

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

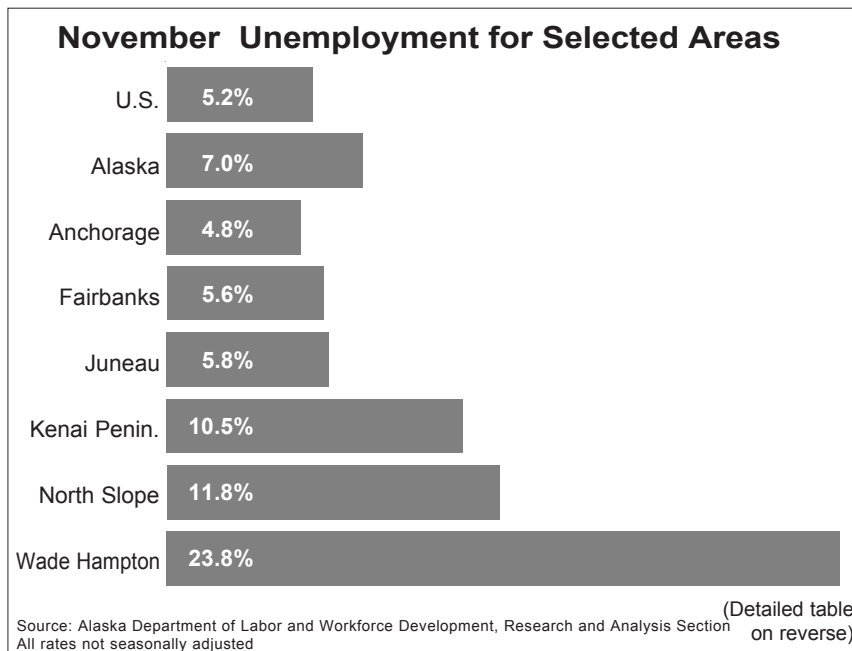
News Release

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November Unemployment Rises Slightly



Alaska's unemployment rate rose four-tenths of a percentage point in November to 7.0 percent. The increase is typical for this time of year according to Dan Robinson, an economist at the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Preliminary numbers suggest that the average monthly unemployment rate in 2004 will be at least slightly lower than in 2003.

Anchorage's rate was unchanged at 4.8 percent and was the lowest in the state in November. Fairbanks' unemployment rate rose five-tenths of a percentage point to 5.6 percent and Juneau's rate fell one-tenth of a percentage point to 5.8 percent. Wade Hampton recorded the state's highest November unemployment rate at 23.8 percent.

In a comparison of Alaska's six economic regions throughout 2004, Anchorage/Mat-Su unemployment rates have been the state's lowest. The Interior region has also seen relatively healthy unemployment rates, consistently recording numbers below the statewide average. At the other end of the spectrum, unemployment rates in the Northern and Southwest regions have been more than twice the statewide average for much of 2004.

Preliminary November payroll estimates show a decline of 8,700 jobs from October. The biggest losses came from seasonal industries that typically shed employment as winter approaches. Construction jobs fell by 2,400, manufacturing by 2,900 (mostly seafood processing), and leisure and hospitality by 1,500.

Alaska has 3,300 more jobs than in November 2003, an over-the-year growth rate of 1.1 percent. Most industrial sectors have contributed, with education and health services leading the way with 1,600 new jobs. The trade, transportation, and utilities sector has added 1,100 and construction has added 700. Employment in the natural resources and mining sector is up 400 from a year ago, a notable change given that jobs in natural resources declined in both 2002 and 2003. These gains were slightly offset by small declines in government, other services, and manufacturing.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 11/04	revised 10/04	revised 11/03	changes from	
				10/04	11/03
Total Nonfarm Employment	295,200	303,900	291,900	-8,700	3,300
Natural Resources & Mining	10,300	10,500	9,900	-200	400
Construction	17,100	19,500	16,400	-2,400	700
Manufacturing	7,500	10,400	7,600	-2,900	-100
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	60,800	61,900	59,700	-1,100	1,100
Information	6,800	6,900	6,900	-100	-100
Financial Activities	14,500	14,500	14,400	0	100
Professional & Business Services	22,300	23,000	22,300	-700	0
Education & Health Services	35,200	35,000	33,600	200	1,600
Leisure & Hospitality	27,300	28,800	27,100	-1,500	200
Other Services	11,000	10,800	11,300	200	-300
Government	82,400	82,500	82,500	-100	-100

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities.

