

ALASKA ECONOMIC **TRENDS**

JUNE 2019



ALASKANS 65 and OLDER

ALSO INSIDE

Craig's transition from fishing, logging booms

FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Alaska's older workers can bring value to any organization

By Dr. Tamika L. Ledbetter, Commissioner

The number of senior citizens in Alaska and the percentage of our population they represent are both growing. More seniors are also working past retirement age nationwide — some by choice, and some by necessity. Because of this trend and the growth that will continue for the next couple of decades, seniors are becoming an increasingly large and important part of our state's worker pool.

The shift to more Alaskans who are 65 and older will require all of us to adapt to a changing population and workforce, and it's also critical we recognize the opportunity this presents.

Business leaders are competing for talent both nationally and globally, and right now we have more jobs than qualified workers to fill them. Many older people have valuable technical and journey-level skills in high-demand fields. Others have years of career experience and may simply need to upgrade their computer skills or get comfortable navigating online job search portals.

Employers should also recognize the value older workers can bring to their organizations. Businesses who hire older people and provide the opportunity to further their training or education often gain loyal and dedicated employees. In addition to their experience, older workers can bring a strong work ethic and maturity to an organization as well as a stability that can help reduce turnover. Multiple generations working together can also add diversity



and depth to the workplace.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development recognizes the benefits of hiring older workers as well as the need to focus on career development for the current and future workforce, and we design our programs with the larger battle for skilled workers in mind. For example, for

many years our MASST program (Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training) has helped workers 55 and older gain employability skills and find suitable work in the current labor market. This program, administered by Alaska Job Center Network staff, includes a variety of training providers and educators who develop curriculum based on helping mid-career workers and seniors make a smooth transition if they continue working.

As commissioner, I would like to thank every MASST trainee serving in a local job center or host site as well as the many staff members across the state dedicated to helping older workers develop skills and find rewarding employment. I also encourage older Alaskans who want to return to work or move up by upgrading their skills to contact our department about the range of resources available to help them succeed.

Contact Dr. Tamika L. Ledbetter, Commissioner, at (907) 465-2700 or commissioner.labor@alaska.gov.



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ON THE COVER:

Tribal members, partners, and National Park Service staff carry the Eagle Pole to the Huna Tribal House site in Glacier Bay, courtesy of National Park Service

PAGE 10: Air view of Craig, courtesy of Victor Rivers family papers, Archives and Special Collections, Consortium Library, University of Alaska Anchorage

ALASKA
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Trends is a nonpartisan, data-driven magazine that covers a range of economic topics in Alaska.

ON THIS PAGE: The background image for 2019 is an aerial photo of rivers near Circle by Dr. Travis Nelson, who teaches at the Center for Pediatric Dentistry in Seattle. Nelson visited Alaska in May 2010 to provide dental care to children in Venetie, Circle, and Fort Yukon.

If you have questions or comments, contact editor Sara Whitney at sara.whitney@alaska.gov or (907) 465-6561. This material is public information, and with appropriate credit it may be reproduced without permission. To sign up for a free electronic subscription, read past issues online, or purchase a print subscription, visit labor.alaska.gov/trends.

Alaskans 65 and Older

Our current senior citizen population and how it's changing

By **EDDIE HUNSINGER**

The number of Alaskans who are 65 or older is growing rapidly in all regions of the state. This shift to larger senior populations across Alaska will play an important role in shaping our communities and households in the coming years.

What's behind the aging trend

The number of senior citizens has increased by more than 5 percent each year since 2010, faster than any other state. As of 2018, Alaska had an estimated 87,304 seniors, up from 54,938 eight years before, and we project the state will have more than 138,000 seniors by 2035.

The statewide growth in the 65-plus population is a long-term trend, but since 2011 it's been amplified as Alaska's especially large population of baby boomers has begun to reach 65. (See exhibits 1 and 2.) Many baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, settled here as young adults during the state's economic booms of the 1970s and 1980s.

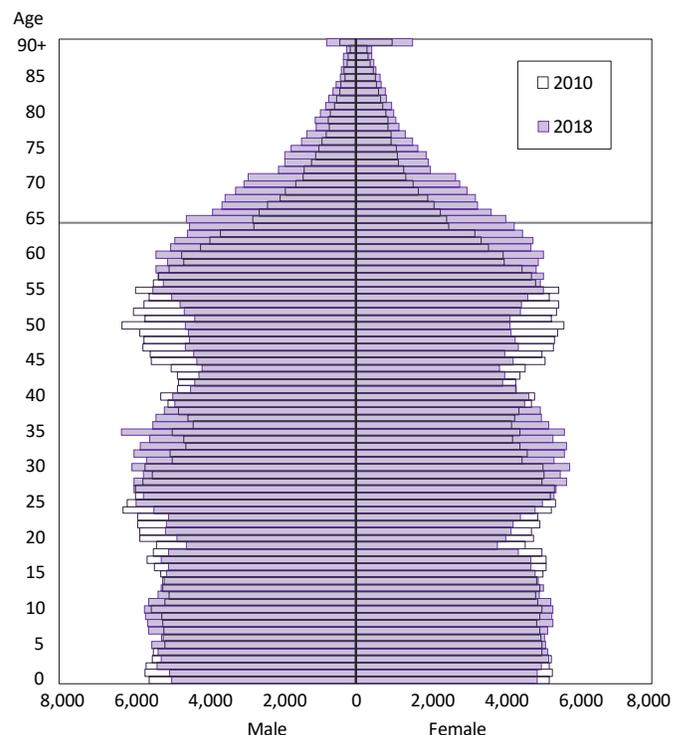
Alaska's negative net migration trend has also contributed to this shift to an older population. Since 2013, Alaska has lost substantially more people to migration each year than it's gained, leading to little or no total population growth. In general, lower growth — whether due to slowed birth rates or migration losses — means a larger share of seniors, because older people move less and yearly migration swings affect younger age groups more.

What Alaska's senior population looks like now

A smaller share than nationwide

While Alaska's senior population is increasing both numerically and as a percentage of the state, seniors are still a smaller share of our population than they are nationwide. (See Exhibit 3.) In fact, the U.S. Census

1 Population Shifts Older ALASKA, 2010 AND 2018, BY AGE AND SEX



Note: Vintage 2018 population estimates
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

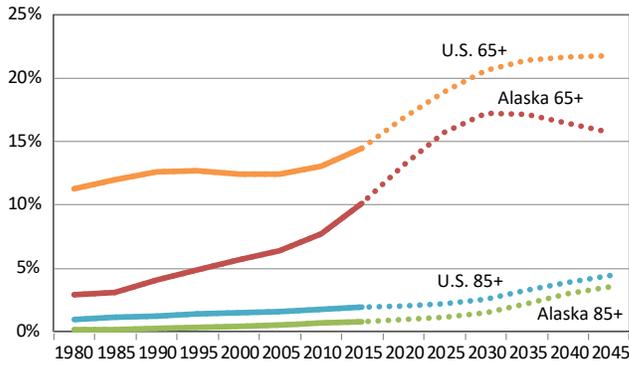
Bureau's latest estimates show Alaska has the second-smallest senior population relative to its total in the country. Our share was smallest until 2016.

Slightly more women than men

Older populations typically have more women than men, and this holds for Alaska, where the total ratio of males to females in 2018 was 1.06 and for senior citizens it was 0.99. The latest estimates for the U.S. were 0.97 and 0.8, respectively, in 2017.

Young age groups skew male because the sex ratio at

2 Senior Projections for Alaska, U.S. 1980 TO 2045



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

birth is about 1.05, while older age groups skew female due to their longer life expectancy. Job-related migration can markedly affect this ratio too, as we see with Alaska’s military population, which is disproportionately male, and industries that have more men, such as fishing and mining.

Larger percentages in Southeast, Kenai

While 81 percent of Alaska’s seniors live in the state’s population centers, Southeast and the Kenai Peninsula have the highest concentrations. (See exhibits 4 and 13.) In Southeast, seniors already make up more than 20 percent of the population in Haines, Wrangell, and the Hoonah-Angoon Census Area.

Between 2010 and 2018, the Interior, Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna, and Gulf Coast regions gained the most seniors in percent as well as numeric terms, each leaping by over 60 percent. Anchorage/Mat-Su alone added more than 17,000 seniors, representing over half the state’s overall increase.

