

ALASKA ECONOMIC
TRENDS
OCTOBER 2026

ALASKA JOB
PROJECTIONS
for 2024 to 2034

FROM THE COMMISSIONER

Employ People With Disabilities Week begins October 5

By Catherine Muñoz, Commissioner

As the first full week of the month, Oct. 5 marks the beginning of Employ People with Disabilities Week in Alaska. Established by statute in 1960 and originally the first full week of May, Employ People with Disabilities Week is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to every Alaskan seeking financial stability and independence through employment.

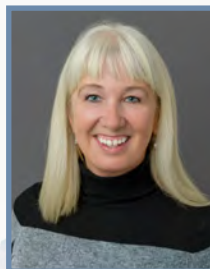
One does not need to qualify for Social Security disability insurance to be considered disabled. As of 2024, approximately 14.5 percent of Alaskans (102,558 people) have self-reported some form of disability, according to the American Community Survey. Of those, an estimated 35.1 percent are employed, with a median wage of \$35,729.

The most common disability in Alaska is ambulatory, with auditory and cognitive disabilities tied for close second.

An essential part of fostering an “employment first” mindset is recognizing that a disability does not define a person’s value. Before 2018, Alaska had been one of a majority of states permitting the use of 14(c) exemption certificates under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act to pay subminimum wages to workers with disabilities. In 2017, however, the department proposed a change to the Alaska Administrative Code that repealed minimum wage exceptions for people with disabilities.

The change became effective in February 2018, with the Alaska statute serving as the basis for repealing the exemption in 2022, solidifying Alaska’s stance as an Employment First State.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation leads several programs that reduce employment barriers for workers with disabilities.



Working alongside the Social Security Administration, our Disability Determination Services team of contract physicians, and psychologists guides applicants through the complex world of disability insurance.

In fiscal year 2025, our vocational rehabilitation team served 1,997 people with disabilities, resulting in 288 workers exiting the VR program fully employed.

Alaska continues its stride into the 21st century with the Assistive Technology Program, partnering with the nonprofit group Assistive Technology of Alaska to provide disability-focused equipment ranging from prosthetics to specialized learning materials and curriculum aids.

In early 2021, Governor Dunleavy initiated the formation of the Alaska Work Matters Task Force to review and analyze existing policies, practices, and procedures regarding the employment of people with disabilities. Section one of the 2023 final report recommends that Alaska become a model employer for individuals with disabilities, thereby setting a statewide standard for disability employment and workforce utilization.

While our work continues, I feel that in the three years since the task force’s report was released, we have charted our course toward what I believe is a more diverse and accessible workforce future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Muñoz".

Contact Commissioner Catherine Muñoz at (907) 465-2700 or commissioner.labor@alaska.gov.



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Job projections by industry

Health care and mining top the growth list from 2024 to 2034

By PAUL MARTZ

The last decade has been tumultuous for Alaska's economy. The oil price crash of 2015 and subsequent recession were followed quickly by the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. Over those five years, the state's job count fell from a peak of 338,579 to 303,046.

Employment has nearly recovered to that 2015 high, helped by major oil developments. However, the upheaval of the last decade fundamentally, and potentially structurally, changed major parts of the economy.

Here is how we project Alaska's major industries will fare for job growth through 2034, starting from 2024 employment levels.

Cannabis brought big agricultural gains, but that has flattened out

Cannabis legalization in 2015 spurred major employment growth in the small agriculture sector, starting in 2017. Since then, the "greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production" category has added 520 jobs, peaking in 2022 at 812 jobs.

Since 2025, the cultivation side of the cannabis industry has settled around 750 jobs, about where we expect it to stay through 2034.

We also project the rest of the agriculture sector to remain essentially flat, netting just seven additional jobs over 10 years, with small amounts of growth for other types of crops buffering overall losses in the greenhouse category.

Oil and gas industry not likely to regain its 2015 peak

The oil and gas sector brings outsized revenues, wages, and jobs to Alaska, but its susceptibility to global market disruptions and uncertainty make it

more volatile than most of the economy.

Oil and gas' transformation over the last decade has been stark, and the industry's history provides context on the magnitude of that shift.

For almost two decades after the 1980s recession, oil and job counts were stable. From 1990 to 2005, the sector averaged 9,000 jobs per year, plus or minus about 850 jobs in some.

