

News Release

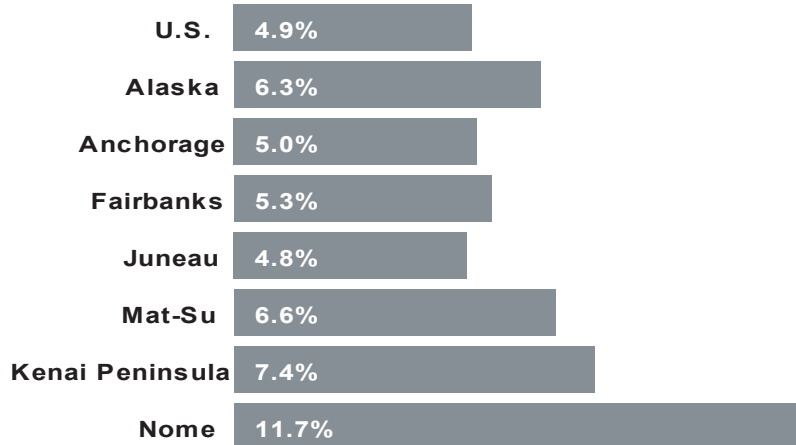


ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

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No. 05-66

May unemployment rate drops to 6.3 percent

May Unemployment for Selected Areas



Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Alaska's unemployment rate fell eight-tenths of a percentage point in May to 6.3 percent, a larger than normal seasonal decline. The comparable national rate (not seasonally adjusted) was unchanged at 4.9 percent.

Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau all recorded lower unemployment rates in May as did most other boroughs and census areas. Wade Hampton had the highest rate at 21.7 percent and Denali had the lowest at 4.0 percent. Denali's rate dropped more than five percentage points from April's 9.2 percent as summer visitors began arriving in earnest. Haines and Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon reported similar large drops in unemployment and corresponding increases in employment.

Preliminary wage and salary employment estimates show an increase of 11,400 jobs from April to May. The largest contributions came from the leisure and hospitality sector (3,900), and the trade, transportation, and utilities sector (3,900). The construction industry also recorded strong over-the-month growth, adding 2,200 jobs in May. Government was the only sector to lose jobs in May and those losses were due primarily to the completion of the academic year at University of Alaska campuses.

Over the year, the state has added 4,600 jobs, which amounts to 1.5 percent growth and continues a long-running trend of modest, but steady job gains. Leading the way has been the education and health services sector, which consists primarily of health care and social services employment. The sector has grown 4.6 percent from May 2004 to May 2005. Leisure and hospitality jobs show the next highest growth rate at 3.9 percent and then construction at 3.4 percent. After several years of declines, employment in the natural resources and mining sector is up 1.9 percent.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 05/05	revised 04/05	revised 05/04	changes from	
				04/05	05/04
Total Nonfarm Employment	310,800	299,400	306,200	11,400	4,600
Natural Resources & Mining	10,500	10,300	10,300	200	200
Construction	18,300	16,100	17,700	2,200	600
Manufacturing	10,300	10,000	10,200	300	100
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	64,100	60,200	63,600	3,900	500
Information	6,900	6,800	6,900	100	0
Financial Activities	14,900	14,700	14,600	200	300
Professional & Business Services	23,600	23,100	23,200	500	400
Education & Health Services	36,600	36,100	35,000	500	1,600
Leisure & Hospitality	31,700	27,800	30,500	3,900	1,200
Other Services	11,100	10,800	11,500	300	-400
Government	82,800	83,500	82,700	-700	100

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities. Benchmark date: March 2004

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

May 2005:	Alaska	6.4%	U.S.	5.1%
April 2005:	Alaska	6.7%	U.S.	5.2%
May 2004:	Alaska	7.4%	U.S.	5.6%

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Labor Force By Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	05/05	04/05	05/04	05/05	04/05	05/04	05/05	04/05	05/04	05/05	04/05	05/04
Alaska Statewide	338,828	335,277	331,492	21,238	23,657	24,249	6.3	7.1	7.3	317,590	311,620	307,243
Anchorage/Mat-Su MSA*	181,500	182,130	176,823	9,648	10,732	11,032	5.3	5.9	6.2	171,852	171,398	165,791
Municipality of Anchorage	148,337	148,664	144,522	7,457	8,156	8,611	5.0	5.5	6.0	140,880	140,508	135,911
Mat-Su Borough	33,163	33,466	32,301	2,191	2,576	2,421	6.6	7.7	7.5	30,972	30,890	29,880
Gulf Coast Region												
Kenai Peninsula Borough	25,840	24,749	25,302	1,906	2,227	2,272	7.4	9.0	9.0	23,934	22,522	23,030
Kodiak Island Borough	6,066	6,278	6,077	500	451	646	8.2	7.2	10.6	5,566	5,827	5,431
Valdez-Cordova	5,377	5,017	5,367	440	528	511	8.2	10.5	9.5	4,937	4,489	4,856
Interior Region												
Denali Borough	1,948	1,240	1,494	77	114	91	4.0	9.2	6.1	1,871	1,126	1,403
Fairbanks MSA*	45,516	44,396	44,205	2,395	2,733	2,798	5.3	6.2	6.3	43,121	41,663	41,408
Southeast Fairbanks	3,072	2,931	2,737	289	362	305	9.4	12.4	11.1	2,783	2,569	2,432
Yukon-Koyukuk	3,720	3,858	3,452	351	391	410	9.4	10.1	11.9	3,369	3,467	3,042
Northern Region												
Nome	3,885	4,078	3,844	456	484	486	11.7	11.9	12.6	3,429	3,594	3,358
North Slope Borough	3,523	3,578	3,593	340	342	382	9.7	9.6	10.6	3,183	3,236	3,211
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,848	2,841	2,797	365	373	395	12.8	13.1	14.1	2,483	2,468	2,402
Southeast Region												
Haines Borough	1,293	1,106	1,338	116	139	121	9.0	12.6	9.0	1,177	967	1,217
Juneau Borough	17,883	17,612	17,947	857	951	975	4.8	5.4	5.4	17,026	16,661	16,972
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,895	7,398	7,913	471	564	551	6.0	7.6	7.0	7,424	6,834	7,362
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,630	2,532	2,543	268	306	301	10.2	12.1	11.8	2,362	2,226	2,242
Sitka Borough	4,628	4,463	4,596	220	254	266	4.8	5.7	5.8	4,408	4,209	4,330
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon	1,931	1,448	2,011	174	230	190	9.0	15.9	9.4	1,757	1,218	1,821
Wrangell-Petersburg	2,750	2,751	2,784	252	301	328	9.2	10.9	11.8	2,498	2,450	2,456
Yakutat Borough	285	265	291	26	28	22	9.1	10.6	7.6	259	237	269
Southwest Region												
Aleutians East Borough	990	1,326	966	109	104	96	11.0	7.8	9.9	881	1,222	870
Aleutians West	2,121	2,462	2,086	214	194	231	10.1	7.9	11.1	1,907	2,268	1,855
Bethel	6,883	7,132	6,814	888	910	898	12.9	12.8	13.2	5,995	6,222	5,916
Bristol Bay Borough	1,192	685	1,125	52	60	72	4.4	8.8	6.4	1,140	625	1,053
Dillingham	1,917	2,033	1,873	223	238	228	11.6	11.7	12.2	1,694	1,795	1,645
Lake & Peninsula Borough	691	624	786	71	88	91	10.3	14.1	11.6	620	536	695
Wade Hampton	2,444	2,342	2,729	530	551	552	21.7	23.5	20.2	1,914	1,791	2,177

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.