

**DIVISION OF
EMPLOYMENT
AND TRAINING
SERVICES**



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



**RESOURCE
BOOK
FY 2023**

Available online:
labor.alaska.gov/dets

A Note from the Director

The Alaska Division of Employment and Training Services Resource Book for Fiscal Year 2023 provides an overview of programs administered by the division for the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

Its content demonstrates each division employee's commitment to carry out our mission through established core values by working with individuals, employers, unions, and other industry partners to provide labor exchange, employment, training, and supportive services, as well as 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 has 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,

Paloma Harbour, Director
Division of Employment and Training Services

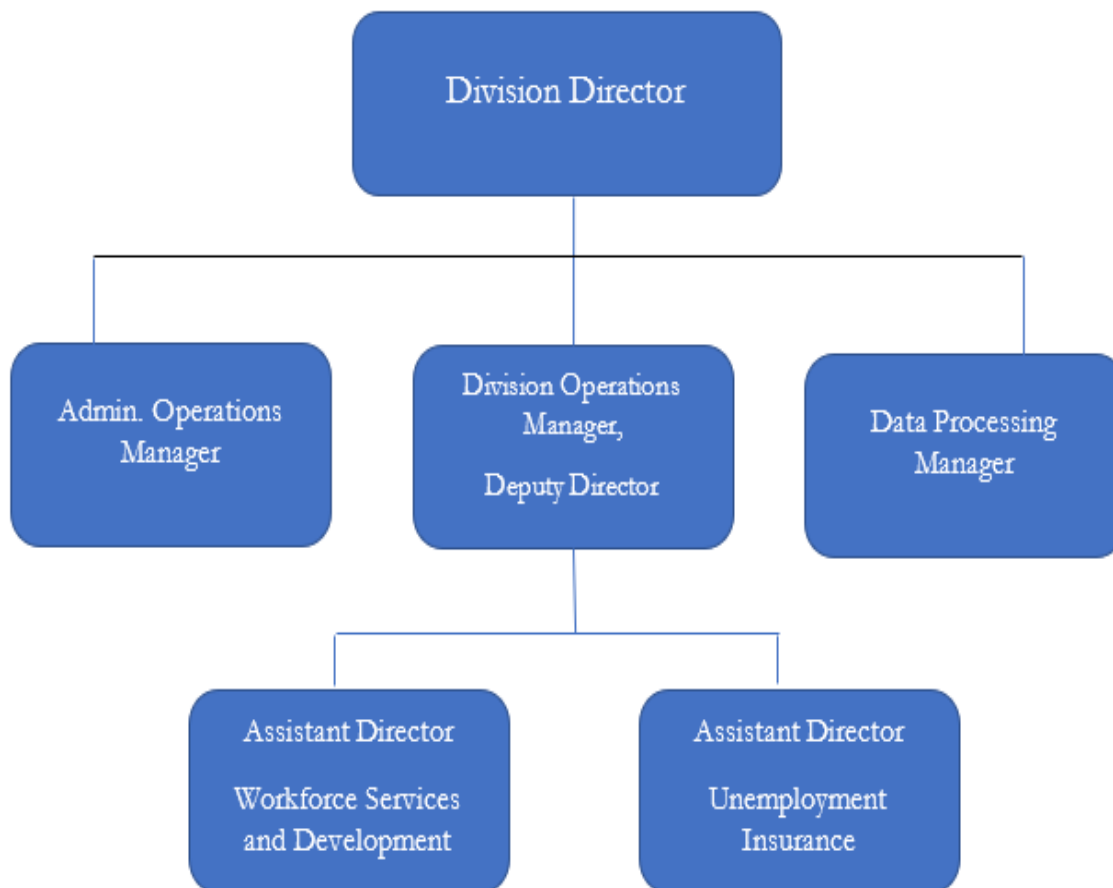
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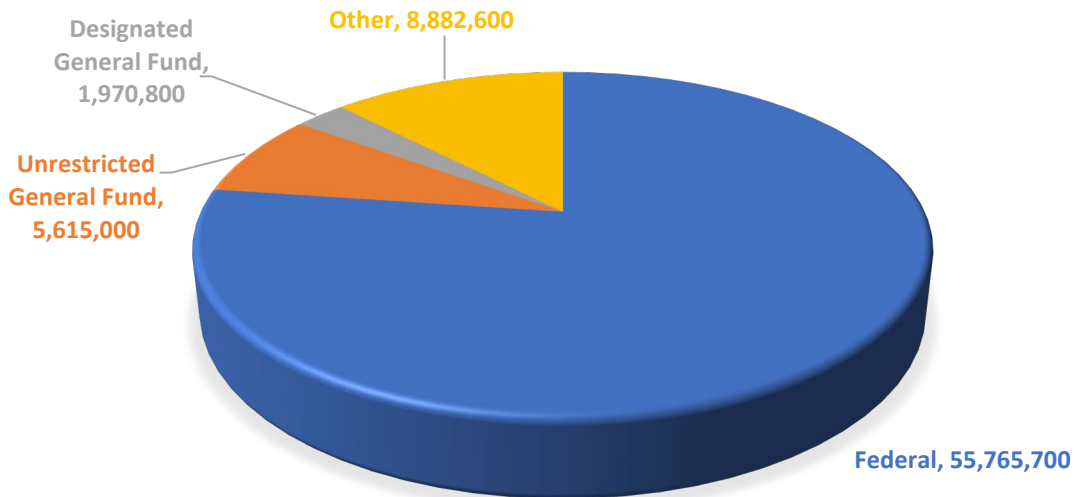
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Division of Employment and Training Services Organization, Funding Allocation, and Component Costs