Then, from 2006 to 2015, industry employment grew steadily, from 10,500 jobs to 15,309, a 46 percent gain. Then in just two years, the post-2015 recessionary era mentioned previously wiped out almost all those gains.

By 2017, oil and gas had fallen to 2006 employment levels. Losses stabilized the following year, and the addition of 357 jobs in 2019 looked like the start of a recovery. That window was short-lived, with the pandemic pushing employment back down to just 8,330 jobs the next year. The low was 7,086 jobs in 2021.

Recovery began slowly in 2022, picking up in 2023 with a final investment decision for the Pikka project, followed by the Willow project go-ahead. Oil and gas continued to add jobs over the next two years, but even with substantial projects providing a tailwind, the industry remained about 1,000 jobs below its 2019 count and 5,900 jobs below the 2015 peak. No other industry saw an employment shift that large during the last decade.

Looking toward 2034, we project oil and gas employment to rise to 9,996, which would be a 12.2 percent gain from 2024.

Some job loss will follow Pikka and Willow wrapping up in the near term, but additional satellite projects will likely use the new infrastructure. Those types of projects won't create as many jobs as Pikka and Willow, but the combination of secondary construction and field operation jobs will contribute to growth.

Even with recent growth, however, oil and gas is unlikely to regain its 2015 peak by 2034. As of 2025, the job count remained 6,000 below that high, even

Alaska job projections by industry¹, 2024 to 2034

	2024 est jobs ²	2034 projected	Change, 2024-34	% change, 2024-34 ³
Total Employment⁴	335,157	343,733	8,577	2.6%
Goods-Producing	44,699	46,394	1,695	3.8%
Natural Resources and Mining	14,639	16,652	2,014	13.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,578	1,585	7	0.4%
Mining	13,061	15,068	2,007	15.4%
Oil and Gas ⁵	8,912	9,996	1,084	12.2%
Oil and Gas Extraction	2,992	3,604	611	20.4%
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	3,784	4,654	870	23.0%
Support Activities for Mining	6,285	6,810	525	8.4%
Construction	17,670	16,799	-871	-4.9%
Construction of Buildings	5,311	4,868	-443	-8.3%
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	4,518	3,982	-536	-11.9%
Specialty Trade Contractors	7,841	7,949	108	1.4%
Manufacturing	12,390	12,942	552	4.5%
Food Manufacturing	8,185	8,859	674	8.2%
Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging	7,396	7,958	562	7.6%
Manufacturing, All Other	4,205	4,084	-122	-2.9%
Services-Providing	290,309	297,134	6,825	2.4%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	69,326	70,753	1,427	2.1%
Wholesale Trade	6,409	6,397	-13	-0.2%
Retail Trade	35,096	35,031	-65	-0.2%
Transportation and Warehousing ⁶	25,223	26,692	1,469	5.8%
Air Transportation	6,444	6,765	321	5.0%
Water Transportation	1,164	1,168	3	0.3%
Truck Transportation	3,119	2,824	-295	-9.5%
Transportation and Warehousing, All Other	14,496	15,936	1,440	9.9%
Utilities	2,598	2,633	36	1.4%
Information	4,541	4,011	-530	-11.7%
Financial Activities	11,795	11,546	-249	-2.1%
Finance and Insurance	6,027	5,538	-489	-8.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5,768	6,008	240	4.2%
Professional and Business Services	27,641	27,994	353	1.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	13,688	13,572	-116	-0.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,377	2,553	176	7.4%
Admin, Support and Waste Mgmt/Remediation Svcs	11,576	11,869	294	2.5%
Education and Health Services	79,960	85,199	5,239	6.6%
Educational Services, Public and Private ⁷	27,886	27,172	-714	-2.6%
Elementary and Secondary Schools, Public/Private	19,237	18,126	-1,111	-5.8%
Educational Services, Public and Private, All Other	8,649	9,046	396	4.6%
Health Care and Social Assistance, Public and Private ⁸	52,074	58,028	5,954	11.4%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	23,182	25,610	2,428	10.5%
Hospitals	16,640	18,544	1,904	11.4%
Health Care and Social Assistance, All Other	12,252	13,874	1,621	13.2%
Leisure and Hospitality	36,102	37,367	1,265	3.5%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,311	5,673	362	6.8%
Accommodation and Food Services	30,791	31,695	904	2.9%
Accommodation	8,303	8,791	488	5.9%
Food Services and Drinking Places	22,488	22,903	416	1.8%
Other Services (Except Government)	12,439	12,282	-157	-1.3%
Total Government	48,506	47,983	-523	-1.1%
Federal Government ⁹	13,477	13,116	-361	-2.7%
State Government ¹⁰	16,689	16,589	-99	-0.6%
Local Government ¹¹	18,339	18,277	-62	-0.3%

¹Industry categories differ from other data sets we publish, largely because these combine public and private jobs.

