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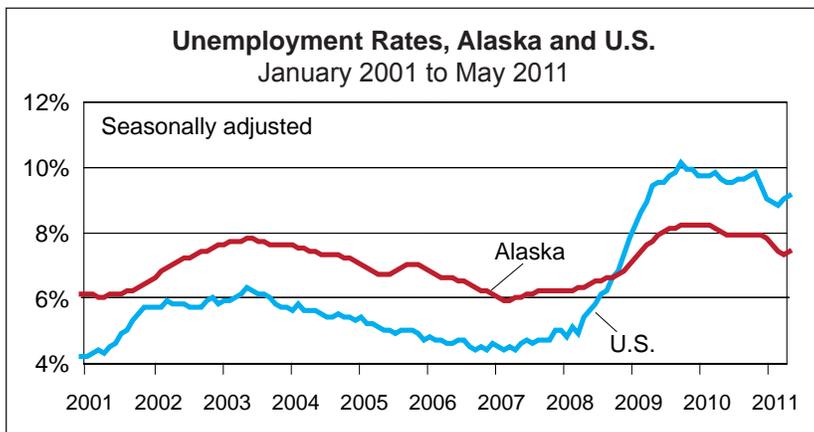
Press Release

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COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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Unemployment rate at 7.4 percent in May



Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May was 7.4 percent, up slightly from April's unchanged rate of 7.3 percent. The comparable national rate in May was 9.1 percent, up from the revised rate of 9.0 percent in April.

The unemployment rates for Alaska and the U.S. both remain below year-ago levels. During the past two months, the national jobless rate raised concern as it trended slightly upward. However, 39 states reported rate decreases in April, the latest data available for individual states.

Alaska's jobless numbers remain better than average compared to the U.S. and to many other states. In April, 34 states had higher unemployment rates than Alaska, 13 had lower rates, and two were identical. Nevada's rate was highest at 12.5 percent, and 3.3 percent in North Dakota was the lowest. Alaska's relatively healthy job market likely means more new job seekers, which puts some pressure on the state's jobless rate.

The not seasonally adjusted jobless rates were mixed around Alaska. In four of the six regions, unemployment fell as employment and economic activity followed their usual seasonal upswing. In the Denali Borough, home to Denali Park, preparation for summer visitors dropped the jobless rate from 16.2 percent in April, one of the highest in the state, to 6.2 percent in May, one of the lowest. In Bristol Bay, the rate fell from 9.2 percent in April to 2.9 percent in May — the lowest in the state — as workers prepared to harvest and process fish for one of the world's largest salmon fisheries. The highest jobless rate was 21 percent in the Aleutians East Borough, where some groundfish seasons ended.

Alaska Nonfarm Payroll Employment¹

	Preliminary 5/11	Revised 4/11	Revised 5/10	Year-over-year change		
				5/10	90% confidence interval ²	
Total Nonfarm Employment ³	328,400	321,400	325,100	3,300	-4,083	10,683
Mining and Logging	16,300	16,000	15,300	1,000	207	1,793
Oil and Gas	13,200	13,100	12,500	700	-	-
Construction	15,900	14,500	16,400	-500	-3,083	2,083
Manufacturing	10,000	9,800	10,300	-300	-1,294	694
Seafood Processing	6,300	6,400	6,600	-300	-	-
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	65,800	62,700	64,100	1,700	-672	4,072
Retail Trade	36,300	35,100	35,800	500	-1,528	2,528
Information	6,500	6,400	6,300	200	-381	781
Financial Activities	14,900	15,100	14,800	100	-1,843	2,043
Professional and Business Services	26,400	26,100	26,300	100	-1,693	1,893
Educational ⁴ and Health Services	43,300	43,100	41,600	1,700	432	2,968
Health Care	31,600	31,500	29,900	1,700	-	-
Leisure and Hospitality	33,900	30,300	32,900	1,000	-1,037	3,037
Accommodations	7,100	6,000	8,000	-900	-	-
Food Svcs. and Drinking Places	21,600	19,700	20,000	1,600	-	-
Other Services	11,800	11,600	11,500	300	-2,876	3,476
Government ⁵	83,600	85,800	85,600	-2,000	-	-

Notes: A dash indicates that confidence intervals are not available at this level of detail.

¹Not seasonally adjusted

²Based on the margin of error of the estimate, a 90 percent confidence interval statistically determines a range of values within which the "true" value falls with a 90 percent level of confidence. For more information, go to <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/c-i.pdf>.

³Excludes the self-employed, fishermen and other agricultural workers, and private household workers

⁴Private education only

⁵Includes public schools, the University of Alaska, and federally recognized tribal entities

Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	5/11	4/11	5/10
Alaska	7.4%	7.3%	8.0%
U.S.	9.1%	9.0%	9.6%

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

Beginning with the production of preliminary estimates for March 2011, production of state and metropolitan area Current Employment Statistics estimates has transitioned from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Concurrent with this transition, the BLS implemented several changes to the methods to help standardize estimation across states. While these changes reduce the potential for statistical bias in state and metropolitan area estimates, they may increase month-to-month variability. More detailed information on the CES changes is available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>.

