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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

March 20, 2015

No. 15-09

Unemployment rate at 6.3 percent in February

Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 6.3 percent in February, unchanged from January. The national rate was 5.5 percent.

Alaska's seasonally adjusted rate fell substantially during the second half of 2014 after a long period of relative stability. One factor in the decline was fewer unemployment insurance claimants after the fall implementation of new work search requirements.

Alaska's not-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 7.6 percent in February, up half a percentage point from January. The unadjusted rate usually peaks in January or February before starting its normal seasonal decline into summer.

The Aleutians West Census Area and the Aleutians East and Kodiak Island boroughs had the lowest unadjusted rates in February at 2.6, 3.4 and 5.3 percent, respectively. These coastal areas buck Alaska's normal seasonal trend because their ports and processing facilities support the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska winter groundfish fisheries, which are the state's largest by both volume and dollar value.

Rates in the Wade Hampton and Yukon Koyukuk census areas were among the highest in the state. Both areas consistently have some of the state's highest rates year-round. Jobless rates were also high in areas with a single dominant seasonal economy, such as the Denali and Bristol Bay boroughs and the Municipality of Skagway.

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Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	2/15	1/15	2/14
Alaska	6.3%	6.3%	6.9%
U.S.	5.5%	5.7%	6.7%

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

For detailed employment estimates, see <http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/ces/>. The estimates are preliminary and subject to potentially large revisions.

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	2/15 ^P	1/15	2/14	Number			Rate		
				2/15 ^P	1/15	2/14	2/15 ^P	1/15	2/14
Alaska	362,581	362,290	363,212	27,725	25,719	28,545	7.6	7.1	7.9
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	203,337	204,660	203,296	12,986	12,059	13,134	6.4	5.9	6.5
Anchorage, Municipality	159,055	160,158	159,039	8,891	8,272	9,054	5.6	5.2	5.7
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	44,282	44,502	44,257	4,095	3,787	4,080	9.2	8.5	9.2
Gulf Coast Region	38,040	38,149	37,767	3,534	3,278	3,545	9.3	8.6	9.4
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,876	27,057	26,611	2,609	2,375	2,536	9.7	8.8	9.5
Kodiak Island Borough	6,812	6,767	6,789	359	387	403	5.3	5.7	5.9
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,352	4,325	4,367	566	516	606	13.0	11.9	13.9
Interior Region	52,306	52,020	52,583	4,095	3,868	4,289	7.8	7.4	8.2
Denali Borough	599	582	631	133	119	157	22.2	20.4	24.9
Fairbanks North Star Borough	46,409	46,147	46,487	3,004	2,854	3,058	6.5	6.2	6.6
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	2,780	2,798	2,880	406	386	476	14.6	13.8	16.5
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,518	2,493	2,585	552	509	598	21.9	20.4	23.1
Northern Region	11,725	11,597	11,464	1,366	1,199	1,408	11.7	10.3	12.3
Nome Census Area	4,226	4,219	4,100	566	497	543	13.4	11.8	13.2
North Slope Borough	4,504	4,379	4,377	267	245	266	5.9	5.6	6.1
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,995	2,999	2,987	533	457	599	17.8	15.2	20.1
Southeast Region	35,591	35,326	36,140	3,177	2,952	3,377	8.9	8.4	9.3
Haines Borough	938	940	951	158	143	155	16.8	15.2	16.3
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,070	1,006	1,059	256	226	233	23.9	22.5	22.0
Juneau, City and Borough	16,931	16,846	17,148	957	913	1,014	5.7	5.4	5.9
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	6,420	6,493	6,540	605	545	666	9.4	8.4	10.2
Petersburg Census Area	1,469	1,428	1,481	191	182	187	13.0	12.7	12.6
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	2,703	2,635	2,757	460	420	487	17.0	15.9	17.7
Sitka, City and Borough	4,256	4,194	4,344	265	261	311	6.2	6.2	7.2
Skagway, Municipality	597	595	619	150	129	166	25.1	21.7	26.8
Wrangell, City and Borough	968	955	993	107	104	123	11.1	10.9	12.4
Yakutat, City and Borough	239	234	248	28	29	35	11.7	12.4	14.1
Southwest Region	21,580	20,539	21,962	2,565	2,362	2,792	11.9	11.5	12.7
Aleutians East Borough	2,488	2,831	2,538	85	88	117	3.4	3.1	4.6
Aleutians West Census Area	6,197	5,165	6,308	164	172	229	2.6	3.3	3.6
Bethel Census Area	7,111	7,046	7,241	1,212	1,095	1,292	17.0	15.5	17.8
Bristol Bay Borough	268	249	272	54	47	54	20.1	18.9	19.9
Dillingham Census Area	2,118	1,955	2,144	213	193	223	10.1	9.9	10.4
Lake and Peninsula Borough	522	517	552	94	88	119	18.0	17.0	21.6
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,876	2,776	2,907	743	679	758	25.8	24.5	26.1

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.

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