²May not sum to total employment due to rounding

³Percent change may be inconsistent with employment change due to employment rounding.

⁴Excludes self-employed workers, fishermen, domestic workers, unpaid family workers, and nonprofit volunteers

⁵Includes oil and gas exploration and oilfield services

⁶Includes U.S. Postal Service employment

⁷Includes local and state government education employment

⁸Includes public sector hospital employment

⁹Excludes uniformed military, postal service, and hospital employment

¹⁰Excludes university, railroad, and hospital employment

¹¹Excludes public school and hospital employment

with significant temporary construction employment for the new projects.

Mining future mostly in existing operations and exploration

The opening of the Red Dog and Greens Creek mines in 1989 and Fort Knox in the mid-1990s ushered in the modern era of large-scale mines in Alaska. Between 1990 and 2025, the mineral mining industry expanded from 1,184 jobs to 3,893.

Two distinct periods of expansion followed the early days. Pogo and Kensington openings nearly doubled the industry's employment from 2005 to 2013.

The 2018-2025 period pushed employment up another 35 percent, to nearly 4,000 jobs.

Manh Choh is the only new recent mine, and most new mining jobs have been in exploration to extend the lives of existing mines as well as exploration and development for potential new mines.

We project mining employment to increase by 23 percent over 10 years, based on sustained growth in potential mine development and existing mines rather than any specific new project.

This projection also excludes any anticipated mine closures over the next 10 years, but future rounds of projections will capture new developments or closures based on lead times and investments in continued exploration.

Construction employment projected to be flat long term

Even with strong ties to the mining and oil and gas industries, construction was diverse enough to weather both recessions. After the 1980s downturn, employment grew robustly through the mid-2000s

(79 percent from 1990-2006, or 7,990 new jobs).

As the housing market in the Lower 48 began to soften in 2006 before the bubble burst and spurred the U.S. Great Recession, Alaska's residential construction industry also began to contract, and the loss continued through 2011. The industry stabilized after that, through 2019.

When the pandemic hit the following year, residential construction employment gradually climbed as mortgage rates fell and homeowners spent more on renovations. From 2020 to 2025, the residential category added 239 jobs (15 percent).

We project flat employment from 2024 to 2034. The short-to-medium term could bring employment spikes if recently announced investment at Anchorage military installations comes to fruition. However, population trends, interest rates, and material and labor costs will likely weigh on the industry moving forward.

Nonresidential construction employment is projected to decrease by about 13 percent over the decade, a loss of 449 jobs, bringing it down to pre-pandemic levels. The industry grew substantially in 2024 and 2025 with new projects on the North Slope. Additional projects tied to the recent developments will rely on existing infrastructure.

Specialty trade contractors also spiked with recent large-scale projects, and the category has added 412 jobs since 2023. This part of the construction sector serves other industries in Alaska, so it recovered much quicker after COVID with the transition to residential projects. We project 1.4 percent growth over the 10-year period.

Heavy and civil engineering construction has benefited considerably from the Pikka and Willow developments, adding 1,482 jobs between 2022 and 2025 (44.3 percent). As current projects wrap up, we expect employment to slowly return to previous levels. The projected 3,982 total jobs in 2034 would be close to 2014, pre-oil-recession levels. Significant utility