More white in recent years

While Alaska’s senior population is increasing in size, it hasn’t become more racially diverse in recent years as other age groups have. The percentage of seniors who are white increased slightly, from 74 percent in 2010 to 75 percent in 2015. (See Exhibit 5.) Nationwide, the senior population became less white, declining from 80 percent to 78 percent.

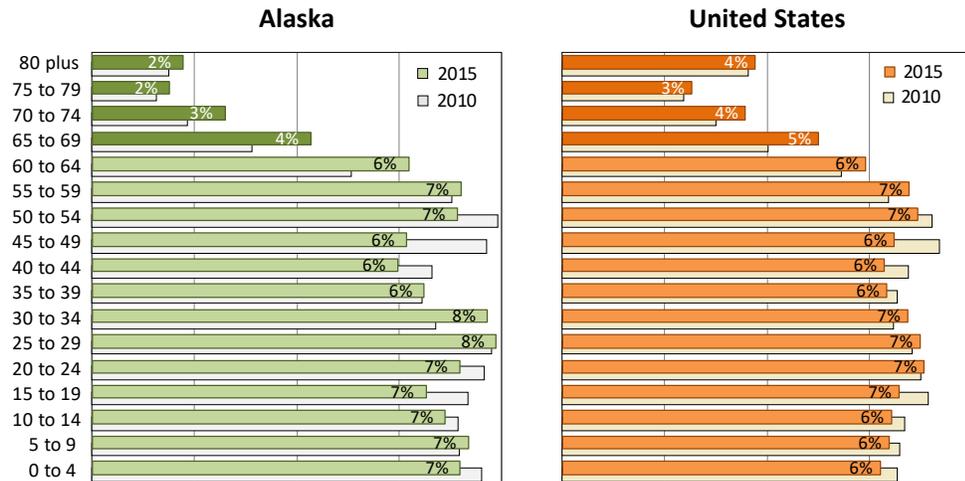
The reason for the difference in Alaska is our baby boom generation, many of whom moved up from the Lower 48 during the ’70s and ’80s, is more white than the generation before it. Diversity will increase among seniors in Alaska in the long-term, however, as younger generations age.

Nearly one in four live alone

About 23 percent of Alaska seniors live alone, according to 2013 to 2017 estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. (See Exhibit 6.) That’s a bit lower than the nationwide 26 percent but much higher than the state overall (9 percent).

Most seniors who live alone are women (57 percent). Women live longer, but it’s also because husbands

3 Age Group Shifts in Alaska and the U.S. 2010 AND 2015

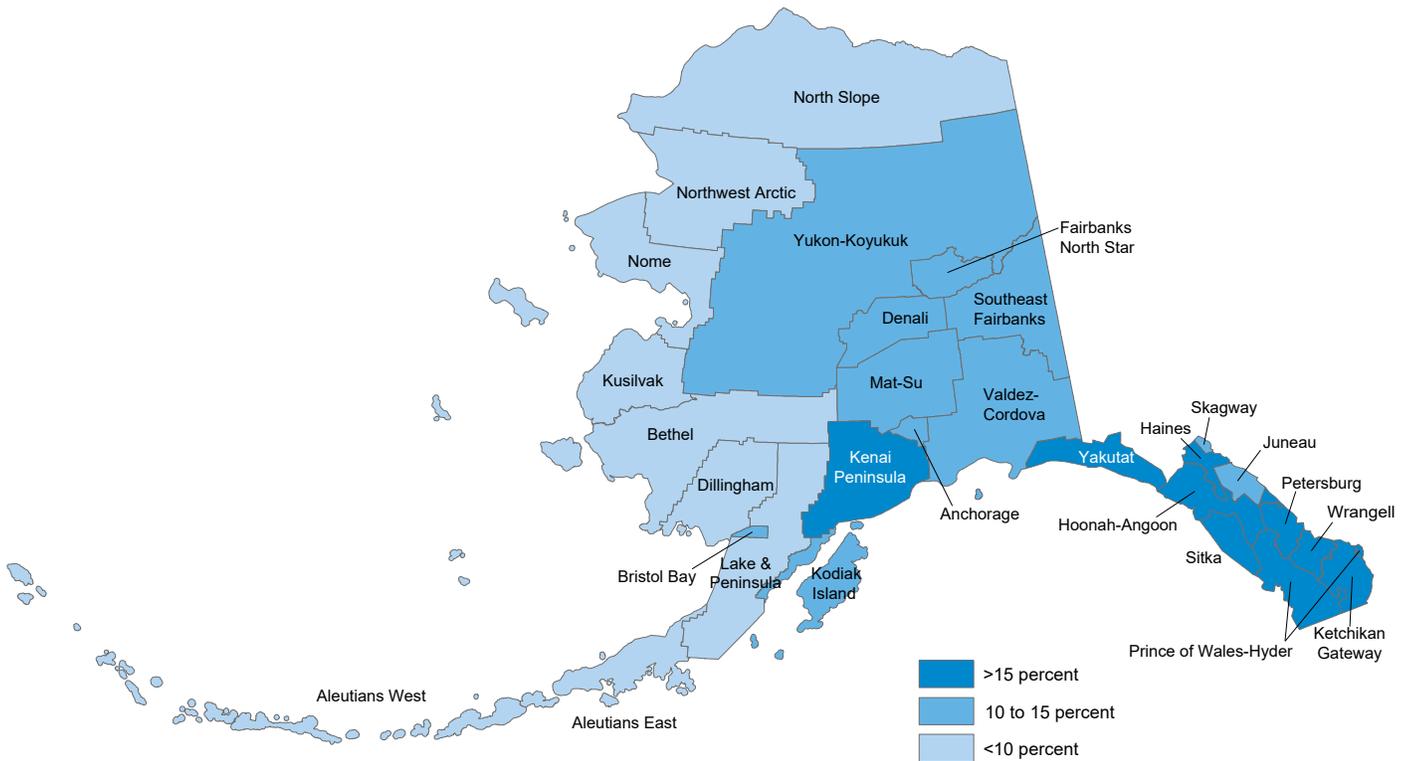


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

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Gulf Coast, Southeast Have Highest Concentrations of Seniors

2018

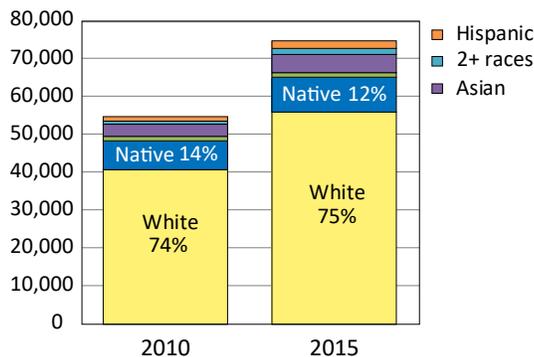


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

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Changes in Racial Makeup of the Senior Population

ALASKA, 2010 AND 2015

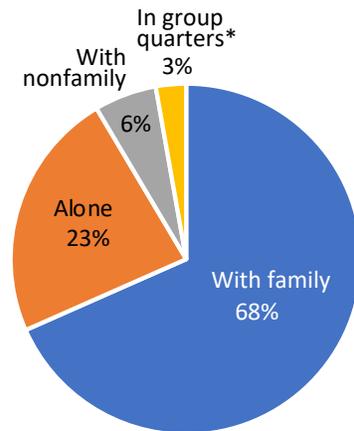


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

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Seniors' Households

ALASKA, 2013-2017 ACS



*Includes nursing homes and dorm-style living facilities
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

tend to be a bit older than their wives and men are more likely to remarry.

Just over two-thirds of seniors in Alaska live with family, and it's around 80 percent for the overall population, shares that are about the same nationwide.

Only 3 percent of Alaska's senior citizens live in "group quarters," which includes nursing homes and dormitory-style living facilities, and this is also in line with the nation. Apartment-style assisted living isn't considered group quarters.

Most have been married

Even though about a fourth of Alaska seniors live alone, more are married and the vast majority were married at some point. (See Exhibit 7.) About 52 percent are married (not separated), compared to 45 percent of the population age 15 and older.

