



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



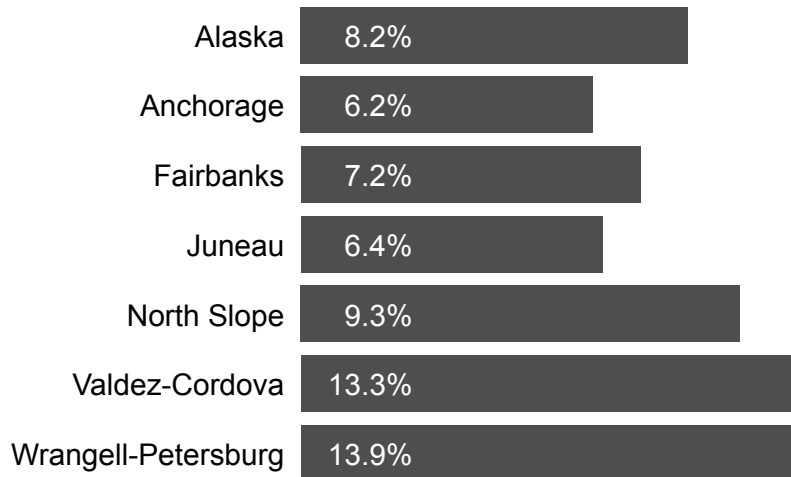
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

March 24, 2006
No. 06-43

February's unemployment rate rises to 8.2 percent

February Unemployment for Selected Areas



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

Alaska's unemployment rate rose five-tenths of a percentage point in February to 8.2 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The February increase was slightly larger than in the most recent five years, but not enough to be statistically significant.

Since the summer of 2004, unemployment rates have declined gradually, although they appear to be leveling off in recent months. Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau all recorded small increases to their unemployment rates in February but all three continued to register rates well below the statewide rate. The Aleutians West Census Area had February's lowest rate at 3.7 percent; Wade Hampton and Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon shared the highest at 22.1 percent.

Preliminary estimates of February payroll employment show a monthly gain of 5,200 jobs. The largest increase — 2,200 jobs — came from the University of Alaska campuses where employment returned to normal levels after the winter break. Local school districts also returned to full employment in February, adding 700 jobs, and seafood processing activity pushed manufacturing employment up by 900.

Coincidentally, February's over-the-year growth was also 5,200 jobs. Since February 2005, the state has added employment in every major sector with the exceptions of manufacturing and information, each of which lost 100 jobs.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	preliminary 02/06	revised 01/06	revised 02/05	changes from	
				01/06	02/05
Total Nonfarm Employment	298,200	293,000	293,000	5,200	5,200
Natural Resources and Mining	11,000	10,700	10,300	300	700
Oil and Gas	9,000	8,900	8,500	100	500
Construction	15,200	14,900	14,700	300	500
Manufacturing	11,500	10,600	11,600	900	-100
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	59,400	59,500	58,500	-100	900
Retail Trade	34,500	34,600	33,700	-100	800
Information	6,800	6,800	6,900	0	-100
Financial Activities	14,400	14,500	14,200	-100	200
Professional and Business Services	22,800	22,500	22,300	300	500
Education ¹ and Health Services	36,100	35,800	35,400	300	700
Health Care	26,100	25,900	25,500	200	600
Leisure and Hospitality	26,900	26,700	26,100	200	800
Accommodation	5,900	6,000	5,900	-100	0
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	17,300	16,900	16,700	400	600
Other Services	11,200	11,100	11,000	100	200
Government ²	82,900	79,900	82,000	3,000	900

¹ Private education only

² Government includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities. Benchmark date: March 2005

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

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

February 2006:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	4.8%
January 2006:	Alaska	6.7%	U.S.	4.7%
February 2005:	Alaska	7.0%	U.S.	5.4%

Contact: Dan Robinson, Economist (907) 465-6036
Research and Analysis Web site: <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us>