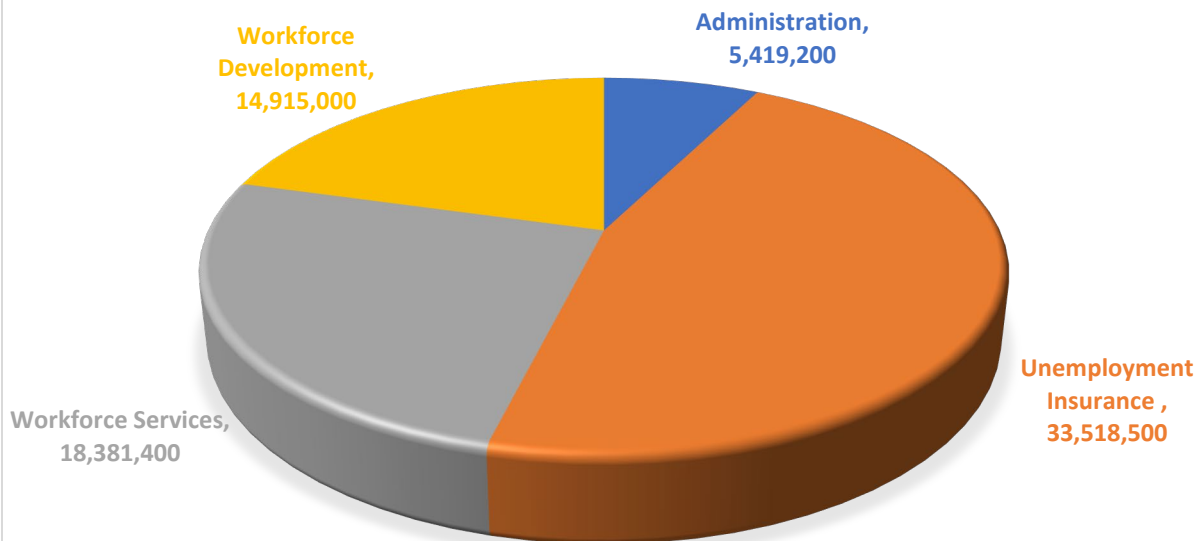
Program Organization



DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES **SFY 2023 BUDGET** **FEDERAL FUNDS VS. GENERAL AND OTHER FUNDS**



DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICES **COST PER COMPONENT COSTS**