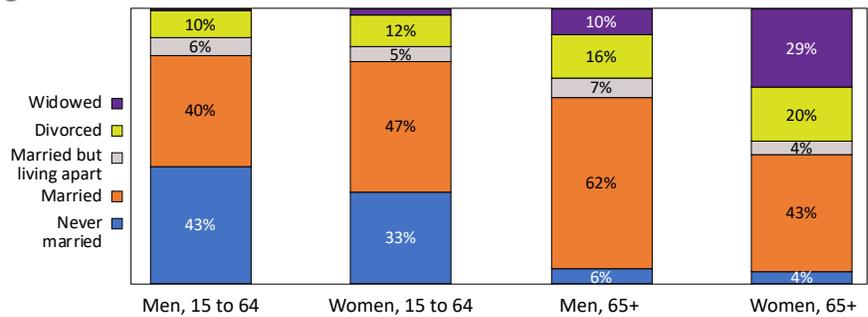
Divorced and widowed shares are higher among seniors too, especially for women: 29 percent of women 65-plus are widowed and 20 percent are divorced, and for men it's 10 percent and 16 percent.

More own than rent homes

Eighty-two percent of Alaska seniors live in owner-occupied homes compared to 64 percent of Alaskans

7 How Marriage Status Differs At 65+

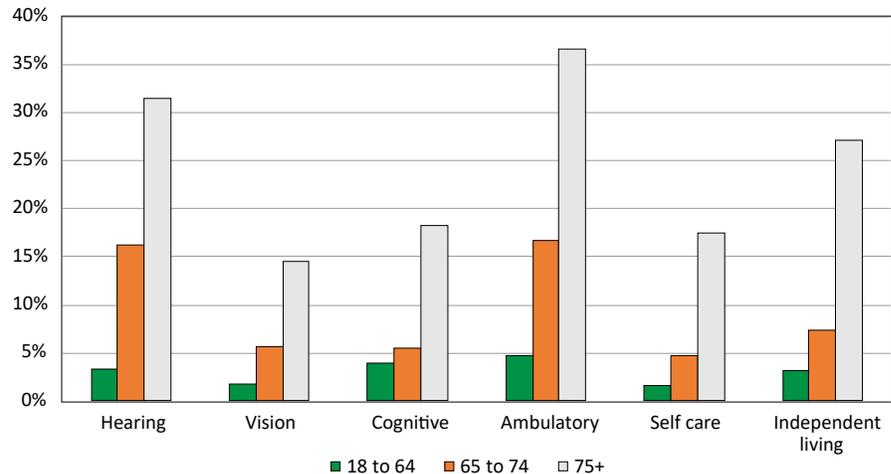
ALASKA, 2013-2017 ACS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

8 Types of Disabilities by Age Group

ALASKA, 2013-2017 ACS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

9 More Alaska Seniors Went to College

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN U.S. AND ALASKA BY AGE, 2013-2017 ACS

	United States				Alaska			
	Everyone		Age 65+		Everyone		Age 65+	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Population 25 years and over	216,271,644	+/-15,647	47,732,389	+/-4,845	475,442	+/-375	74,340	+/-244
Did not graduate high school	12.7%	+/-0.1	17.2%	+/-0.1	7.6%	+/-0.2	13.4%	+/-0.7
Diploma or equivalent	27.3%	+/-0.1	32.1%	+/-0.1	27.6%	+/-0.4	24.7%	+/-1.1
Some college or associate degree	29.1%	+/-0.1	24.8%	+/-0.1	35.8%	+/-0.5	31.4%	+/-1.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	30.9%	+/-0.1	25.9%	+/-0.1	29.0%	+/-0.5	30.4%	+/-1.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

overall, and 18 percent live in rentals. The average size of senior households is 2.1 people, and in keeping with Alaska's larger average households in general, this is a bit higher than for all U.S. seniors (1.9).

Seven percent of Alaska seniors live with grandchildren — 5 percent nationally — and about 2 percent are responsible for their care. More than three-quarters of co-resident grandparents are under 65, however, and caregiving by co-resident grandparents decreases with age.

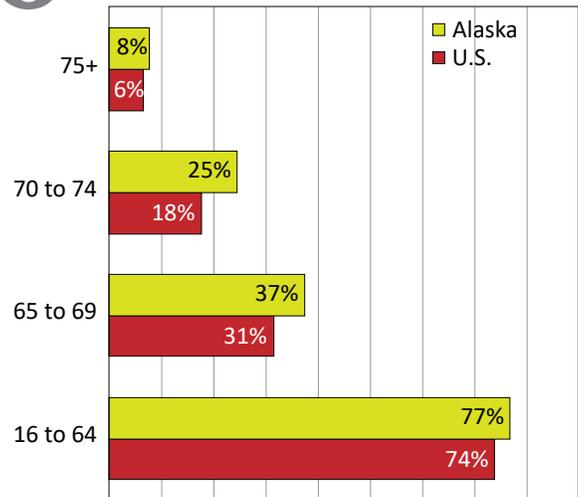
Disabilities increase at higher ages

Thirty-nine percent of Alaska seniors have a disability of some form, which the U.S. Census Bureau determines using six questions on hearing, vision, cognitive ability, ambulatory ability, self care, and living independently. (See Exhibit 8.)

Ambulatory disabilities, which include difficulty walking or climbing stairs, affect 17 percent of those from 65 to 74 and 37 percent of those over 75. Difficulty hearing affects 16 percent and 31 percent, respectively.

Given that rates of disability increase with age, it's worth noting Alaska's current senior population is relatively young. A large share are in their 60s or early 70s, so the numbers of Alaskans with disabilities will increase in the near future as the state's percentage of the most elderly seniors increases.

10 Labor Force Participation RATES BY AGE, 2013-2017 ACS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

More have gone to college

More seniors have college degrees in Alaska than they do nationwide, at 30 percent compared to 26 percent. (See Exhibit 9.) The Alaska percentage is close to that of the total population over age 25, but nationally, the share of seniors who have a bachelor's degree is 5 per-

11 Income and Poverty Among Seniors in the U.S. and Alaska 2013-2017 ACS

	United States				Alaska			
	Everyone		Age 65+		Everyone		Age 65+	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Income in the past 12 months								
Households	118,825,921	+/-229,026	29,144,402	+/-94,276	252,536	+/-1,271	43,889	+/-540
Households with earnings	77.7%	+/-0.1	36.9%	+/-0.1	86.0%	+/-0.4	49.2%	+/-1.5
Mean earnings	\$83,186	+/-163	\$56,453	+/-180	\$90,061	+/-1,111	\$62,862	+/-3,135
Households with Social Security income	30.6%	+/-0.1	90.0%	+/-0.1	21.1%	+/-0.3	84.6%	+/-1.0
Mean Social Security income	\$18,778	+/-17	\$20,467	+/-24	\$17,091	+/-266	\$18,464	+/-301
Households w/ Supplemental Security income	5.4%	+/-0.1	6.4%	+/-0.1	4.5%	+/-0.3	7.5%	+/-0.7
Mean Supplemental Security income	\$9,743	+/-16	\$9,434	+/-22	\$9,901	+/-377	\$8,822	+/-550
Households with cash public asst income	2.6%	+/-0.1	1.8%	+/-0.1	6.3%	+/-0.3	9.7%	+/-0.8
Mean cash public assistance income	\$3,230	+/-18	\$2,978	+/-41	\$4,020	+/-189	\$3,859	+/-326
Households with retirement income	18.4%	+/-0.1	48.6%	+/-0.1	19.4%	+/-0.4	55.4%	+/-1.4
Mean retirement income	\$25,798	+/-45	\$26,258	+/-60	\$30,401	+/-859	\$34,093	+/-1,390
Households with food stamp/SNAP benefits	12.6%	+/-0.1	8.9%	+/-0.1	10.3%	+/-0.3	8.2%	+/-0.7
Median household income	\$57,652	+/-138	\$41,876	+/-64	\$76,114	+/-979	\$59,041	+/-1,751
Poverty status in the past 12 months								
Population with determined poverty status	313,048,563	+/-10,099	46,424,881	+/-5,241	719,983	+/-538	73,193	+/-300
Below 100 percent of the poverty level	14.6%	+/-0.1	9.3%	+/-0.1	10.2%	+/-0.4	5.1%	+/-0.6

Note: All earnings and income are adjusted to 2017 dollars.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

cent less than the total population.