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	02/06	01/06	02/05	02/06	01/06	02/05	02/06	01/06	02/05	02/06	01/06	02/05
Alaska Statewide	340,199	337,521	335,032	27,899	26,116	27,916	8.2	7.7	8.3	312,300	311,405	307,116
Anchorage/Mat-Su (MSA*)	186,416	186,032	182,511	12,769	11,839	12,338	6.8	6.4	6.8	173,647	174,193	170,173
Municipality of Anchorage	150,403	150,167	147,401	9,348	8,668	9,168	6.2	5.8	6.2	141,055	141,499	138,233
Mat-Su Borough	36,013	35,865	35,110	3,421	3,171	3,170	9.5	8.8	9.0	32,592	32,694	31,940
Gulf Coast Region	34,542	34,225	34,958	3,819	3,597	3,966	11.1	10.5	11.3	30,723	30,628	30,992
Kenai Peninsula Borough	23,853	23,700	23,941	2,758	2,557	2,774	11.6	10.8	11.6	21,095	21,143	21,167
Kodiak Island Borough	6,160	6,054	6,219	457	465	486	7.4	7.7	7.8	5,703	5,589	5,733
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,529	4,471	4,798	604	575	706	13.3	12.9	14.7	3,925	3,896	4,092
Interior Region	51,831	50,978	50,746	4,222	3,959	4,299	8.1	7.8	8.5	47,609	47,019	46,447
Denali Borough	827	795	837	137	134	160	16.6	16.9	19.1	690	661	677
Fairbanks North Star Borough (MSA*)	44,501	43,721	43,859	3,188	2,993	3,239	7.2	6.8	7.4	41,313	40,728	40,620
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,555	3,526	2,989	447	411	444	12.4	11.7	14.9	3,148	3,115	2,545
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,908	2,936	3,061	450	421	456	15.5	14.3	14.9	2,458	2,515	2,605
Northern Region	11,002	10,841	10,714	1,256	1,160	1,290	11.4	10.7	12.0	9,746	9,681	9,424
Nome Census Area	3,874	3,884	4,022	548	504	531	14.1	13.0	13.2	3,326	3,380	3,491
North Slope Borough	3,691	3,488	3,681	342	324	370	9.3	9.3	10.1	3,349	3,164	3,311
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,437	3,469	3,011	366	332	389	10.6	9.6	12.9	3,071	3,137	2,622
Southeast Region	37,524	37,139	37,149	3,536	3,342	3,771	9.4	9.0	10.2	33,988	33,797	33,378
Haines Borough	1,075	1,022	1,071	166	148	188	15.4	14.5	17.6	909	874	883
Juneau Borough	18,066	17,949	17,737	1,149	1,075	1,195	6.4	6.0	6.7	16,917	16,874	16,542
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,015	7,011	7,101	653	633	715	9.3	9.0	10.1	6,362	6,378	6,386
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,421	2,372	2,437	474	421	471	19.6	17.7	19.3	1,947	1,951	1,966
Sitka Borough	4,505	4,446	4,376	327	304	345	7.3	6.8	7.9	4,178	4,142	4,031
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,554	1,502	1,533	344	321	368	22.1	21.4	24.0	1,210	1,181	1,165
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,625	2,585	2,624	366	389	430	13.9	15.0	16.4	2,259	2,196	2,194
Yakutat Borough	263	252	270	57	51	59	21.7	20.2	21.9	206	201	211
Southwest Region	18,883	18,305	18,956	2,298	2,219	2,252	12.2	12.1	11.9	16,585	16,086	16,704
Aleutians East Borough	1,155	1,352	1,229	100	108	111	8.7	8.0	9.0	1,055	1,244	1,118
Aleutians West Census Area	4,456	3,972	4,529	166	214	186	3.7	5.4	4.1	4,290	3,758	4,343
Bethel Census Area	7,151	7,292	7,039	1,013	979	952	14.2	13.4	13.5	6,138	6,313	6,087
Bristol Bay Borough	470	456	452	89	74	72	18.9	16.2	15.9	381	382	380
Dillingham Census Area	2,111	1,785	2,116	232	210	259	11.0	11.8	12.2	1,879	1,575	1,857
Lake and Peninsula Borough	864	853	933	107	101	102	12.4	11.8	10.9	757	752	831
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,676	2,595	2,658	591	533	570	22.1	20.5	21.4	2,085	2,062	2,088

* Metropolitan Statistical Area

Source: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section • Benchmark: 2005

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.