

News Release

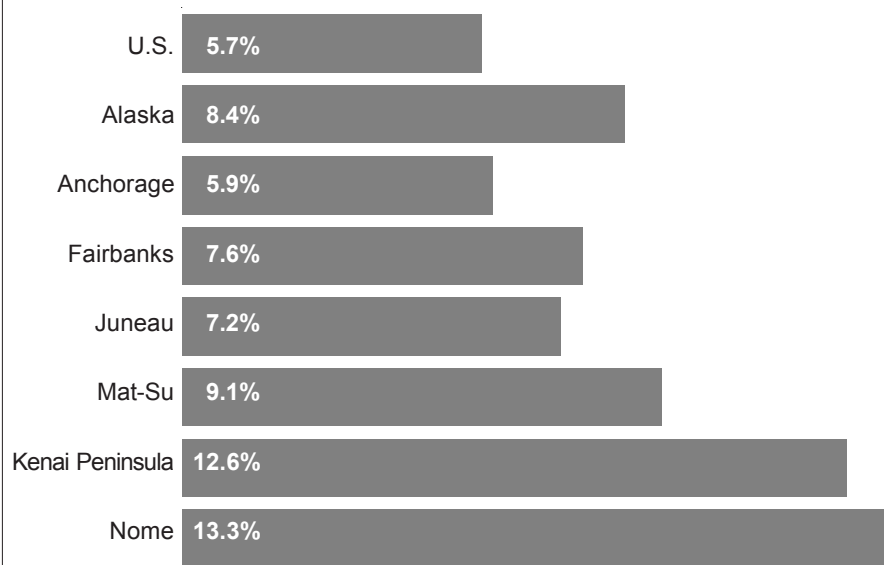
Frank H. Murkowski, Governor
Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

P.O. Box 21149
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1149
Telephone: (907) 465-2700
Fax: (907) 465-2784

March 10, 2005
No. 05-52

Unemployment Rate Follows Seasonal Trend

January Unemployment for Selected Areas



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section
All rates not seasonally adjusted (Detailed table on reverse)

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 01/05	revised 12/04	revised 01/04	changes from 12/04	changes from 01/04
Total Nonfarm Employment	288,500	293,200	283,300	-4,700	5,200
Natural Resources & Mining	9,800	10,000	9,400	-200	400
Construction	14,300	15,900	13,700	-1,600	600
Manufacturing	10,500	5,800	10,600	4,700	-100
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	58,600	60,800	57,000	-2,200	1,600
Information	6,700	6,900	6,800	-200	-100
Financial Activities	14,300	14,500	13,900	-200	400
Professional & Business Services	22,000	22,700	21,700	-700	300
Education & Health Services	34,800	35,000	33,800	-200	1,000
Leisure & Hospitality	25,700	27,400	24,900	-1,700	800
Other Services	11,100	11,700	10,600	-600	500
Government	80,700	82,500	80,900	-1,800	-200

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

Benchmark date: March 2004

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

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

January 2005:	Alaska 7.4%	U.S. 5.2%
December 2004:	Alaska 7.6%	U.S. 5.4%
January 2004:	Alaska 7.8%	U.S. 5.7%

Alaska's unemployment rate rose eight-tenths of a percentage point in January to 8.4 percent and is three-tenths of a percentage point lower than January 2004's rate. An increase of that magnitude from December to January is typical, according to Dan Robinson, an economist at the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, which attempts to separate normal seasonal movement from real economic change, fell from 7.6 percent to 7.4 percent over the month. Changes of five-tenths of a percentage point or less are considered within the margin of error at the state level (changes of more than two-tenths of a percentage point are considered significant at the national level).

January and February are the months of highest unemployment for Alaska's very seasonal economy. Construction, seafood processing, retail trade, hotels, and restaurants all employ substantially fewer people in the winter months than during their summer peak seasons. The number of construction jobs typically increase by more than fifty percent from January to August and seafood processing jobs nearly triple. Self-employed workers also find fewer employment opportunities during the winter.

January wage and salary employment estimates indicated healthy over-the-year growth of 1.8 percent. Leading the way were construction at 4.4 percent; the leisure and hospitality sector, which includes hotels and restaurants, at 3.2 percent; education and health care at 3 percent; and trade, transportation, and utilities at 2.8 percent. Government, manufacturing, and information were down slightly compared to January 2004.