More Alaskan seniors went to college in general, too. About 31 percent have an associate degree or some college, compared to 25 percent nationwide.

Working and income

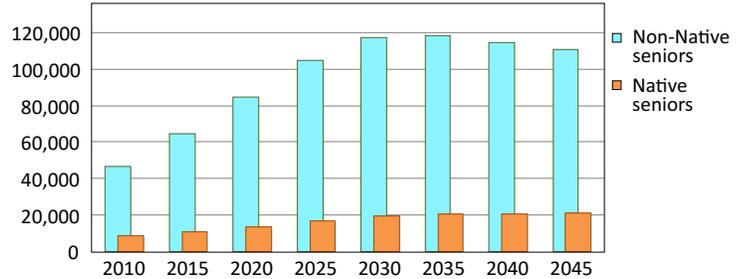
Although seniors are less likely to work than younger adults, they've become more likely to continue working in recent decades. Labor force participation — working or looking for work — among seniors

Continued on page 18

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Steady Increases in Native Seniors

ALASKA, 2010 TO 2045



Notes: Values for 2020 and 2045 are projections. Alaska Native includes Native alone or in combination with another race.

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

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Alaska's Senior Populations by Borough or Census Area

ALASKA, 2010 TO 2040

	65+ Population					Percent of Population That is 65+				
	2010	2018	2020	2030	2040	2010	2018	2020	2030	2040
Alaska	54,938	87,304	97,828	136,415	134,957	8%	12%	13%	17%	16%
Anchorage/Matanuska-Susitna Region	28,208	45,537	51,007	73,291	75,481	7%	11%	12%	16%	16%
Anchorage, Municipality	21,139	32,892	36,931	51,915	51,539	7%	11%	12%	17%	16%
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	7,069	12,645	14,076	21,376	23,942	8%	12%	13%	16%	15%
Gulf Coast Region	7,991	12,857	14,142	18,813	17,680	10%	16%	18%	23%	21%
Kenai Peninsula Borough	6,276	10,248	11,086	14,476	13,840	11%	18%	19%	23%	22%
Kodiak Island Borough	915	1,445	1,654	2,355	2,173	7%	11%	13%	19%	18%
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	800	1,164	1,402	1,982	1,667	8%	12%	15%	24%	21%
Interior Region	7,743	12,728	14,430	19,878	19,155	7%	11%	13%	17%	16%
Denali Borough	137	240	304	390	353	8%	13%	16%	20%	18%
Fairbanks North Star Borough	6,375	10,698	12,228	17,134	16,731	7%	11%	12%	17%	16%
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	662	1,007	1,064	1,357	1,316	9%	14%	15%	19%	18%
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	569	783	834	997	755	10%	15%	16%	21%	17%
Northern Region	1,460	1,838	2,210	3,135	2,889	6%	7%	8%	11%	9%
Nome Census Area	603	739	917	1,241	1,158	6%	7%	9%	12%	10%
North Slope Borough	402	528	641	949	843	4%	5%	6%	9%	7%
Northwest Arctic Borough	455	571	652	945	888	6%	7%	8%	12%	11%
Southeast Region	7,166	11,089	12,340	16,093	14,919	10%	15%	17%	22%	21%
Haines Borough	345	531	599	740	653	14%	21%	25%	33%	32%
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	288	464	494	602	499	13%	21%	24%	32%	30%
Juneau, City and Borough	2,635	4,216	4,785	6,559	6,191	8%	13%	15%	20%	19%
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	1,367	2,159	2,350	3,077	2,870	10%	16%	17%	23%	22%
Petersburg Borough	369	610	653	790	707	12%	19%	21%	27%	26%
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	628	978	1,091	1,430	1,320	10%	16%	17%	23%	21%
Sitka, City and Borough	1,008	1,363	1,502	1,872	1,753	11%	16%	17%	23%	22%
Skagway Borough, Municipality	88	154	186	220	260	9%	14%	17%	18%	20%
Wrangell, City and Borough	374	517	568	683	557	16%	21%	24%	30%	26%
Yakutat, City and Borough	64	97	112	120	109	10%	19%	21%	27%	29%
Southwest Region	2,370	3,255	3,699	5,205	4,833	6%	8%	9%	12%	10%
Aleutians East Borough	155	221	233	304	283	5%	7%	8%	11%	10%
Aleutians West Census Area	193	421	485	680	654	3%	8%	9%	13%	13%
Bethel Census Area	1,041	1,360	1,557	2,167	2,046	6%	8%	8%	11%	9%
Bristol Bay Borough	83	117	150	214	177	8%	13%	18%	28%	26%
Dillingham Census Area	367	483	549	770	642	8%	10%	11%	16%	12%
Kusilvak Census Area	404	502	545	791	810	5%	6%	6%	8%	7%
Lake and Peninsula Borough	127	151	180	279	221	8%	9%	10%	15%	11%

Note: 2020 to 2040 are projections.

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

Craig, Alaska

Prince of Wales town's transition from cannery, logging booms

By **ALYSHA GUTHRIE**

Prince of Wales is the southernmost island in Southeast Alaska, rich with resources used for centuries by the Tlingit and Haida people. Though sparsely populated, it covers 2,577 square miles, making it the fourth-largest island in the United States.

The island's largest incorporated city is Craig, a fishing village nestled on the west coast and sheltered from the open ocean by several islands. The closest, *Shaan Da*, or Fish Egg Island, is home to the area's vital her-
ring fishery.

Craig's Tlingit name is *Shaan Seet*, named for the small strait between the city and Fish Egg Island. It's also the name of the local Native corporation, which has more

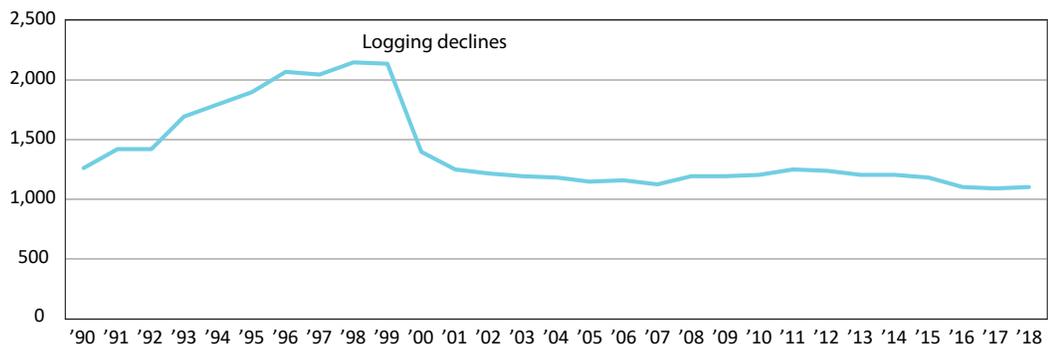
than 580 shareholders.

While the island has a road system that connects all its communities, Craig's only commercial access is via small seaplane or boat. Klawock, which is about seven miles away, serves as access point and houses an Inter-Island Ferry Authority office as well as two regional airlines with planes that carry up to nine passengers. The ferry runs from Ketchikan to Hollis, a town about 30 miles across the island by road. (See the map on the next page.)

Craig had about 1,095 residents in 2018, down from 1,201 in 2010 and 1,397 in 2000. Even the 2000 count was a significant drop, however. Craig's population grew through the 1990s before peaking in 1998 and 1999, then dropping the following year with the decline of logging. (See Exhibit 1.)

1 Craig Settled At Just Over 1,000 People After 2000

CRAIG POPULATION, 1990 TO 2018 ESTIMATES



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

The cannery and Craig's early fishing boom

Craig's modern economy began with fishing. The town was named for Craig Miller, who established a fish saltery on the island in 1907 followed by a cold storage plant and a packing company. By 1912, the town had a salmon cannery as well. Craig became a second-class city in 1922 and a first-class city in 1973.

Seacoast Packing Co. bought the Craig cannery in 1929, then folded in two other Prince of Wales plants the following year: the cannery near Karheen Creek and the Klawock cannery, which was built in 1878 and was Alaska's first. The town's population grew through the 1930s as pink salmon runs hit records.

