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Unemployment rate at 6.8 percent in September



Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell one-tenth of a percentage point in September to 6.8 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The rate has been bumping around by statistically insignificant amounts since May without showing a clear trend up or down.

The U.S. unemployment rate was unchanged in September at 6.1 percent, a pause in what has been a clear upward trend for more than a year. The rate has climbed 1.7 percentage points since its cyclical low of 4.4 percent in March 2007.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

	Preliminary 9/08	Revised 8/08	Revised 9/07	Changes from	
				8/08	9/07
Total Nonfarm Employment	333,900	341,900	332,300	-8,000	1,600
Natural Resources and Mining	15,500	15,500	14,400	0	1,100
Oil and Gas	13,100	12,900	11,800	200	1,300
Construction	20,000	20,600	20,200	-600	-200
Manufacturing	15,400	19,800	15,700	-4,400	-300
Seafood Processing	11,200	15,600	11,500	-4,400	-300
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	66,500	69,400	66,900	-2,900	-400
Retail Trade	36,800	38,300	36,700	-1,500	100
Information	7,000	7,000	6,900	0	100
Financial Activities	14,800	15,300	15,200	-500	-400
Professional and Business Services	26,900	27,300	26,200	-400	700
Educational ² and Health Services	36,900	37,400	36,500	-500	400
Health Care	26,700	27,100	26,500	-400	200
Leisure and Hospitality	35,300	39,100	35,700	-3,800	-400
Accommodations	10,000	11,900	10,000	-1,900	0
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	20,400	22,000	20,800	-1,600	-400
Other Services	11,700	11,700	11,800	0	-100
Government ³	83,900	78,800	82,800	5,100	1,100

¹ Not seasonally adjusted

² Private education only

³ Government includes public schools, the University of Alaska and federally recognized tribal entities.

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	9/08	8/08	9/07
Alaska	6.8%	6.9%	6.3%
U.S.	6.1%	6.1%	4.7%

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

Alaska's estimated payroll job count in September was 333,900, an over-the-month decline of about 8,000 jobs as the state's seasonal industries began to wind down for the year. Seafood processing jobs fell by 4,400, accommodations by 1,900, food services and drinking places by 1,600, and retail trade by 1,500.

Partly compensating for the seasonal declines was a typical increase in state and local government education jobs at the beginning of the academic school year.

Alaska continues to show over-the-year job growth, although the growth rate appears to have slowed slightly. The number of payroll jobs grew by 1,600 from September 2007 to this September. The driving force behind most of that growth continues to be the oil and gas industry.

By comparison, the number of U.S. payroll jobs in September was down nearly 600,000 from September 2007. Seasonally adjusted payroll job numbers for the country show a decline of 760,000 jobs from a high point of 138.1 million in December 2007.

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Research and Analysis' Web site: laborstats.alaska.gov

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	9/08	8/08	9/07	9/08	8/08	9/07	9/08	8/08	9/07	9/08	8/08	9/07
Alaska Statewide	360,853	366,649	354,374	22,274	21,669	19,974	6.2	5.9	5.6	338,579	344,980	334,400
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	193,265	193,730	189,514	11,185	10,737	10,043	5.8	5.5	5.3	182,080	182,993	179,471
Municipality of Anchorage	153,833	154,214	151,059	8,370	8,022	7,680	5.4	5.2	5.1	145,463	146,192	143,379
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	39,432	39,516	38,455	2,815	2,715	2,363	7.1	6.9	6.1	36,617	36,801	36,092
Gulf Coast Region	38,627	40,920	38,014	2,667	2,482	2,362	6.9	6.1	6.2	35,960	38,438	35,652
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,518	28,080	25,996	1,949	1,810	1,704	7.3	6.4	6.6	24,569	26,270	24,292
Kodiak Island Borough	6,209	6,511	6,192	352	325	329	5.7	5.0	5.3	5,857	6,186	5,863
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	5,900	6,329	5,826	366	347	329	6.2	5.5	5.6	5,534	5,982	5,497
Interior Region	55,030	55,961	54,157	3,144	3,078	2,751	5.7	5.5	5.1	51,886	52,883	51,406
Denali Borough	2,304	2,919	2,394	61	52	59	2.6	1.8	2.5	2,243	2,867	2,335
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,431	46,733	45,515	2,459	2,417	2,158	5.3	5.2	4.7	43,972	44,316	43,357
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,528	3,562	3,497	262	263	230	7.4	7.4	6.6	3,266	3,299	3,267
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,767	2,747	2,751	362	346	304	13.1	12.6	11.1	2,405	2,401	2,447
Northern Region	11,945	11,810	11,466	993	993	957	8.3	8.4	8.3	10,952	10,817	10,509
Nome Census Area	3,890	3,709	3,824	408	433	407	10.5	11.7	10.6	3,482	3,276	3,417
North Slope Borough	4,978	4,985	4,655	242	222	251	4.9	4.5	5.4	4,736	4,763	4,404
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,077	3,116	2,987	343	338	299	11.1	10.8	10.0	2,734	2,778	2,688
Southeast Region	43,174	45,005	42,538	2,270	2,242	2,089	5.3	5.0	4.9	40,904	42,763	40,449
Haines Borough	2,075	2,314	2,018	84	89	81	4.0	3.8	4.0	1,991	2,225	1,937
Juneau Borough	18,772	19,026	18,591	848	814	787	4.5	4.3	4.2	17,924	18,212	17,804
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	9,109	9,723	8,904	428	418	375	4.7	4.3	4.2	8,681	9,305	8,529
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area	2,477	2,314	2,375	260	267	246	10.5	11.5	10.4	2,217	2,047	2,129
Sitka Borough	4,946	5,079	4,930	233	243	238	4.7	4.8	4.8	4,713	4,836	4,692
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	2,453	2,573	2,401	147	148	131	6.0	5.8	5.5	2,306	2,425	2,270
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area	2,994	3,598	2,978	250	240	216	8.4	6.7	7.3	2,744	3,358	2,762
Yakutat Borough	348	378	341	20	23	15	5.7	6.1	4.4	328	355	326
Southwest Region	18,807	19,226	18,687	2,012	2,139	1,773	10.7	11.1	9.5	16,795	17,087	16,914
Aleutians East Borough	1,079	1,271	1,099	89	88	77	8.2	6.9	7.0	990	1,183	1,022
Aleutians West Census Area	3,069	3,184	3,011	142	145	128	4.6	4.6	4.3	2,927	3,039	2,883
Bethel Census Area	7,119	6,946	7,029	960	1,018	850	13.5	14.7	12.1	6,159	5,928	6,179
Bristol Bay Borough	1,089	1,784	1,119	42	37	36	3.9	2.1	3.2	1,047	1,747	1,083
Dillingham Census Area	2,456	2,307	2,437	186	200	172	7.6	8.7	7.1	2,270	2,107	2,265
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,306	1,211	1,368	71	66	52	5.4	5.5	3.8	1,235	1,145	1,316
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,689	2,523	2,624	522	585	458	19.4	23.2	17.5	2,167	1,938	2,166

Note: 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.

¹ Unemployment rates that are not seasonally adjusted should not be compared with those that are.

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