected in FY 2022	
Non-fraud overpayments	\$18,338,096
Fraud overpayments	\$2,151,588
Fraud penalties	\$1,113,011
Total	\$21,602,695
Recovered in FY 2022	
Non-fraud overpayments	\$8,621,273
Fraud overpayments	\$1,758,336
Fraud Penalties	\$680,954
Total	\$11,060,563

The Fraud Investigations Unit detects and investigates fraud found in unreported wages and work, job termination, job refusal, inability or unavailability to work, false claims for dependent allowance, check forgeries, and identity theft. Based on findings, investigators calculate benefit overpayments and fraud penalties. Investigators may also prepare fraud cases for criminal prosecution.

Alaska began receiving offsets from claimants' federal income tax returns for overpaid benefits utilizing the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) in 2017. In FY 2022, Alaska collected \$1,063,311.65, of which 30 percent of the claimants offset was returned to the UI Trust Fund, and the remaining 70 percent deposited in Alaska's general fund.

Claim Centers

There are UI claim centers in Anchorage, Juneau, and Fairbanks. Claim center staff obtain claim and eligibility information by telephone and the internet. Callers use a self-directing number to contact a claim center or file online through myAlaska. Unemployed workers can use the internet to establish a new claim, reopen an existing claim, and file for biweekly benefits.

UI claim center staff review and gather information from the claimant and any interested parties to determine if there are any conditions or circumstances that could result in the denial of benefits as required by eligibility and disqualification provisions of Alaska law and defined policy. Once the review is complete, a written determination is issued to the claimant, and, if applicable, the claimant's last employer.

FY 2022 Total UI benefits paid	\$78,717,237
Total initial claims processed	112,816
Calls received in UI claim centers	125,374
Alaskans who received UI benefits	36,535
Average weekly amount	\$281
Total number of weeks filed	504,738
Total determinations written and issued	52,706

Data Processing Liaison (DPL)

DPL supports systems that are critical to UI business services through analysis and testing of computer and database processes. DPL works directly with the department's Data Processing unit and other units in the UI program to implement changes and updates to ensure department standards in design and functionality.

Quality Control (QC)

The UI Integrity Task Force meets bi-monthly to identify the main causes of overpayment and develop strategies to reduce the improper payment rate. This group and is committed to continue to reduce Alaska's improper payment rate. The UI Benefit Accuracy Measurement (BAM) program is a federally required diagnostic tool to measure the accuracy of UI claims and identify opportunities for improvements in the UI program. Each week, UI claims are randomly selected and auditors are systematically assigned cases. Investigations normally include contacting claimants and employers, examining records both within and outside the agency, and determining whether benefits were properly paid or denied. The BAM program adheres to Improper Payment Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA) guidelines to ensure Alaska remains in compliance and that the improper payment rate does not exceed 10 percent. According to most recent Calendar Year 2022 data, Alaska's improper payment rate was 11.429 percent. The following were identified as the primary reasons for improper payment of benefits:

- Benefit year earnings – Claimants not reporting or incorrectly reporting weekly earnings
- Work searches – No work search performed and not enough information available to verify work search
- Separation Issues – Claimants not reporting correct last employer, incorrect separation reason, and incorrect disqualification dates

Support

UI Support provides support service functions to ensure prompt and proper payment of UI benefits and works with claim centers to pay special claims using federal and out-of-state wages. The unit also maintains UI wage records and ensures prompt and accurate reviews of wage and benefit eligibility issues, billing of participating employers, and billing and reimbursement of participating states.

Tax

FY 2022 Tax Activity

Deposited in the UI Trust Account	\$156,607,356
Employer Contributions	\$134,400,154
Employee Contributions	\$22,207,205
Transferred to TVEP	\$13,653,864
Transferred to STEP	\$8,533,667
Contribution reports processed	79,241
Employers registered in Alaska (74% have fewer than 10 emp.)	20,384
Employer audits	45
Amended	25
Misclassified workers discovered	58
Additional contributions collected	\$22,586
Contributions refunded	\$92,299

Alaska's UI program is based on an insurance model, under which the program must collect sufficient premiums to fund payments. UI Tax collects contributions from employers and employees to finance the UI Trust Fund from which UI benefits are paid. Alaska uses a "payroll decline" method to establish individual employer UI tax rates. Employer and employee taxes are submitted each quarter and deposited in the Alaska account of the Federal UI Trust Fund. Taxes in the UI Trust Fund are only used to pay UI benefits. Portions of employee tax contributions are also set aside for the State Training and Employment Program (STEP) and Alaska Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) to fund technical and vocational training. State law

specifies the entities and allocation of these funds. This system has proven effective, and the Trust Fund has remained solvent and able to weather periods of high unemployment.

Technical

The Technical Unit provides support to the UI program in areas of federal and state compliance, legislation and regulation, planning, analysis, project management, training, service delivery, corrective action, and evaluation of program improvements. The unit supports the development and implementation of claim center staff training as well as developing and updating all UI program resource materials.

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund FY 2022 Income

UI Tax Contributions

Total UI Tax Contributions	\$156,607,356
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Statutory Transfers from Employee Contributions	
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Alaska Technical and Vocational Education Program	(13,653,864)
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State Training and Employment Program	(8,533,667)
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Total Statutory Transfers	(22,187,531)
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Net Contributions to the UI Trust Fund

\$134,419,827

Reimbursements

Federal Government	
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Emergency Unemployment Compensation	(52,985)
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Federal Government Employees	1,869,458
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Extended Benefits	5,055,909
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Military Employees	228,748
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Total Federal Government	7,101,130
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State of Alaska	2,178,551
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Local Alaska Governments	1,339,919
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Other States – Interstate Claims	651,983
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Nonprofit Organizations	1,273,021
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Total Reimbursements	12,544,604
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Other

Interest Earnings	6,061,524
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Total Other	6,061,524
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Total Income	\$153,025,955
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FY 2022 UI Benefits Paid

State Regular	\$78,717,237
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