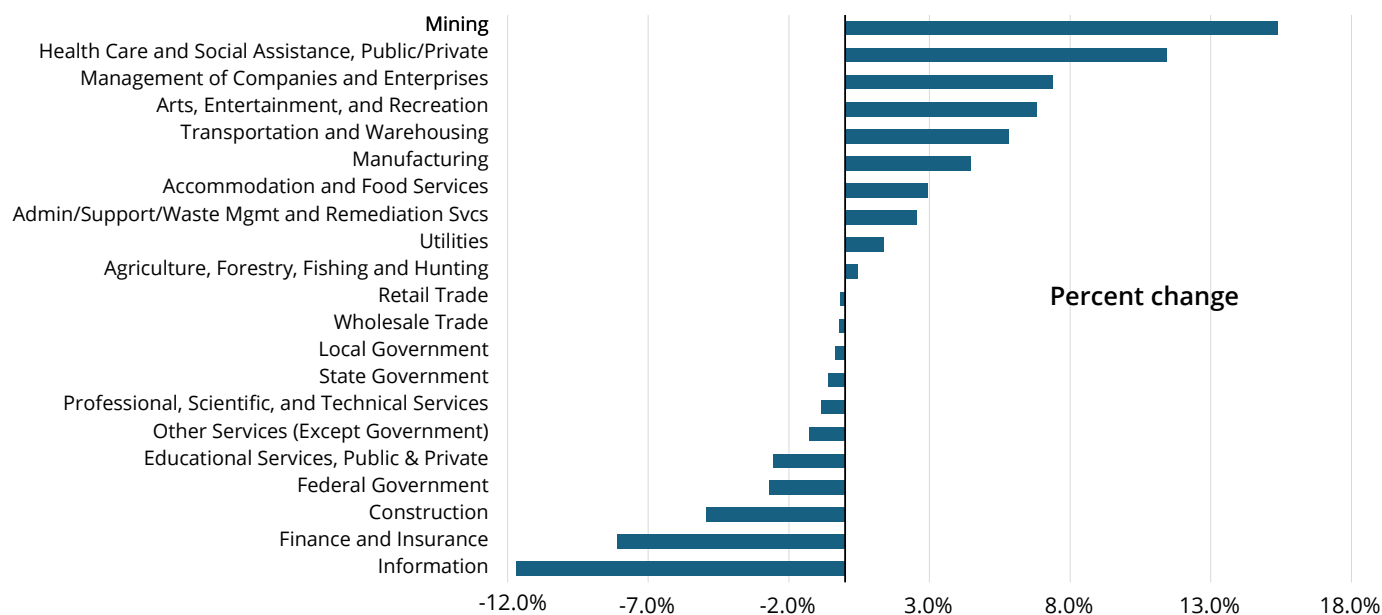
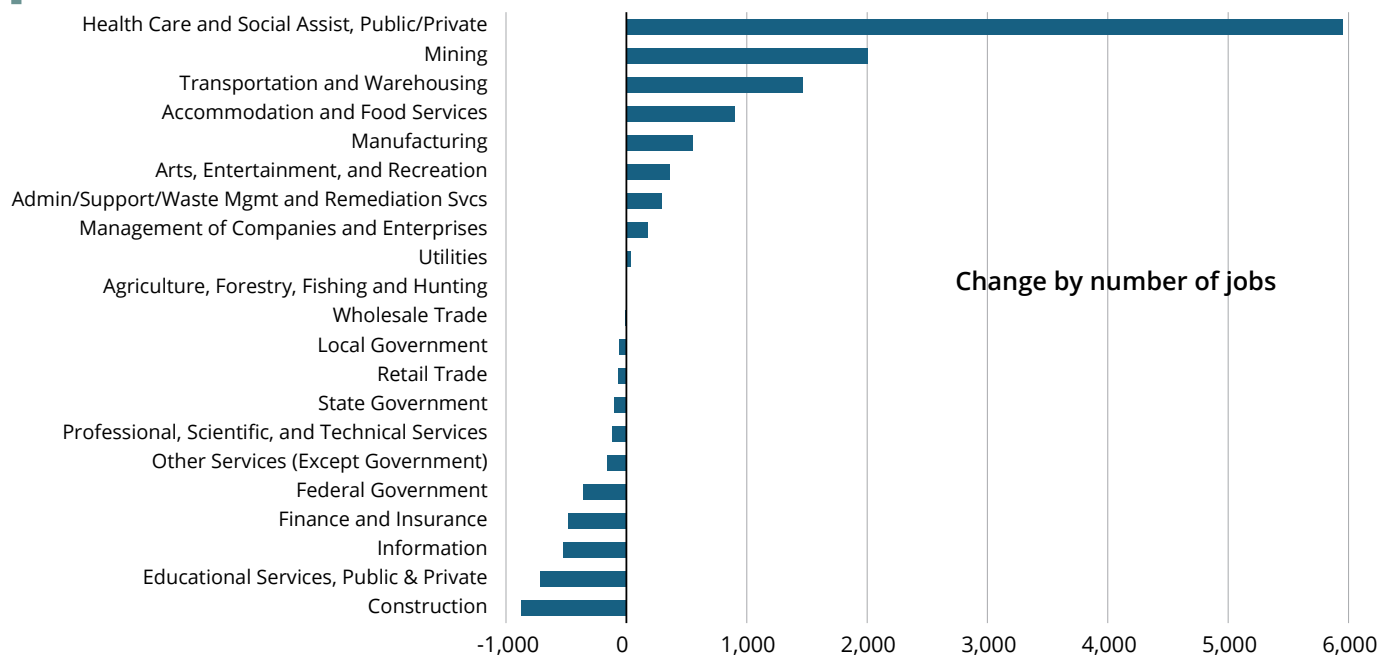
About the effects of AI

