



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



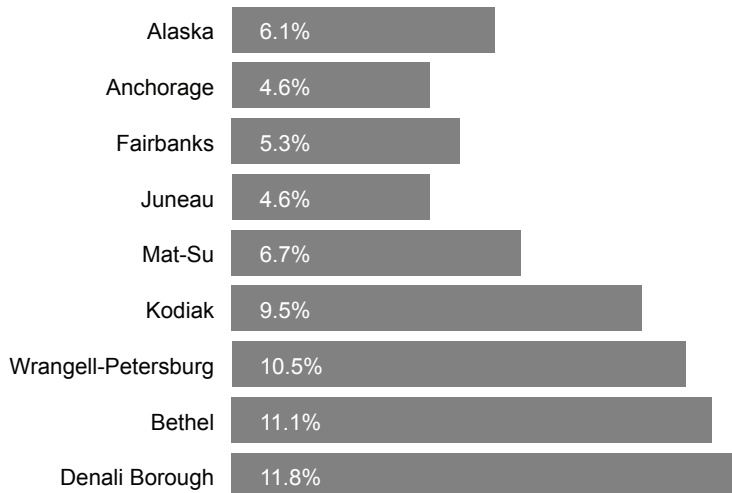
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Greg O'Claray, Commissioner

December 22, 2006
No. 07-25

Unemployment rate at 6.1 percent in November

November Unemployment for Selected Areas



Alaska's statewide unemployment rate increased four-tenths of a percentage point in November to 6.1 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development. The increase is in line with expectations for November, a month when seasonal employment continues to decline and unemployment continues to rise correspondingly.

The 6.1 percent rate means that nearly 20,994 people were unemployed during November, an increase of roughly 1,300 people from October. The jobless rate was 6.7 percent in November 2005, meaning that 1,668 more people were unemployed than in November 2006. The state's rate has seesawed all year between being slightly higher and slightly lower than year-ago rates.

Despite the rising unemployment rate, a number of areas in the state continued to enjoy low unemployment rates. The rates in Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau and Sitka were all running below 5.7 percent, and in most areas, employers reported a very tight labor market. All four economies are much less susceptible to seasonal swings than almost everywhere else in the state.

In 11 areas of the state, the unemployment rates were in the double-digits in November, and three saw their unemployment rates climb by more than four percentage points between October and November: the Denali Borough, the Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area and the Yakutat Borough. All three areas, along with many others, are buffeted by the very seasonal nature of the visitor, construction, timber or fishing industries.

Payroll employment fell by 9,400 in November as nearly every major employment category showed a broad seasonal downturn. The biggest losses came in seafood processing, construction and accommodations. Even so, there were 5,400 more total jobs in November than a year ago.

One of the few categories that was able to hold its own was retail, which isn't surprising since many retailers add staff for the holiday season. Given a relatively healthy economy, Alaska's retailers should be enjoying healthy holiday sales in 2006.

The strongest over-the-year gains were in oil and gas, and health care. Possibly bigger than the increase in employment in the state's highest-paying industry, oil and gas, is the effect it's having on stronger-than-average gains in overall earnings.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	Preliminary 11/06	Revised 10/06	Revised 11/05	Changes from	
				10/06	11/05
Total Nonfarm Employment	306,500	315,900	301,100	-9,400	5,400
Natural Resources and Mining	12,800	12,800	10,900	0	1,900
Oil and Gas	10,400	10,500	8,800	-100	1,600
Construction	17,600	19,800	17,800	-2,200	-200
Manufacturing	7,800	10,800	7,700	-3,000	100
Seafood Processing	4,100	6,800	4,000	-2,700	100
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	62,900	64,300	61,800	-1,400	1,100
Retail Trade	36,500	36,500	36,200	0	300
Information	7,000	7,000	6,900	0	100
Financial Activities	14,700	14,900	14,700	-200	0
Professional and Business Services	23,400	24,100	23,300	-700	100
Educational ¹ and Health Services	37,300	37,100	35,700	200	1,600
Health Care	26,600	26,600	25,800	0	800
Leisure and Hospitality	28,500	30,200	27,800	-1,700	700
Accommodations	6,500	7,700	6,300	-1,200	200
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	18,300	18,600	17,800	-300	500
Other Services	11,500	11,600	11,500	-100	0
Government ²	83,000	83,300	83,000	-300	0

¹ Private education only

² Government includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities.