At one time, the Craig cannery was known as "the heartbeat of town." It was the primary source of residents' income, and the town came to life each May for its seasonal opening. Things quieted down with the end of the purse-seining season.

Operations came to an abrupt end in 1957 when the cannery burned down, which was the fate of nearly half of all Southeast canneries between 1878 and

1949. The fires were caused by a range of factors, including crude and mostly wood construction, flammable heating oils and oily waste, boilers that operated at high temperatures and pressures, and inadequate fire suppression equipment.

According to the Alaska Historical Society, 134 canneries were built between those years, 65 burned and were not rebuilt, five burned and were rebuilt, 10 were moved to other sites, and some operations were consolidated. By 1949, Southeast had just 37 operating canneries.

The property, on which some buildings remained, was sold in 1959 and repurposed as a major maintenance and supply station in 1963. As fishing declined, these services became less necessary and eventually the property was for sale again. Ward Cove Packing acquired it in 1988, and in 2007, the city purchased the site for \$1.75 million after eyeing it for several years for possible new harbor and support facilities.

Because of the cannery's historical significance, many residents are happy to see it in local hands. The city is formulating its development plan, with the goal of balancing economic development, harbor use, public use, and historical preservation as well as working it into



At left, Craig's cannery site in 2007. The cannery burned down in 1957 and the site changed hands a few times in the years that followed. The city purchased the property in 2007 and is developing a plan for it this year, with the goal of development for multiple uses while keeping a clear connection to its history. Photo by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

downtown traffic patterns.

Development will likely include recognition of the site's history while making it suitable for industrial and marine use as well as mixed commercial and residential use. The Craig Harbor Advisory Committee, Craig Planning Commission, and the city council will take public input and make major development decisions this year.

Logging took over as fishing dwindled

The town lost its booming fishing industry as well as its cannery in the 1950s as local salmon runs became depleted. Coinciding with the collapse of commercial fishing, the city signed a 50-year timber contract with the U.S. Forest Service.

The timber industry flourished over the next few decades, and Craig's population grew steadily until the industry declined dramatically in Southeast in the late 1990s and 2000s. Without another industry to take logging's place, many people left Craig.

Small-scale, family-owned sawmills specializing in value-added products continue to operate in the area, and fallers remain one of the top occupations in the city, at 13 workers in 2016. The last of Southeast's large-scale mills also continues to oper-

ate, but its future remains uncertain with a decreasing timber supply.

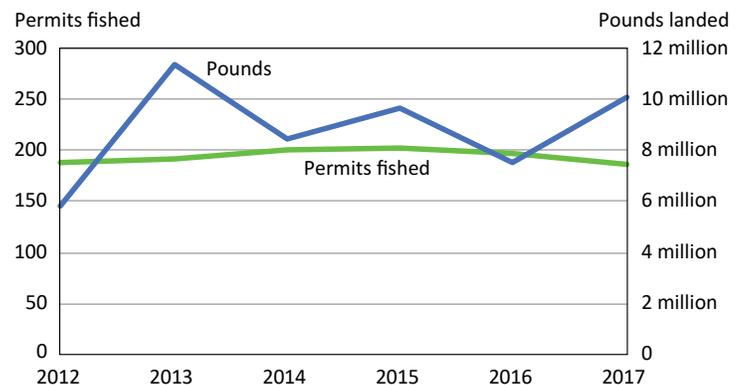
Logging may have faded, but it left a permanent mark on the city. About 33 percent of the homes in Craig are trailers set up in the 1970s during the logging boom to accommodate the influx of workers.

Craig's mix of industries today

Most workers in Craig have shifted to local government, health care, transportation, and commercial fishing. (See Exhibit 3. Note that it doesn't include most commercial fishermen because they're self-

2 Poundage Varies, But Fishing Steady

CRAIG, 2012 TO 2017



Source: Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Prince of Wales Island has its own marathon, now in its 20th year, which draws about 400 runners from around the world to run the full or half marathons or relays. Times can be used to qualify for the Boston Marathon.

employed.) Although the salmon runs haven't reached the heights of the early 1900s, their numbers have rebounded and commercial fishing remains a major part of the city's economy. Landed poundage has varied over the years, but the numbers of issued and fished permits has remained consistent. About about 200 permits are fished in Craig each year. (See Exhibit 2.)

Subsistence fishing also plays a vital role for most residents, who harvest salmon, halibut, rockfish, herring, and shellfish as well as the occasional marine mammal — mainly harbor seals.

About 62 percent of Craig residents work, and about two-thirds of those are employed year-round. Median household income is lower than the state's, at \$62,826 in Craig versus \$76,114 statewide.

The area's unemployment rate runs higher than the state and the Southeast Region, and the seasonality of some of the island's industries plays a role. These include charter sport fishing, construction, and agriculture, which is mostly logging but includes some hatchery employment. Prince of Wales' average annual unemployment rate has averaged around 11 percent since 2010 and is currently close to 10 percent, while the Southeast Region and Alaska rates have fallen between 6 and 8 percent since 2010.

The area's seasonal swings are larger, too. The Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area's unemployment peaks in the first quarter of the year and falls in the third. The state's highs and lows are similar — February and August — although the difference is far less drastic than for Prince of Wales, at around 2 percent versus nearly 7 percent.

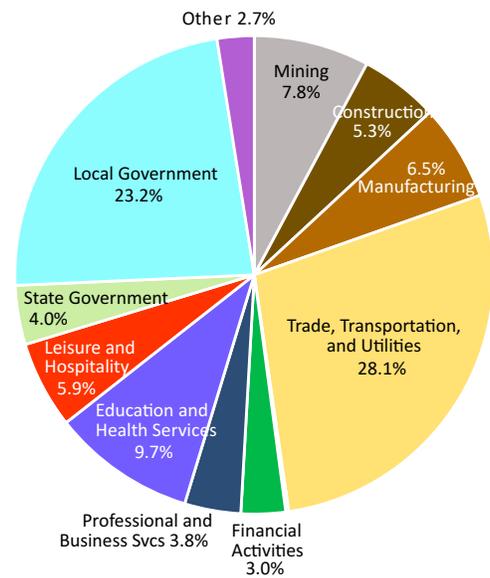
An increasingly older population

Another shift for Craig in recent years is that the median age of its population, which like most of Southeast was already older than the state overall, has continued to rise. In 2010, Craig's median age was 36.2, which rose to 38.1 in 2018. Alaska's median age increased from 33.8 to 35.2 over that period.

Craig's racial makeup is similar to the state as a whole.

3 Where Residents Work

CRAIG WORKERS BY INDUSTRY, 2016

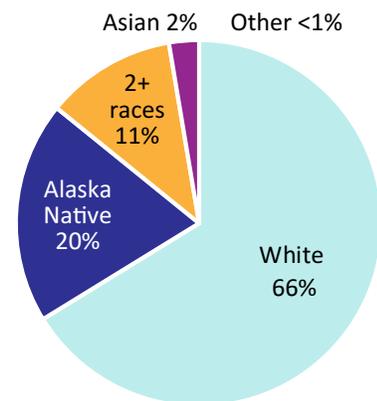


Note: Does not include federal workers or the self-employed, such as most commercial fishermen

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

4 Craig's Racial Makeup

2013-2017 ACS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013 to 2017

Sixty-six percent of residents are white, 20 percent are Alaska Native, 11 percent are of mixed race, and 2 percent are Asian. (See Exhibit 4.)

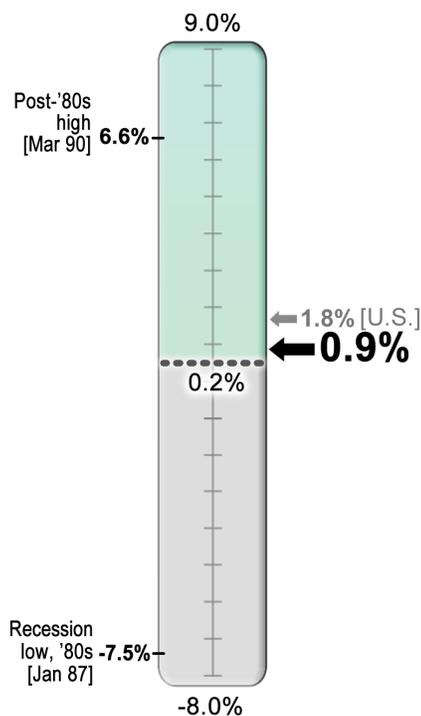
Alysha Guthrie is a research analyst for Research and Analysis in Juneau. Reach her at (907) 465-6029 or alysha.guthrie@alaska.gov.

