



MEDIA RELEASE

Jobs are Alaska's Future



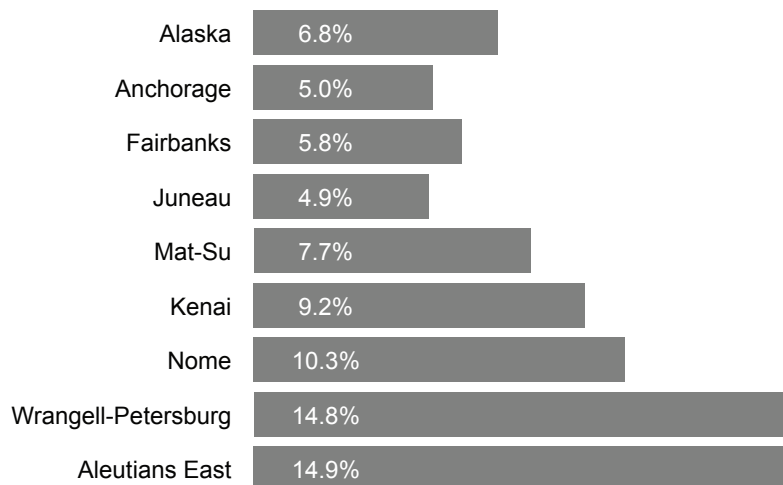
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Guy Bell, Acting Commissioner

Jan. 19, 2007
No. 07-28

Unemployment rate rises to 6.8 percent in December

December Unemployment for Selected Areas



Alaska's unemployment rate rose seven-tenths of a percentage point in December to 6.8 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The increase is slightly larger than usual for December, but the rate is still one-tenth of a percentage point lower than in December 2005.

The Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area had December's highest unemployment rate at 21.6 percent and Juneau's 4.9 percent rate was the lowest.

Anchorage's rate rose four-tenths of a percentage point in December to 5.0 percent, the Mat-Su Borough's rate climbed from 6.7 percent to 7.7 percent and Fairbanks saw an increase of five-tenths of a percentage point to 5.8 percent. Unemployment rates for all three areas are at or near year-ago levels.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment

	Preliminary 12/06	Revised 11/06	Revised 12/05	Changes from	
				11/06	12/05
Total Nonfarm Employment	303,700	306,600	298,500	-2,900	5,200
Natural Resources and Mining	12,900	12,800	11,000	100	1,900
Oil and Gas	10,700	10,500	9,000	200	1,700
Construction	16,200	17,500	16,400	-1,300	-200
Manufacturing	6,200	8,000	5,900	-1,800	300
Seafood Processing	2,600	4,300	2,300	-1,700	300
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	62,600	62,900	61,600	-300	1,000
Retail Trade	36,500	36,500	36,200	0	300
Information	6,800	6,900	6,900	-100	-100
Financial Activities	14,700	14,800	14,600	-100	100
Professional and Business Services	23,300	23,400	23,300	-100	0
Educational ¹ and Health Services	37,600	37,200	36,100	400	1,500
Health Care	26,800	26,600	26,200	200	600
Leisure and Hospitality	28,800	28,500	28,100	300	700
Accommodations	6,600	6,500	6,500	100	100
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	18,600	18,300	18,000	300	600
Other Services	11,400	11,600	11,300	-200	100
Government ²	83,200	83,000	83,300	200	-100

¹ Private education only

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

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates¹

December 2006:	Alaska	6.7%	U.S.	4.5%
November 2006:	Alaska	6.4%	U.S.	4.5%
December 2005:	Alaska	6.9%	U.S.	4.9%

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

Payroll employment fell by 2,900 in December, primarily due to large seasonal declines in the construction and seafood processing industries. Over-the-year job growth remained moderate at 1.7 percent.

According to Dan Robinson, an economist with the department, the two most notable trends in the job numbers are the continuing strong growth in oil and gas and the slight declines in construction employment.

"The state's 10,700 oil and gas jobs are the most since 1991, and the industry has added 1,700 jobs in the last year alone," he said.

On the other hand, construction jobs were down 200 over the year and 2006 looks to be the first year since 1996 that the industry hasn't produced job growth. Over the nine-year period from 1996 to 2005, the industry added 6,000 jobs. The majority of them came between 2001 and 2005 when construction employment increased by 25 percent.

