About the Occupations Data

Alaska Worker Characteristics

Count of workers: The data represent the total count of workers, by occupation, covered by unemployment insurance in Alaska. Workers are assigned to the occupation in which they earned the most money in the given year, so a person will be counted only once, even if they worked in multiple occupations. Because they do not pay into the Alaska unemployment insurance system, the following are excluded from these counts: federal workers, the self-employed, crew of small fishing operations, and owners and officers of companies.

Residency: Workers are considered Alaska residents if they applied for an Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) in at least one of the two most current years.

Age: Worker age is determined by matching workers with historical Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend files. Only those workers with age data are used to determine the percent of workers age 45 and up or age 50 and up. Occupations with a significant number of nonresident workers will have less reliable age information; age data is not available for nonresident workers. For more information, see the Department of Labor's resident hire page.

Potential Supply

Many occupations require skilled workers to perform the job duties, and the supply of qualified workers is limited. The potential supply is a count of workers who are qualified for an occupation but not currently working in that occupation. If the mean national wage of the worker's current occupation is greater than 15% less than the given occupation, he or she is counted as currently employed in a lower paid occupation.

Unemployment insurance wage records are used to determine a person's occupation. Workers are deemed qualified if they have four quarters of prior experience in the occupation. UI Claimants are counted in their primary prior occupation based on wages.

ALEXsys Employment Data

ALEXsys is the state's online jobs database. Employers can advertise job openings and workers can apply for jobs. Not all employers are going to use ALEXsys to advertise their job openings, and not all workers will look for work using ALEXsys.

Number of registrants: The count of ALEXSys registrants who reported having worked in, or being qualified for, an occupation. Job seekers can list more than one occupation and be counted multiple times.

Number of job position postings: The total count of jobs advertised by occupation.

Ratio of registrants to job position postings: The number of job seekers qualified for an occupation divided by the number of jobs advertised. A low ratio, for example, 1 job to 1 applicant, would indicate favorable conditions for those seeking employment. Urban areas typically have more qualified applicants than rural areas, and thus, more people competing for the same job.

For more information, visit the ALEXsys website.

Employment and Job Openings

When describing employment opportunities in Alaska, two categories were used: growth and openings. Growth is the percentage increase – or in some cases decrease – that an occupation is expected to experience in the ten year forecast period. Openings is a measure of how many opportunities there are to enter an occupation.

Below are the categories for growth and openings.

Employment Growth

Robust	21% growth or more in this occupation over the ten year forecast

Strong	At least 15% but less than 21% growth in this occupation
Moderate	At least 10% but less than 15% growth in this occupation
Low	Less than 10% growth in this occupation over the ten year forecast

Openings

Very High	300 openings or more in this occupation
High	At least 130 but fewer than 300 openings in this occupation
Moderate	At least 80 but fewer than 130 openings in this occupation
Low	Fewer than 80 openings in this occupation

Ten year occupational employment projections are produced biennially, and provide the data for employment and job openings. Projections are an estimate, not a precise count, of the number of jobs. We make predictions about the number of jobs that will be available, based on economic conditions.

Estimated employment: The base year of the forecast cycle. Base-year employment estimates are required to develop the employment projections and the base-year employment matrix.

Projected employment: The target, or ending, year of the forecast cycle. In order to produce target-year occupational projections, a change factor is developed and applied to each occupation. An occupational staffing pattern is then applied to the projected industry total of each occupation to give a target-year occupational projection.

Percent change: The percent of change between the base and projected years. A positive number indicates growth, or new jobs created. This number can be deceptive. A large percentage change does not necessarily mean a large number of new jobs. For instance, if the base year for an occupation is 20 and the forecast year shows an increase of 10, it is a 50 percent increase. In reality, it is only 10 jobs.

Labor force exits: A labor force exit occurs when a worker leaves an occupation, creating a vacancy for another worker to fill.

Occupation transfers: An occupational transfer occurs when an employee takes a job with a new employer but remains in the same occupation.

Occupational openings, annual average: The occupational openings are the sum of the growth, exits, and transfers. The annual average is that total divided by the number of years.

Average Wage

Average hourly wage data comes from the Research and Analysis Section of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, through the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey. The data are based on the statewide average wages for the occupation. For more information see the wages page.

Alaska Licensing Information

For more information on occupational licenses, click here.

Training Resources

Training programs related to the occupation are listed by training provider with the type of degree (as reported by the provider) and, if available, the number of individuals exiting the program within the given time range.

To view all training providers and programs, click here.