Administration Unit

Nic Dehart, 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

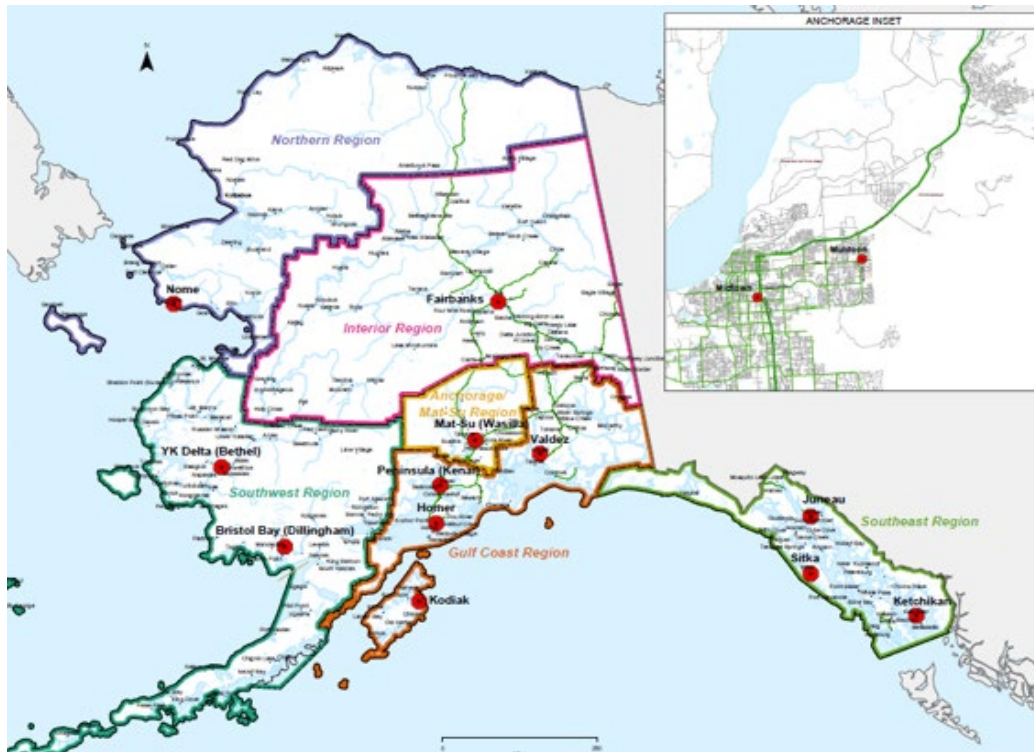
Overview

The Workforce Services and Development (WSD) component administers labor exchange, employment, and training programs delivered through the AlaskaJobs labor exchange system, 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 WSD 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

- The Alaska Job Center Network
- Reemployment Services and Reemployment Eligibility Assessment
- Veterans' Employment and Training Services
- Alaska Adult Education
- Alaska Career Ready - WorkKeys®
- State Monitor Advocate and Complaint System
- Foreign Labor Certification
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Fidelity Bonding
- Career Support and Training Services
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Incumbent Worker Training Programs
- Eligible Training Provider List
- Rapid Response
- Trade Adjustment Assistance

The Alaska Job Center Network: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services



Alaska Job Center Network

Collectively known as the [Alaska Job Center Network](#) (AJCN), Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title III Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services are delivered through 14 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 and 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 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 Resource Room 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 workshop topics 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 Career Support and Training Services for WIOA Title IB, apprenticeship, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and state grant programs.

Job center staff also 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, coordinate 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 of 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 (WOTC) program. The Anchorage Midtown job center also houses the Seafood Office to provide industry-specific services to employers and job seekers.

During FY 2023, division staff have continued to use best practices in virtual and distance delivery developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to expand access in rural areas and for job seekers, workers, and employers who prefer virtual services, while remaining open for in-person assistance. Commensurate with continued pandemic recovery, decreased

unemployment rates, and a prolonged virtual one-stop system outage experienced by many state and local board users across the country including Alaska for several weeks in July 2022, fewer Alaskan job seekers sought Wagner-Peyser services in FY 2023 than 2022, while job center visits and AlaskaJobs access increased. Nearly 46 percent of users accessed AlaskaJobs from a mobile phone or device.

