

**David G. Stone**  
Acting Commissioner  
P.O. Box 111149  
Juneau, AK 99811-1149  
www.labor.alaska.gov



**Beth Leschper**  
Communications Director  
907.465.2700  
cell: 907.723.1321  
beth.leschper@alaska.gov

## Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

April 20, 2012

No. 12-28

### Unemployment rate at 7.0 percent in March

Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 7.0 percent, unchanged from February's revised rate. The comparable national rate was 8.2 percent.

The U.S. and Alaska rates have both continued to trend downward, though Alaska's has reached typical long-term levels while the nation's remains historically high. During the past decade, the nation's unemployment rate ranged from 4.7 to 6.0 percent during nonrecessionary years.

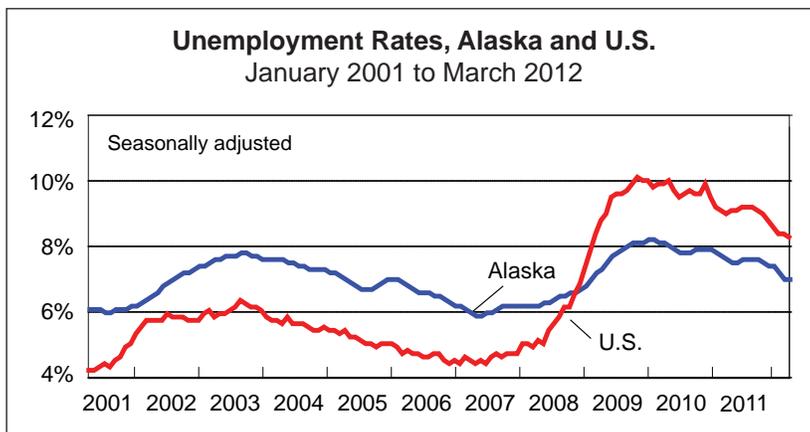
March rates for Alaska's boroughs and census areas — which are not seasonally adjusted — vary widely. Rural Alaska had both the lowest and highest rates.

The Hoonah-Angoon Census Area's rate of 25.8 percent was the highest in the state. Hoonah-Angoon has high year-round unemployment, and last year its rate never fell below double digits. Other areas with persistently high unemployment include the Wade Hampton, Nome, Yukon-Koyukuk and Bethel census areas, and the Northwest Arctic Borough.

The Aleutians West Census Area is an example of a rural area with a strong seasonal swing — its rate was lowest in the state in March at 4.9 percent, but in December it hit 19.7 percent. The Bristol Bay and Denali boroughs have similar cycles of significant economic activity followed by extended lulls, often driven by fishing and visitor seasons.

The state's more populated areas — such as Anchorage, Juneau, and Fairbanks — typically have lower-than-average unemployment rates and less variation throughout the year. They seldom have the lowest rates in the state, however. None of their annual rates reached double digits in 2011, and they rarely climb that high in any part of the year.

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



	3/12	2/12	3/11
Alaska	7.0%	7.0%	7.6%
U.S.	8.2%	8.3%	8.9%

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

## Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted<sup>1</sup>

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	3/12 <sup>P</sup>	2/12	3/11	Number			Rate		
				3/12 <sup>P</sup>	2/12	3/11	3/12 <sup>P</sup>	2/12	3/11
<b>Alaska Statewide</b>	<b>365,116</b>	<b>363,359</b>	<b>363,588</b>	<b>28,765</b>	<b>28,820</b>	<b>30,343</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>Anchorage/Mat-Su Region</b>	<b>200,206</b>	<b>199,966</b>	<b>201,054</b>	<b>13,613</b>	<b>13,509</b>	<b>14,807</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>7.4</b>
Municipality of Anchorage	156,739	156,529	157,472	9,333	9,230	10,339	6.0	5.9	6.6
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	43,467	43,437	43,582	4,280	4,279	4,468	9.8	9.9	10.3
<b>Gulf Coast Region</b>	<b>39,452</b>	<b>38,890</b>	<b>38,400</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>3,718</b>	<b>3,957</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>10.3</b>
Kenai Peninsula Borough	27,286	26,863	26,598	2,694	2,753	2,958	9.9	10.2	11.1
Kodiak Island Borough	7,181	7,215	6,964	410	412	443	5.7	5.7	6.4
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,985	4,812	4,838	529	553	556	10.6	11.5	11.5
<b>Interior Region</b>	<b>54,466</b>	<b>53,971</b>	<b>53,626</b>	<b>4,523</b>	<b>4,535</b>	<b>4,541</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Denali Borough	882	882	852	180	188	162	20.4	21.3	19.0
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,909	46,468	46,197	3,373	3,361	3,395	7.2	7.2	7.3
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	3,550	3,524	3,508	428	439	444	12.1	12.5	12.7
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	3,125	3,097	3,069	542	547	540	17.3	17.7	17.6
<b>Northern Region</b>	<b>13,421</b>	<b>13,294</b>	<b>12,789</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>1,301</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>10.1</b>
Nome Census Area	4,378	4,343	4,213	512	505	527	11.7	11.6	12.5
North Slope Borough	5,798	5,786	5,506	319	309	286	5.5	5.3	5.2
Northwest Arctic Borough	3,245	3,165	3,070	525	487	480	16.2	15.4	15.6
<b>Southeast Region</b>	<b>38,297</b>	<b>37,851</b>	<b>38,371</b>	<b>3,166</b>	<b>3,291</b>	<b>3,364</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>8.8</b>
Haines Borough	1,115	1,091	1,115	134	138	130	12.0	12.6	11.7
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	822	803	830	212	209	222	25.8	26.0	26.7
Juneau, City and Borough of	18,504	18,387	18,537	990	1,001	1,096	5.4	5.4	5.9
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,580	7,473	7,593	639	678	681	8.4	9.1	9.0
Petersburg Census Area	1,606	1,590	1,617	194	206	208	12.1	13.0	12.9
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	2,398	2,384	2,409	438	463	453	18.3	19.4	18.8
Sitka, City and Borough of	4,486	4,335	4,498	283	296	309	6.3	6.8	6.9
Skagway, Municipality of	512	526	515	121	145	125	23.6	27.6	24.3
Wrangell, City and Borough of	1,035	1,012	1,010	122	117	99	11.8	11.6	9.8
Yakutat, City and Borough of	239	250	247	33	38	41	13.8	15.2	16.6
<b>Southwest Region</b>	<b>19,272</b>	<b>19,383</b>	<b>19,350</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>2,381</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>12.3</b>
Aleutians East Borough	1,370	1,323	1,368	116	125	101	8.5	9.4	7.4
Aleutians West Census Area	4,337	4,411	4,342	213	218	174	4.9	4.9	4.0
Bethel Census Area	7,210	7,307	7,248	1,132	1,128	1,114	15.7	15.4	15.4
Bristol Bay Borough	450	440	454	53	50	51	11.8	11.4	11.2
Dillingham Census Area	2,104	2,098	2,150	220	222	245	10.5	10.6	11.4
Lake and Peninsula Borough	930	917	943	108	110	113	11.6	12.0	12.0
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,871	2,887	2,845	630	611	583	21.9	21.2	20.5

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.

<sup>1</sup>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