Gauging Alaska's Economy



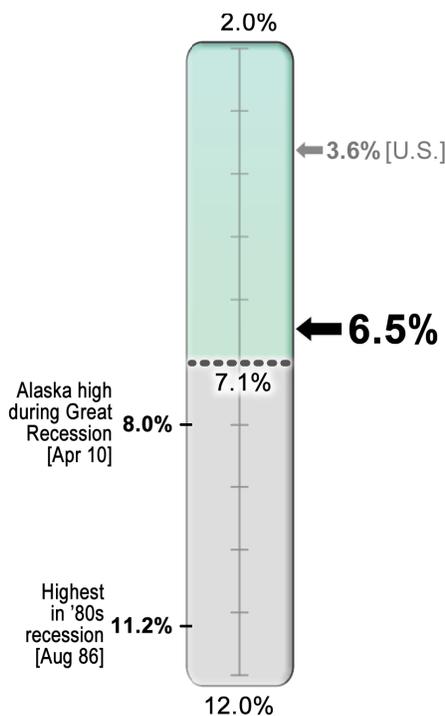
Job Growth

April 2019
Over-the-year percent change



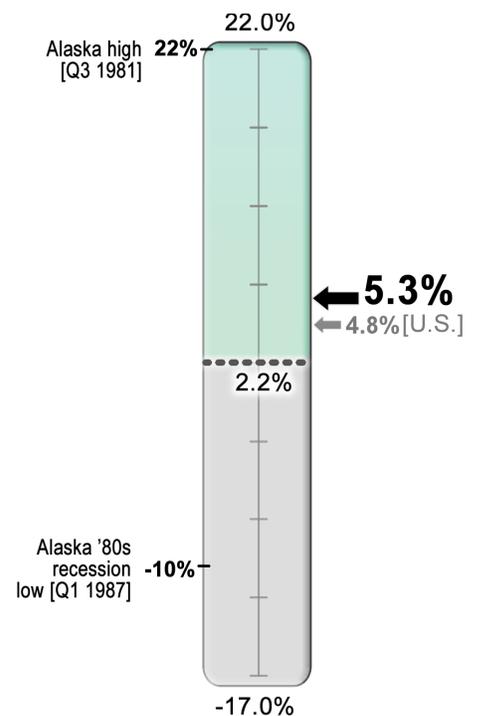
Unemployment Rate

April 2019
Seasonally adjusted



Wage Growth

4th Quarter 2018
Over-the-year percent change

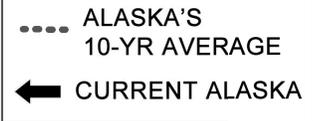


- After revisions to 2018 data, the state has registered over-the-year job gains for seven straight months after losing jobs for the prior 36 months.
- The gains are small but could signal the end of the state's recession.
- U.S. job growth remains strong and has been positive since 2010, with the strongest growth in 2015.

- Alaska's rate has been level at 6.5 percent for the last nine months.
- Unemployment rates are complicated economic measures and generally less telling at the state level than job or wage growth as indicators of broad economic health.

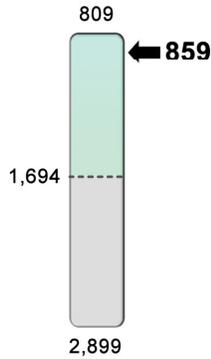
- Wages increased for the fifth consecutive quarter, and the growth has accelerated.
- Fourth quarter 2018 wages grew faster in Alaska than they did for the U.S. as a whole. It was the first time in years one of the three main gauges showed stronger performance for Alaska than for the nation.

Gauging Alaska's Economy



Initial Claims

Unemployment, week ending May 11, 2019†

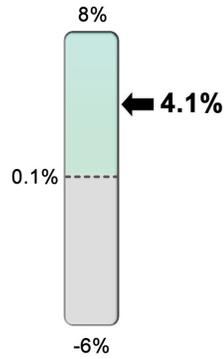


➤ For a variety of reasons, initial claims are well below the 10-year average despite job losses.

† Four-week moving average ending with the specified week

GDP Growth

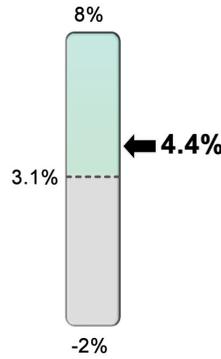
4th Quarter 2018
Over-the-year percent change



➤ Gross domestic product is the value of the goods and services a state produces. Alaska's GDP has grown for the last nine quarters after declining for 15 out of the prior 16.

Personal Income Growth

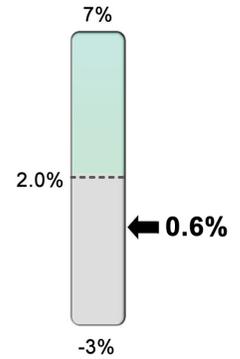
4th Quarter 2018
Over-the-year percent change



➤ Personal income includes wages as well as transfer payments (such as Social Security, Medicaid, and the PFD) and investment income. Growth has resumed and is now well above the 10-year average.

Change in Home Prices

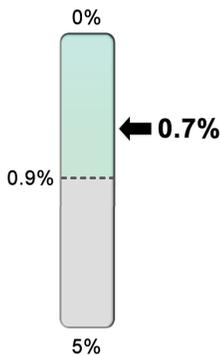
Single-family, 4th Qtr 2018
Over-the-year percent change



➤ Home prices include only those for which a commercial loan is used. This indicator tends to be volatile from quarter to quarter.

Foreclosure Rate

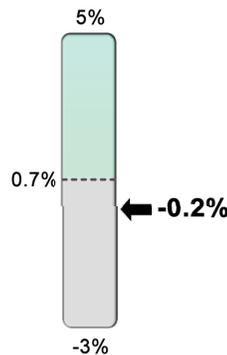
4th Quarter 2018



➤ Foreclosure rates remain very low, highlighting how different the state's recent recession was from the '80s recession when foreclosure rates exceeded 10 percent.

Population Growth

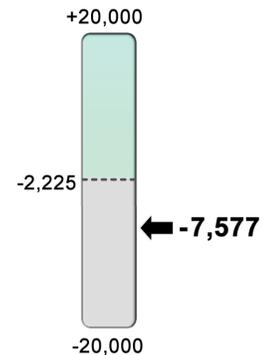
2017 to 2018



➤ The state's population has remained mostly stable during the state's recession, although 2018 was only the second year of small population declines since 1988.