Contact: Neal Fried, Economist (907) 269-4861
Research and Analysis Web site: <http://laborstats.alaska.gov>

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	5/11 ^P	4/11	5/10	Number			Rate		
				5/11 ^P	4/11	5/10	5/11 ^P	4/11	5/10
Alaska Statewide	364,284	358,461	360,634	26,915	27,525	27,618	7.4	7.7	7.7
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	197,058	197,369	195,830	13,191	13,460	13,996	6.7	6.8	7.1
Municipality of Anchorage	154,432	154,487	153,730	9,565	9,587	10,465	6.2	6.2	6.8
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	42,626	42,882	42,100	3,626	3,873	3,531	8.5	9.0	8.4
Gulf Coast Region	39,654	38,265	39,461	3,325	3,549	3,322	8.4	9.3	8.4
Kenai Peninsula Borough	27,871	26,584	27,791	2,423	2,614	2,503	8.7	9.8	9.0
Kodiak Island Borough	6,369	6,686	6,296	465	440	424	7.3	6.6	6.7
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	5,414	4,995	5,374	437	495	395	8.1	9.9	7.4
Interior Region	55,966	53,573	54,892	4,017	4,110	4,048	7.2	7.7	7.4
Denali Borough	1,786	831	1,711	111	135	103	6.2	16.2	6.0
Fairbanks North Star Borough	47,283	46,269	46,486	3,060	3,092	3,139	6.5	6.7	6.8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,704	3,473	3,612	360	392	350	9.7	11.3	9.7
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	3,193	3,000	3,083	486	491	456	15.2	16.4	14.8
Northern Region	12,593	12,860	12,313	1,190	1,198	1,219	9.4	9.3	9.9
Nome Census Area	4,177	4,238	4,090	513	513	534	12.3	12.1	13.1
North Slope Borough	5,368	5,549	5,239	232	225	267	4.3	4.1	5.1
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,048	3,073	2,984	445	460	418	14.6	15.0	14.0
Southeast Region	41,946	39,067	41,283	2,730	2,875	2,761	6.5	7.4	6.7
Haines Borough	1,430	1,247	1,428	100	118	111	7.0	9.5	7.8
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area ²	1,380	945	1,356	182	181	165	13.2	19.2	12.2
Juneau, City and Borough of	19,368	18,513	18,950	951	973	1,003	4.9	5.3	5.3
Ketchikan Gateway Borough ²	8,563	7,715	8,441	575	585	575	6.7	7.6	6.8
Petersburg Census Area ²	1,762	1,720	-	162	178	-	9.2	10.3	-
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area ²	2,586	2,533	-	341	368	-	13.2	14.5	-
Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area ²	-	-	2,494	-	-	321	-	-	12.9
Sitka, City and Borough of	4,732	4,536	4,795	273	264	280	5.8	5.8	5.8
Skagway, Municipality of ²	772	560	751	34	89	17	4.4	15.9	2.3
Wrangell, City and Borough of ²	1,029	996	-	81	82	-	7.9	8.2	-
Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area ²	-	-	2,753	-	-	259	-	-	9.4
Yakutat, City and Borough of	324	302	315	31	37	30	9.6	12.3	9.5
Southwest Region	17,067	17,324	16,852	2,462	2,331	2,270	14.4	13.5	13.5
Aleutians East Borough	724	1,272	734	152	123	97	21.0	9.7	13.2
Aleutians West Census Area	2,158	2,786	2,077	311	220	243	14.4	7.9	11.7
Bethel Census Area	6,986	6,912	6,948	1,087	1,062	1,064	15.6	15.4	15.3
Bristol Bay Borough	1,224	531	1,220	36	49	40	2.9	9.2	3.3
Dillingham Census Area	2,089	2,106	2,066	223	223	208	10.7	10.6	10.1
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,115	992	1,087	92	104	81	8.3	10.5	7.5
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,771	2,725	2,720	561	550	537	20.2	20.2	19.7

P = Preliminary. As more information becomes available, data are revised every month for the previous month and again at the end of every calendar year.

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 in rural Alaska do not meet the definition because they have not conducted an active job search due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.

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

²Because of the creation of new boroughs, this borough or census area has been changed or no longer exists. Data for the Skagway Municipality and Hoonah-Angoon Census Area (previously the Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon Census Area) became available in 2010. Data for the City and Borough of Wrangell, Petersburg Census Area, and Prince of Wales-Hyder went into effect in January 2011. Prior to January 2011, data were published for Wrangell-Petersburg Census Area and Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan Census Area.

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