FY 2023 Job Center Activity Snapshot

	Job Center Visits	Veterans Served by Job Center	Individuals Served by Job Center	Internal Job Orders	Job Openings	Job Referrals
Anchorage Midtown	7,705	304	6,395	7,635	22,021	4,781
Anchorage Muldoon	1,419	107	2,268	1,822	2,761	329
Bristol Bay	42	2	101	127	343	12
Fairbanks	4,133	167	2,940	2,422	4,056	1,108
Homer	199	24	578	1,298	1,315	698
Juneau	1,170	38	1,292	4,666	5,504	1,013
Ketchikan	707	17	604	608	963	320
Kodiak	1,178	8	559	633	736	229
Mat - Su	3,783	184	3,794	1,401	2,276	1,146
Nome	216	8	1,463	908	1,099	188
Kenai Peninsula	3,510	104	2,594	2,594	3,013	2,031
Sitka	215	1	228	637	10,648	175
Valdez	173	6	206	270	358	85
YK Delta	1441	3	632	679	925	135

AJCN highlights and key accomplishments for FY 2023:

- 12,241 job seekers received 52,348 staff-assisted services
- 12,922 job seekers received 134,983 self-services through AlaskaJobs
- An average of 54,785 users per quarter accessed AlaskaJobs for an average of 125,713 sessions each quarter
- 1,682 approved employers placed 25,740 orders in AlaskaJobs, representing 56,018 job openings that resulted in 12,250 job referrals and 49,783 resume views. Job orders from external sources resulted in 9,402 self-service referrals.

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	

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

An essential function of the AJCN, 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 81 UI claimants may be selected each week to participate in RESEA. This will include recently separated veterans and those deemed most likely to exhaust their benefits who live within 50 road miles to the Anchorage Midtown, Matanuska-Susitna, Fairbanks, Kenai, Juneau, and Ketchikan job centers. Selected claimants must schedule a 60 – 90-minute individual RESEA session with a job center employment specialist where they 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 claimant's 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 2023, of 18,940 UI recipients across the state, 4,035 participated in RESEA with 2,461 completing RESEA requirements. The RESEA program will add a second interview requirement in FY2024 to increase the number of UI claimants returning to work as they receive additional job center staff assistance. The second RESEA intervention will include more intense services, which may include career guidance/planning, aptitude testing and job referral/placement assistance to a job in AlaskaJobs.

Veterans Employment and Training Services

Alaska is home to over 62,744 veterans who make up 11.8 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. Using a team approach to providing services to veterans, all job center staff receive training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that impacts veteran priority, preference, and employability. When job seekers indicate veteran status upon initial entry to a job center, they are also evaluated for eligible Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs). The Jobs for Veterans Statewide Grant (JVSG) funds Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and a Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). JVSG staff 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 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 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 2022. Approximately 78 employers, education, training, and apprenticeship providers attended the event, which served over 250 participants. During FY 2023, a total of 657 veterans received 2,199 staff-assisted services through Alaska's Veterans Employment and Training Services program.

[Alaska Adult Education](#)

Alaska's Adult Education and Literacy (AAE) program provides 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.

The AAE program receives annual funding from the State of Alaska and U.S. Department of Education 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 2023:

- \$2,460,000 was awarded to organizations to provide Adult Education and Literacy services.
- 2,434 students received instruction and 1,255 (51 percent) became full-time students.
 - *Full-time is defined as 12 and more hours of direct instruction.*
- The average student age was 36, with 8 percent under age 18.
- 51 percent of students were English language learners, a 21 percent increase from FY 2022.
- 14 percent resided in a correctional facility, community correctional program, or other institutional setting, a five percent decrease from FY 2022.

The 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 FY 2023, Alaska Pearson VUE testing sites served 720 in-person and 88 remote test-takers for 2,632 total GED tests, for which 400 High School Equivalency Diplomas were awarded. Alaska achieved an 83 percent passing rate, versus the national average of 75 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's 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, 18 percent of Alaska's test-takers scored at the College Ready level and seven percent scored at the College Ready + Credit level.

Alaska Career Ready - WorkKeys©

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.

Alaska Career Ready uses nationally recognized assessment and coursework including the WorkKeys curriculum, WorkKeys assessments, and NCRCs. 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 2023, the Alaska Career Ready program provided 1,123 WorkKeys assessments to job seekers who earned 305 National Career Readiness Certificates, a nearly fourfold increase in testers and a 28 percent increase in NCRCs earned over the prior year.