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates¹

November 2006:	Alaska	6.4%	U.S.	4.5%
October 2006:	Alaska	6.4%	U.S.	4.4%
November 2005:	Alaska	6.9%	U.S.	5.0%

¹ All other unemployment rates in this press release are not seasonally adjusted.

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	11/06	10/06	11/05	11/06	10/06	11/05	11/06	10/06	11/05	11/06	10/06	11/05
Alaska Statewide	346,197	346,400	339,050	20,994	19,677	22,662	6.1	5.7	6.7	325,203	326,723	316,388
Anchorage/Mat-Su	193,550	190,672	187,484	9,679	9,174	10,339	5.0	4.8	5.5	183,871	181,498	177,145
Municipality of Anchorage	156,579	154,458	151,629	7,219	7,025	7,732	4.6	4.5	5.1	149,360	147,433	143,897
Mat-Su Borough	36,971	36,214	35,855	2,460	2,149	2,607	6.7	5.9	7.3	34,511	34,065	33,248
Gulf Coast Region	34,791	35,325	34,457	2,917	2,552	3,301	8.4	7.2	9.6	31,874	32,773	31,156
Kenai Peninsula Borough	24,419	24,652	23,952	1,922	1,732	2,092	7.9	7.0	8.7	22,497	22,920	21,860
Kodiak Island Borough	5,634	5,785	5,945	536	390	733	9.5	6.7	12.3	5,098	5,395	5,212
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,738	4,888	4,560	459	430	476	9.7	8.8	10.4	4,279	4,458	4,084
Interior Region	52,387	52,919	52,368	3,183	2,917	3,324	6.1	5.5	6.3	49,204	50,002	49,044
Denali Borough	975	1,429	827	115	109	109	11.8	7.6	13.2	860	1,320	718
Fairbanks North Star Borough	45,207	45,121	45,104	2,386	2,189	2,513	5.3	4.9	5.6	42,821	42,932	42,591
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,504	3,605	3,462	331	297	347	9.4	8.2	10.0	3,173	3,308	3,115
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,701	2,764	2,975	351	322	355	13.0	11.6	11.9	2,350	2,442	2,620
Northern Region	11,116	11,187	10,986	977	1,000	1,093	8.8	8.9	9.9	10,139	10,187	9,893
Nome Census Area	3,827	3,949	3,911	391	395	442	10.2	10.0	11.3	3,436	3,554	3,469
North Slope Borough	4,355	4,302	3,660	278	301	328	6.4	7.0	9.0	4,077	4,001	3,332
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,934	2,936	3,415	308	304	323	10.5	10.4	9.5	2,626	2,632	3,092
Southeast Region	37,850	38,729	37,696	2,522	2,325	2,705	6.7	6.0	7.2	35,328	36,404	34,991
Haines Borough	1,131	1,203	1,140	116	98	129	10.3	8.1	11.3	1,015	1,105	1,011
Juneau Borough	18,047	18,248	17,837	823	793	925	4.6	4.3	5.2	17,224	17,455	16,912
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,541	7,816	7,187	476	464	507	6.3	5.9	7.1	7,065	7,352	6,680
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,260	2,291	2,452	314	289	321	13.9	12.6	13.1	1,946	2,002	2,131
Sitka Borough	4,497	4,535	4,587	211	208	243	4.7	4.6	5.3	4,286	4,327	4,344
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,453	1,567	1,546	273	223	304	18.8	14.2	19.7	1,180	1,344	1,242
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,685	2,757	2,683	283	232	243	10.5	8.4	9.1	2,402	2,525	2,440
Yakutat Borough	236	312	264	26	18	33	11.0	5.8	12.5	210	294	231
Southwest Region	16,502	17,573	16,059	1,714	1,711	1,899	10.4	9.7	11.8	14,788	15,862	14,160
Aleutians East Borough	840	1,031	599	68	64	86	8.1	6.2	14.4	772	967	513
Aleutians West Census Area	2,614	3,231	2,478	156	131	178	6.0	4.1	7.2	2,458	3,100	2,300
Bethel Census Area	7,110	7,089	7,238	792	800	843	11.1	11.3	11.6	6,318	6,289	6,395
Bristol Bay Borough	596	645	643	50	43	56	8.4	6.7	8.7	546	602	587
Dillingham Census Area	1,967	2,060	1,923	163	174	192	8.3	8.4	10.0	1,804	1,886	1,731
Lake and Peninsula Borough	926	1,029	639	52	54	72	5.6	5.2	11.3	874	975	567
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,449	2,488	2,539	433	445	472	17.7	17.9	18.6	2,016	2,043	2,067

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