Net Migration

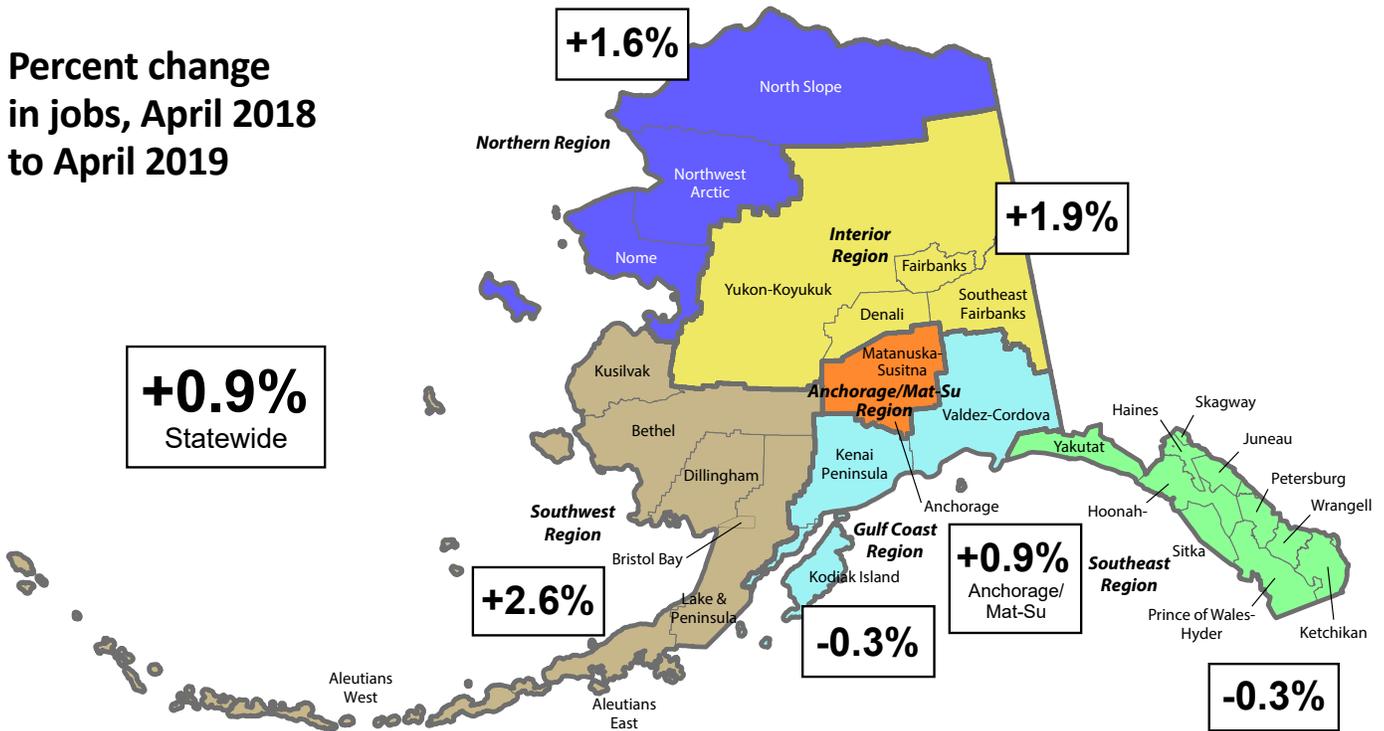
2017 to 2018



➤ The state had net migration losses for the sixth consecutive year in 2018, although natural increase (births minus deaths) offset those losses until 2017 and 2018.

Employment by Region

Percent change
in jobs, April 2018
to April 2019



Unemployment Rates

Seasonally adjusted

	Prelim. 04/19	Revised 03/19	04/18
United States	3.6	3.8	3.9
Alaska	6.5	6.5	6.7

Not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim. 04/19	Revised 03/19	04/18
United States	3.3	3.9	3.7
Alaska	6.4	7.2	6.9

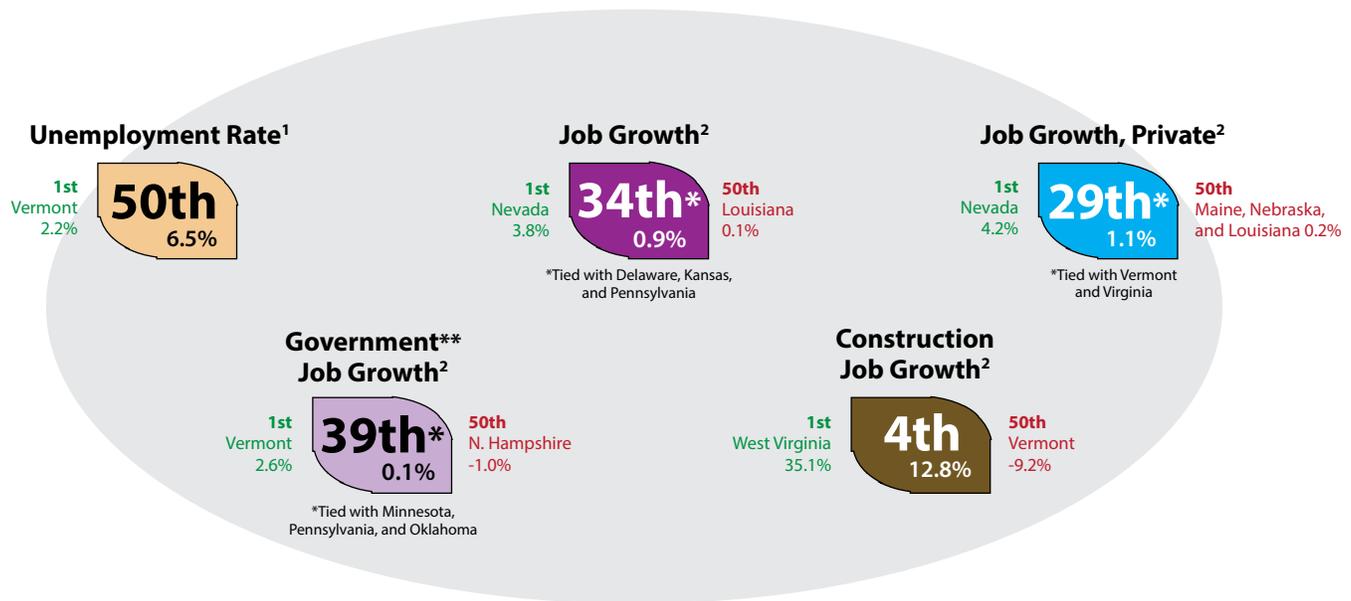
Corrections

Due to a formula error, some of the regions' year-ago unemployment rate comparisons were incorrect starting with 1/19 data. We have corrected these rates in the online versions of this year's press releases and in the April and May issues of *Trends*. We apologize for the error.

Regional, not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim. 04/19	Revised 03/19	04/18		Prelim. 04/19	Revised 03/19	04/18		Prelim. 04/19	Revised 03/19	04/18
Interior Region	6.7	7.4	7.0	Southwest Region	10.3	10.3	10.1	Southeast Region	6.3	7.8	6.3
Denali Borough	14.8	18.4	12.7	Aleutians East Borough	2.6	2.2	3.1	Haines Borough	8.8	14.4	10.2
Fairbanks N Star Borough	5.8	6.4	6.3	Aleutians West Census Area	2.9	2.8	3.4	Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	14.0	19.6	15.2
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	9.4	10.4	10.0	Bethel Census Area	13.7	13.7	11.0	Juneau, City and Borough	4.6	5.4	4.5
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	15.8	17.5	16.0	Bristol Bay Borough	7.7	14.9	8.6	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	6.8	7.9	6.5
Northern Region	10.9	10.9	11.1	Dillingham Census Area	8.7	9.8	10.3	Petersburg Borough	9.3	12.3	9.5
Nome Census Area	11.7	11.9	12.1	Kusilvak Census Area	20.4	21.2	22.0	Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	11.4	14.1	11.6
North Slope Borough	6.7	6.8	7.0	Lake and Peninsula Borough	11.9	13.9	13.5	Sitka, City and Borough	4.2	4.8	4.5
Northwest Arctic Borough	14.5	14.6	14.6	Gulf Coast Region	7.1	8.2	7.9	Skagway, Municipality	12.0	18.5	12.5
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	5.6	6.3	6.3	Kenai Peninsula Borough	7.3	8.6	8.3	Wrangell, City and Borough	7.6	9.2	6.3
Anchorage, Municipality	5.1	5.7	5.7	Kodiak Island Borough	5.1	5.3	5.8	Yakutat, City and Borough	6.0	11.5	6.9
Mat-Su Borough	7.3	8.3	8.1	Valdez-Cordova Census Area	8.6	10.0	8.5				

How Alaska Ranks



**Federal, state, and local; includes public schools and universities

¹April seasonally adjusted unemployment rates

²April employment, over-the-year percent change

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

Other Economic Indicators

	Current		Year ago	Change
Urban Alaska Consumer Price Index (CPI-U, base yr 1982=100)	227.992	2nd half 2018	219.131	+4.0%
Commodity prices				
Crude oil, Alaska North Slope, * per barrel	\$72.16	April 2019	\$71.03	+1.59%
Natural gas, residential, per thousand cubic feet	\$10.29	Feb 2019	\$10.62	-3.11%
Gold, per oz. COMEX	\$1,288.60	5/23/2019	\$1,294.80	-0.48%
Silver, per oz. COMEX	\$14.42	5/23/2019	\$16.41	-12.13%
Copper, per lb. COMEX	\$2.60	5/23/2019	\$3.07	-15.31%
Zinc, per MT	\$2,542.00	5/22/2019	\$3,029.00	-16.08%
Lead, per lb.	\$0.81	5/23/2019	\$1.13	-28.32%
Bankruptcies				
	101	Q1 2019	101	0%
Business	9	Q1 2019	13	-30.77%
Personal	92	Q1 2019	88	+4.55%
Unemployment insurance claims				
Initial filings	4,930	April 2019	5,688	-13.33%
Continued filings	34,326	April 2019	46,130	-25.59%
Claimant count	8,969	April 2019	11,816	-24.09%

*Department of Revenue estimate

Sources for pages 14 through 17 include Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; Kitco; U.S. Census Bureau; COMEX; Bloomberg; Infomine; Alaska Department of Revenue; and U.S. Courts, 9th Circuit

SENIOR CITIZENS

Continued from page 9

dropped from 28 percent in 1970 to 14 percent in 1990, then went back up to 25 percent recently. The pattern was more muted nationally, going from 16 percent to 12 percent to 17 percent over the same period.