State Monitor Advocate and Complaint System

Alaska's agriculture primarily includes greenhouse and nursery work, tree farming, and crops such as hay, potatoes, and barley. Alaska's aquaculture includes fish hatcheries, as well as the farming of aquatic plants like kelp and seaweed, and shellfish such as oysters, mussels, clams, and scallops. The Monitor Advocate System is a federal and state monitoring system that ensures migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) in agriculture and aquaculture jobs have equitable access to career services, skill development, and workforce protections to improve

their living and working conditions.

Alaska's State Monitor Advocate (SMA) conducts outreach and monitors MSFW outreach conducted by job center staff at MSFWs' work, living, and gathering places. The SMA also facilitates the Employment Service and Employment-Related Law Complaint System to help resolve all labor-related complaints, and promotes the Agricultural Recruitment System for U.S. workers, which connects job seekers with agriculture employers who need workers. The SMA provides technical assistance and training to job center staff on MSFW outreach as well as processing and handling complaints and violations, and works with the Foreign Labor Certification program to ensure temporary foreign agricultural labor H-2A job order compliance.

Foreign Labor Certification

Alaska's 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 need for H-2A (temporary agriculture) and H-2B (temporary non-agricultural) visas issued to foreign workers for those jobs, and ensure that U.S. workers are provided with equal pay and benefits in positions offered to foreign workers.

The Foreign Labor Certification coordinator manages job orders in [AlaskaJobs](#), provides input and monitors visa application status in the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) online 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 provides resources and refers qualified workers to employers, and submits quarterly and annual reporting to 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 performs H-2A pre-certification housing inspections.

Most Alaska H-2B applications are for workers in the seafood and retail industries, while H-2A applications are for workers in nursery, horticulture and hydroponic farming operations. In FY 2023, Alaska's FLC program processed 145 job orders for 64 employers at 85 worksites with 11,265 total positions, including 88 H-2B job orders and four H-2A job orders for a total of 5,175 positions that received temporary labor certification from the OFLC.

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 from 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 2023, the Alaska WOTC program issued 1,948 certifications \$5,481,400 in potential employer tax credits.

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 intact and safe. Bonds

purchased with grant funds do not expire, and may be issued beyond the program period. During FY 2023, 28 Fidelity Bonds totaling \$140,000 were issued, all covering justice-involved individuals.

Career Support and Training Services - WIOA Title I and Alaska Grant 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, Registered Apprenticeships, the Trade Adjustment Assistance program, and Alaska's State Training and Employment Program (STEP), 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 and state 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.

WIOA 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 2023, case managers worked with 667 Adult participants, 432 of whom were new registrants, while 462 participants exited the program.

WIOA 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; 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 2023, 251 individuals participated in the dislocated worker program. Of those, 203 were new registrants, while 115 exited the program.

WIOA 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, thus allowing businesses to meet the changing demands 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 2023, the Incumbent Worker Training program assisted 10 employers to train 20 incumbent workers in the ground and air transportation, healthcare, and technology industries.

Eligible Training Provider List

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 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 706 training programs from 74 approved providers on Alaska's ETPL as of June 30, 2023.

Rapid Response

Alaska's Rapid Response coordinator works with a team of specialists housed in job centers throughout the state to provide customized strategies, support, and assistance to businesses, communities, families, and individuals to avoid or minimize the impact of job loss and business closures. The Rapid Response team learns about layoffs, closures and disasters via workers filing unemployment insurance claims, direct contact from impacted employers and workers, media announcements, fluctuations in employer tax contributions, and Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices. WARN notices are written announcements filed by employers to give employees 60 days' notice of a layoff, generally when the businesses have 50 or more employees, which the Rapid Response program also publishes.

Rapid response assistance is tailored to each worksite and dislocation, and may include information on incumbent worker training, unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance, Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits, labor market information, on-the-job training, classroom training, and referral to basic and remedial education. Depending on the demographics of the worker group, partners may present services available through their organizations, language interpreters may be provided as needed, and mental health support may be made available. While meetings are normally conducted in person at the worksite or local job center, staff also provide in-depth information by phone, email, and virtually. In FY 2023, the program provided Rapid Response services to 15 employers and received one WARN notice, demonstrating a stabilizing job market consistent with the prior

year's performance.

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 partners with Rapid Response, 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 support and training 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 2024 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 no remaining active or pending petitions, and has increased outreach efforts to notify past Trade-Affected Workers who have outstanding training benefits via the department's social media feeds and website, as well as direct email and text messaging from the AlaskaJobs platform.