"Growth of that magnitude is hard to sustain over an extended period, especially when the broader economy is growing at a much more moderate rate," Robinson said.

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

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

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	12/06	11/06	12/05	12/06	11/06	12/05	12/06	11/06	12/05	12/06	11/06	12/05
Alaska Statewide	347,217	346,197	338,850	23,707	20,994	23,418	6.8	6.1	6.9	323,510	325,203	315,432
Anchorage/Mat-Su	195,636	193,550	188,635	10,834	9,679	10,543	5.5	5.0	5.6	184,802	183,871	178,092
Municipality of Anchorage	158,071	156,579	152,431	7,955	7,219	7,765	5.0	4.6	5.1	150,116	149,360	144,666
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	37,565	36,971	36,204	2,879	2,460	2,778	7.7	6.7	7.7	34,686	34,511	33,426
Gulf Coast Region	34,453	34,791	33,890	3,409	2,917	3,476	9.9	8.4	10.3	31,044	31,874	30,414
Kenai Peninsula Borough	24,571	24,419	23,897	2,258	1,922	2,249	9.2	7.9	9.4	22,313	22,497	21,648
Kodiak Island Borough	5,255	5,634	5,441	642	536	734	12.2	9.5	13.5	4,613	5,098	4,707
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,627	4,738	4,552	509	459	493	11.0	9.7	10.8	4,118	4,279	4,059
Interior Region	52,373	52,387	52,318	3,547	3,183	3,426	6.8	6.1	6.5	48,826	49,204	48,892
Denali Borough	945	975	819	129	115	110	13.7	11.8	13.4	816	860	709
Fairbanks North Star Borough	45,160	45,207	45,072	2,640	2,386	2,592	5.8	5.3	5.8	42,520	42,821	42,480
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,475	3,504	3,424	369	331	356	10.6	9.4	10.4	3,106	3,173	3,068
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,793	2,701	3,003	409	351	368	14.6	13.0	12.3	2,384	2,350	2,635
Northern Region	11,146	11,116	11,132	971	977	1,082	8.7	8.8	9.7	10,175	10,139	10,050
Nome Census Area	3,808	3,827	3,939	391	391	467	10.3	10.2	11.9	3,417	3,436	3,472
North Slope Borough	4,424	4,355	3,683	263	278	295	5.9	6.4	8.0	4,161	4,077	3,388
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,914	2,934	3,510	317	308	320	10.9	10.5	9.1	2,597	2,626	3,190
Southeast Region	38,085	37,850	37,477	3,002	2,522	2,931	7.9	6.7	7.8	35,083	35,328	34,546
Haines Borough	1,110	1,131	1,102	134	116	135	12.1	10.3	12.3	976	1,015	967
Juneau Borough	18,205	18,047	18,008	892	823	968	4.9	4.6	5.4	17,313	17,224	17,040
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,588	7,541	7,118	547	476	547	7.2	6.3	7.7	7,041	7,065	6,571
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,234	2,260	2,431	401	314	387	17.9	13.9	15.9	1,833	1,946	2,044
Sitka Borough	4,522	4,497	4,447	272	211	257	6.0	4.7	5.8	4,250	4,286	4,190
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,512	1,453	1,475	327	273	299	21.6	18.8	20.3	1,185	1,180	1,176
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,680	2,685	2,618	396	283	295	14.8	10.5	11.3	2,284	2,402	2,323
Yakutat Borough	234	236	278	33	26	43	14.1	11.0	15.5	201	210	235
Southwest Region	15,523	16,502	15,398	1,943	1,714	1,960	12.5	10.4	12.7	13,580	14,788	13,438
Aleutians East Borough	583	840	548	87	68	104	14.9	8.1	19.0	496	772	444
Aleutians West Census Area	2,081	2,614	1,900	216	156	191	10.4	6.0	10.1	1,865	2,458	1,709
Bethel Census Area	7,029	7,110	7,248	859	792	860	12.2	11.1	11.9	6,170	6,318	6,388
Bristol Bay Borough	588	596	637	62	50	64	10.5	8.4	10.0	526	546	573
Dillingham Census Area	1,842	1,967	1,854	180	163	189	9.8	8.3	10.2	1,662	1,804	1,665
Lake and Peninsula Borough	882	926	595	53	52	73	6.0	5.6	12.3	829	874	522
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,518	2,449	2,616	486	433	479	19.3	17.7	18.3	2,032	2,016	2,137

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and 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.