On a procedural note, this month's rates were calculated using a new method instituted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that makes comparisons with previous years' data more meaningful. For the last several years Alaska has had large year-end revisions that made such comparisons misleading. The new method will be used to recalculate state and local unemployment rates back to 2000. The new rates will be posted at the website: <http://alms.labor.state.ak.us>

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

Contact: Dan Robinson (907) 465-6036

Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate (not seasonally adjusted)			Employment		
	01/05	12/04	01/04	01/05	12/04	01/04	01/05	12/04	01/04	01/05	12/04	01/04
	Alaska Statewide	331,383	331,573	329,476	27,697	25,266	28,582	8.4	7.6	8.7	303,686	306,307
Anchorage/Mat-Su MSA*	189,224	191,717	187,769	12,204	11,481	12,781	6.4	6.0	6.8	177,020	180,236	174,988
Municipality of Anchorage	154,133	156,300	152,819	9,017	8,547	9,368	5.9	5.5	6.1	145,116	147,753	143,451
Mat-Su Borough	35,091	35,417	34,950	3,187	2,934	3,413	9.1	8.3	9.8	31,904	32,483	31,537
Gulf Coast Region												
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,602	21,637	21,566	2,715	2,387	2,956	12.6	11.0	13.7	18,887	19,250	18,610
Kodiak Island Borough	6,047	5,270	5,960	518	826	512	8.6	15.7	8.6	5,529	4,444	5,448
Valdez-Cordova CA	4,614	4,684	4,583	658	566	649	14.3	12.1	14.2	3,956	4,118	3,934
Interior Region												
Denali Borough	799	838	764	160	130	185	20.0	15.5	24.2	639	708	579
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	41,740	42,520	40,638	3,177	2,779	3,383	7.6	6.5	8.3	38,563	39,741	37,255
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,501	2,482	2,379	441	352	421	17.6	14.2	17.7	2,060	2,130	1,958
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	3,247	2,967	3,087	452	376	468	13.9	12.7	15.2	2,795	2,591	2,619
Northern Region												
Nome Census Area	3,792	4,075	3,772	505	690	475	13.3	16.9	12.6	3,287	3,385	3,297
North Slope Borough	3,518	3,419	3,568	371	211	407	10.5	6.2	11.4	3,147	3,208	3,161
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,583	2,493	2,835	386	211	386	14.9	8.5	13.6	2,197	2,282	2,449
Southeast Region												
Haines Borough	1,010	1,133	994	172	138	187	17.0	12.2	18.8	838	995	807
Juneau Borough	16,354	16,195	16,956	1,184	1,059	1,215	7.2	6.5	7.2	15,170	15,136	15,741
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	6,919	7,047	6,890	731	634	761	10.6	9.0	11.0	6,188	6,413	6,129
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,360	2,261	2,311	482	347	480	20.4	15.3	20.8	1,878	1,914	1,831
Sitka Borough	3,981	4,159	4,072	338	302	372	8.5	7.3	9.1	3,643	3,857	3,700
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	1,245	1,330	1,358	328	266	329	26.3	20.0	24.2	917	1,064	1,029
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	2,376	2,419	2,511	468	393	500	19.7	16.2	19.9	1,908	2,026	2,011
Yakutat Borough	304	283	280	66	49	46	21.7	17.3	16.4	238	234	234
Southwest Region												
Aleutians East Borough	1,425	514	1,339	145	121	104	10.2	23.5	7.8	1,280	393	1,235
Aleutians West Census Area	3,864	2,074	3,600	270	279	201	7.0	13.5	5.6	3,594	1,795	3,399
Bethel Census Area	6,530	6,644	6,726	963	839	879	14.7	12.6	13.1	5,567	5,805	5,847
Bristol Bay Borough	622	663	563	67	61	76	10.8	9.2	13.5	555	602	487
Dillingham Census Area	1,829	1,734	1,774	245	221	228	13.4	12.7	12.9	1,584	1,513	1,546
Lake & Peninsula Borough	578	609	634	107	89	105	18.5	14.6	16.6	471	520	529
Wade Hampton CA	2,320	2,406	2,549	544	461	477	23.4	19.2	18.7	1,776	1,945	2,072

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. * Metropolitan Statistical Area • Benchmark: March 2004
The official definition of unemployment excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Many individuals in rural Alaska do not meet the definition because they have not conducted an active job search due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.