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 2023, Alaska received \$23,047,633.

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 severe storm, flooding, and landslides in the fall of 2022 that impacted the west coast of Alaska.

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

The right to file an appeal of a division determination is federally mandated under the Social Security Act Sec. 303(a)(3) and further codified in Alaska Statute (AS) 23.20.410 through 23.20.470 and Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) title 8, chapter 85, sections 151 through 157.

The law requires an opportunity for a fair hearing before an impartial tribunal for all individuals whose claims for unemployment compensation are denied. Unemployment insurance tax determinations and determinations involving labor dispute disqualifications can also be appealed. There are two levels of administrative appeals: a lower-level appeal to the tribunal and a higher-level appeal requesting Commissioner review.

Appeal cases are subject to quarterly quality reviews, where a random sample of cases are scored using 31 criteria outlined in the ET Handbook No. 382, 3rd edition, which measures the quality of lower authority appeals. Quality reviews determine the tribunal's success in meeting critical fair hearing and due process elements. Additionally, 60 percent of tribunal cases must be closed within 30 days and 80 percent within 45 days of the appeal filing date.

In the fiscal year 2023, the appeal's office issued approximately 1,216 tribunal decisions and 58 commissioner-level decisions while concurrently meeting federal time and quality measures in fulfilling the fundamental right to due process.

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.

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 2023, Alaska collected \$1,030,111.16, 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.

Detected in FY 2023	
Non-fraud overpayments	\$1,842,118
Fraud overpayments	\$2,609,354
Fraud penalties	\$1,393,139
Total	\$5,844,611
Recovered in FY 2023	
Non-fraud overpayments	\$2,944,164
Fraud overpayments	\$2,211,159
Fraud Penalties	\$1,054,801
Total	\$6,210,124

Claim Centers

FY 2023 Total UI benefits paid	\$60,774,612
Total initial claims processed	65,008
Calls received in UI claim centers	72,749
Alaskans who received UI benefits	19,264
Average weekly amount	\$309
Total number of weeks filed	273,900
Total determinations written and issued	37,773

There are UI claim centers in Anchorage and Juneau. 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.

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 quarterly to identify the main causes of overpayment and develop strategies to reduce the improper payment rate. This group is committed to continually 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 the improper payment rate does not exceed 10 percent. According to most recent Calendar Year 2023 data, Alaska’s improper payment rate was 6.792 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
- Separation Issues – Claimants not reporting correct last employer, incorrect separation reason, and incorrect disqualification dates
- Work searches – No work search performed and not enough information available to verify work search

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.

FY 2023 UI Tax Activity	
Deposited into UI Trust Account	\$178,588,741
Employer Contributions	\$149,739,465
Employee Contributions	\$26,715,992
Transferred to TVEP	\$14,535,455
Transferred to STEP	\$9,454,865
Contribution Reports Processed	82,480
Employers Registered in Alaska*	21,504
Employer Audits	107
Amended	83
Misclassified Workers Discovered	281
Additional Contributions Collected	\$22,569

Tax

Contributions Refunded	\$11,667
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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 2023 Income

UI Tax Contributions

Total UI Tax Contributions	\$176,455,457
Statutory Transfers from Employee Contributions	
Alaska Technical and Vocational Education Program	(15,127,765)
State Training and Employment Program	(9,454,865)
Total Statutory Transfers	<hr/> (24,582,630) <hr/>

Net Contributions to the UI Trust Fund \$151,872,827

Reimbursements

Federal Government	
Emergency Unemployment Compensation	(40,867)
Federal Government Employees	1,070,966
Extended Benefits	(40,983)
Military Employees	212,422
Total Federal Government	<hr/> 1,201,539
State of Alaska	1,835,066
Local Alaska Governments	1,146,509
Other States – Interstate Claims	903,848
Nonprofit Organizations	1,249,234
Total Reimbursements	<hr/> 6,336,196 <hr/>

Other

Interest Earnings	9,389,852
Total Other	<hr/> 9,389,852 <hr/>
Total Income	<hr/> \$167,598,878 <hr/>

FY 2023 UI Benefits Paid

State Regular	\$61,492,565
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