Benchmark date: March 2003

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

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

November 2004:	Alaska 7.2%	U.S. 5.4%
October 2004:	Alaska 7.2%	U.S. 5.5%
November 2003:	Alaska 8.1%	U.S. 5.9%

URL Address: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us>

Contact: Dan Robinson (907) 465-6036

Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	11/04	10/04	11/03*	11/04	10/04	11/03*	11/04	10/04	11/03*	11/04	10/04	11/03*
Alaska Statewide	342,678	346,059	330,813	24,020	22,951	25,882	7.0	6.6	7.8	318,658	323,108	304,931
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	196,624	195,921	188,077	10,535	10,143	11,271	5.4	5.2	6.0	186,089	185,778	176,806
Municipality of Anchorage	157,238	157,150	151,702	7,609	7,465	8,214	4.8	4.8	5.4	149,629	149,685	143,488
Mat-Su Borough	39,386	38,771	36,375	2,926	2,678	3,057	7.4	6.9	8.4	36,460	36,093	33,318
Gulf Coast Region	32,543	33,492	32,372	3,697	3,356	4,186	11.4	10.0	12.9	28,846	30,136	28,186
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,125	21,856	21,026	2,221	2,107	2,555	10.5	9.6	12.2	18,904	19,749	18,471
Kodiak Island Borough	6,566	6,607	6,617	885	672	1,066	13.5	10.2	16.1	5,681	5,935	5,551
Valdez-Cordova CA	4,852	5,029	4,729	591	577	565	12.2	11.5	11.9	4,261	4,452	4,164
Interior Region	51,891	52,675	49,857	3,423	3,164	3,825	6.6	6.0	7.7	48,468	49,511	46,032
Denali Borough	1,242	1,261	1,249	146	142	208	11.8	11.3	16.7	1,096	1,119	1,041
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	45,666	46,406	43,867	2,563	2,375	2,930	5.6	5.1	6.7	43,103	44,031	40,937
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,659	2,664	2,524	337	292	319	12.7	11.0	12.6	2,322	2,372	2,205
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,324	2,345	2,217	377	356	368	16.2	15.2	16.6	1,947	1,989	1,849
Northern Region	9,186	9,231	9,227	1,283	1,365	1,366	14.0	14.8	14.8	7,903	7,866	7,861
Nome Census Area	3,401	3,387	3,407	461	460	482	13.6	13.6	14.1	2,940	2,927	2,925
North Slope Borough	3,396	3,437	3,484	401	456	505	11.8	13.3	14.5	2,995	2,981	2,979
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,389	2,407	2,336	421	449	379	17.6	18.7	16.2	1,968	1,958	1,957
Southeast Region	37,545	38,255	36,897	2,931	2,748	3,159	7.8	7.2	8.6	34,614	35,507	33,738
Haines Borough	1,206	1,205	1,205	138	110	164	11.4	9.1	13.6	1,068	1,095	1,041
Juneau Borough	16,681	17,134	16,418	966	1,014	1,101	5.8	5.9	6.7	15,715	16,120	15,317
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,086	7,224	6,932	607	578	617	8.6	8.0	8.9	6,479	6,646	6,315
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,567	2,589	2,538	295	258	323	11.5	10.0	12.7	2,272	2,331	2,215
Sitka Borough	4,474	4,511	4,394	294	223	320	6.6	4.9	7.3	4,180	4,288	4,074
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	2,031	2,046	1,952	308	279	273	15.2	13.6	14.0	1,723	1,767	1,679
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,183	3,222	3,171	262	226	324	8.2	7.0	10.2	2,921	2,996	2,847
Yakutat Borough	318	322	289	61	59	39	19.2	18.3	13.5	257	263	250
Southwest Region	14,888	16,486	14,385	2,151	2,176	2,076	14.4	13.2	14.4	12,737	14,310	12,309
Aleutians East Borough	1,516	1,679	1,474	74	59	81	4.9	3.5	5.5	1,442	1,620	1,393
Aleutians West Census Area	2,641	2,885	2,492	345	306	273	13.1	10.6	11.0	2,296	2,579	2,219
Bethel Census Area	5,859	6,553	5,714	860	936	883	14.7	14.3	15.5	4,999	5,617	4,831
Bristol Bay Borough	463	505	460	52	43	63	11.2	8.5	13.7	411	462	397
Dillingham Census Area	1,742	1,956	1,708	207	231	224	11.9	11.8	13.1	1,535	1,725	1,484
Lake & Peninsula Borough	540	568	506	107	81	87	19.8	14.3	17.2	433	487	419
Wade Hampton CA	2,126	2,340	2,031	505	519	465	23.8	22.2	22.9	1,621	1,821	1,566

Benchmark: March 2003 Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. * Comparisons with previous year's numbers are of very limited use because of the magnitude of year-end revisions. The official definition of unemployment excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search. They are considered not in the labor force.