Labor force participation is higher overall in Alaska, and this holds for seniors even when we adjust for more in their 60s and early 70s. (See Exhibit 10 on page 8.)

Lower labor force participation and smaller household sizes (2.1 people compared to 2.8 for all Alaska households) are reflected in incomes. The median income for Alaska households headed by seniors was \$59,041 in the American Community Survey 2013-2017 — higher than U.S. senior households (\$41,876), but much lower than all Alaska households (\$76,114). (See Exhibit 11.)

About half of senior-headed households in Alaska had earnings from a job — higher than the national rate of 37 percent, but still much lower than Alaska households overall (86 percent). The senior households in Alaska with earnings earned much less on average — \$62,862 versus \$90,061, respectively. Larger shares of senior households receive income from sources like Social Security (about 85 percent) and retirement accounts (55 percent), and this doesn't include savings.

Poverty rates are lower for seniors in Alaska and nationwide. In Alaska, 5 percent of seniors fall below the federal poverty threshold versus 10 percent for all Alaskans. For U.S. seniors it's just over 9 percent, which seems high compared to Alaska, but poverty data aren't adjusted for cost of living.

Looking forward: Big increases everywhere until 2035

It's easier to predict change in the 65-plus population than in younger populations. Migration rates are lower and more predictable, and mortality rates don't vary much from year to year, so the current age structure shows what the future senior population will look like.

Alaska's senior population will continue to increase, both numerically and as a share of the state, through the next decade and peak in the mid-2030s. (See Exhibit 2 on page 5.) After 2035, when we project the state will reach 138,000 seniors at just over 17 percent of the population, the senior share will decline with continued population aging as well as migration and mortality losses.

The U.S. Census Bureau projects a smaller shift for the national population, but its senior share will increase without interruption through the 2030s and past 2045, and remain above Alaska's share.

Oldest age group to grow in the long term

Alaska's 85-plus population will grow throughout the projection period and make up about 3.5 percent of the state in 2045, but it too will remain below the nationwide share. Although the percentage seems small, it would be nearly 30,000 elderly Alaskans — about the size of Juneau. This is an especially important population to prepare for, as disability and the need for care increase so much with age.

Steady growth for Alaska Native seniors

Alaska had 11,349 Alaska Native seniors as of July 2017, our latest estimate. That's an increase from 8,555 in 2010, and we project Alaska will have 21,033 Native seniors in 2045.

Seniors currently account for about 8 percent of the Alaska Native population, up from 6 percent in 2010, and that's projected to level off at 12 percent in the 2030s. In terms of Alaska's total senior population, about 14 percent are Alaska Natives, down from 16 percent in 2010 but projected to reach 16 percent again by 2045. (See Exhibit 12 on page 9.)

Increases in every part of the state

Senior shares of the population will grow in all regions in the coming decades. (See Exhibit 13.)

Seniors are already 15 percent of the Southeast Region, and we project that share will reach 22 percent by 2030. Haines, Wrangell, and the communities that make up the Hoonah-Angoon Census Area are each projected to peak at more than 30 percent senior citizens — the highest shares in the state.

Sixteen percent of the Gulf Coast Region's population was 65 or older as of 2018, which we project will hit 23 percent in 2030. Though the Kenai Peninsula currently has the region's largest share, the Valdez-Cordova Census Area's 2030 projection is largest at 24 percent.

While the remote regions of Southwest and Northern are younger and have high birth rates, their senior populations will increase as well. We expect the Northern Region's share to reach 11 percent in 2030 before falling to 9 percent in 2040. Southwest is projected to reach 12 percent before dipping to 10 percent.

In the Interior Region, seniors represented 11 percent of the population in 2018, which we project will increase to 17 percent in 2030. The massive but sparsely populated Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area, which includes dozens of villages, has already reached 15 percent and is on track to reach 21 percent by 2030.

Eddie Hunsinger is the state demographer. Reach him in Anchorage at (907) 269-4960 or eddie.hunsinger@alaska.gov.

SAFETY MINUTE

How to prevent injuries and deaths from fireworks this July 4

In a single month in 2017, eight people were killed and an estimated 12,900 people were injured by homemade or professional-grade fireworks, with 8,700 of those treated in a U.S. hospital emergency room. The report released last June by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission also found that 67 percent of the entire year's fireworks-related injuries happened between June 16 and July 16.

Most injuries came from sparklers, firecrackers, and aerial devices, and the most commonly injured body parts were hands and fingers (about 31 percent); head, face, and ears (22 percent); legs (17 percent); eyes (14 percent); and arms (6 percent).

Telephone follow-ups found that most injuries were caused by misuse or malfunctions. Misuses included holding fireworks in the hand, setting them off improperly, throwing lit fireworks at someone, dismantling or manufacturing fireworks, igniting fireworks too close to someone, igniting used "dud" fireworks, and placing fireworks too close to a heat source. Typical malfunctions included tip-overs, debris, errant flight paths, blowouts (explosions in the tube), and backfires such as sparks shooting from the back of the device.

While the sparkling lights and thunderous booms add to the thrill of an Independence Day celebration, the results can be deadly. If you decide to light them this July 4, purchase legal fireworks and take these safety steps:

- Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks. Parents may not realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers. Sparklers burn at about 2,000 degrees, which is hot enough to melt

some metals.

- Always ensure an adult closely supervises if older children are allowed to handle devices.
- Avoid buying fireworks packaged in brown paper, because this is often a sign the fireworks were made for professional displays. The results can be deadly if consumers get their hands on professional fireworks.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a device when lighting the fuse. Back up to a safe distance immediately after lighting fireworks.
- Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire.
- Never try to relight or handle malfunctioning fireworks. Soak them with water and throw them away.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Never carry fireworks in a pocket or shoot them off in metal or glass containers.
- After fireworks fizzle out, douse the spent device with water from a bucket or hose before discarding it to prevent trash fires.

For the full CPSC report, visit https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/Fireworks_Report_2017.pdf?Jr0IMG0Z5QYQMTyUTr_3GR.991BKn4l

Safety Minute is written by the Labor Standards and Safety Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

EMPLOYER RESOURCES

Grant available to train incumbent workers to fight opioid abuse

The opioid crisis is wreaking havoc in Alaska, destroying families and adding fuel to an unprecedented crime wave. Opioid addiction crosses all demographics and is widespread, from Alaska's smallest villages to the largest cities.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Employment and Training Services, received more than \$1.2 million in grant funds to help combat this crisis. The grant provides training and support service funds to Alaskans at risk of, or directly affected by, opioid abuse. It includes \$300,000 to train 75 statewide incumbent workers who can help those affected by opioid addiction.

Training funds are available to employers to boost their workers' qualifications, credentials, or licensure to support Alaskans struggling with opioid addiction. Employers can select a training provider that best suits their workers' training needs. Training opportunities must address treat-

ing addiction or substance abuse, improving pain therapy or pain management techniques that prevent or reduce dependence on prescription painkillers, or increasing mental health treatment skills to decrease opioid addiction.

Eligible employers for this reimbursable training include for-profit businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies that have been operating for at least one year at the time of the application. The employer must commit to retain the incumbent workers who receive the training.

Employers can contact their local Alaska Job Center or email sandy.burgess@alaska.gov for more information. To learn more about incumbent worker training, visit labor.alaska.gov/dets/iwtp.

Employer Resources is written by the Employment and Training Services Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.