Artificial intelligence will touch much of Alaska's labor force over the next decade, but we can't accurately attribute any current broad shifts to AI.

While technology is improving rapidly and AI is being adopted at an increasing rate, it's still too early to predict the magnitude of the change over the next decade.

We do expect industries that have transitioned to online services over the last couple of decades to be the most vulnerable to automation in the near term, particularly finance and insurance. While other industries will certainly be affected, we expect impacts mostly in specific occupations across multiple parts of the economy.

Projected job change by Alaska industry, 2024 to 2034



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

projects on the horizon will stabilize employment, as will ongoing infrastructure-related construction.

Seafood processing likely to stabilize at a lower new normal

Seafood processing has always been volatile. Between 1990 and 2025, 18 years — about half — were loss years. The longest uninterrupted growth streak was from 2002 to 2006, when the industry expanded from 7,525 to 9,337 jobs.

Processing has continued to struggle since the pandemic. The industry has been hit by recent U.S. tariffs, policy uncertainty, and retaliation from China.

The industry lost 1,075 jobs from 2023 to 2024 as the market wore on processors, resulting in closures and consolidations. Employment bounced back up to 7,972 jobs in 2025, a recovery of about half the previous year's loss, but remained well-below pre-pandemic levels.

After six years of lower employment, processing appears to have absorbed the changes. We expect it to stabilize around 7,958 jobs by 2034.

Wholesale, retail outlook is mixed

Wholesale trade weathered previous downturns well, although like most industries, its employment has leveled off.

Wholesale employment dipped with the oil recession in 2016 and began to recover in 2019 before dropping sharply in 2020 and 2021 with COVID.

Growth has been modest since, and in the long term we expect employment to be flat: -0.2 percent between 2024 and 2034.

Retail trends are harder to isolate because of the range of retailers and the industry's vulnerability to changes in consumer preferences rather than global commodity prices.

Since 1990, the warehouse clubs and supercenters category has expanded by 194 percent, offset by losses in traditional grocery and convenience retailers (-35 percent). The net gain has been 4,905 jobs between those two categories.

From 2024 to 2034, we project the grocery side will decline by 17.8 percent and the supercenter side will increase by 5.9 percent.

Motor vehicle and parts dealers gained some ground after the Great Recession but did not fare well during Alaska's two most recent recessions. The industry has been mostly flat over the last few years, and we expect it to remain flat through 2034.

Jobs in building material and supply dealers, which were stable until 2019, jumped during the COVID home improvement era, then dropped back down by almost the same amount. We project very slight growth through 2034, to about 3,586 total jobs.

Clothing, accessories, shoe, and jewelry retailers are projected to see the largest percentage increase over the decade at 12.2 percent (200 jobs).

These types of retailers started to gain momentum in 2025, adding 77 jobs. We project 2034 employment will be on par with pre-pandemic employment (1,848). Tourism is a driver for this industry and has likely buffered it from settling at a lower job count.

Transportation growth in sightseeing and air cargo

Tourism boosted scenic and sightseeing transportation and air transportation in recent years, and that will likely continue. We project 19.5 percent and 5 percent growth, respectively, through 2034.

Truck transportation is projected to decline by 295 jobs (-9.5 percent). Oil and gas projects boosted this category over the last few years, but employment will decline as those projects wind down. However, ore trucking for mining projects, a relatively new phenomenon in Alaska, has generated a significant number of jobs in recent years. We expect that growth to continue to 2034.

Employment for couriers and express delivery services, along with warehousing and storage, is expected to grow by 544 jobs (13.3 percent). Some will be linked to cargo storage at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, but delivery employment overall has made a strong showing recently, growing by 36.5 percent from 2020 to 2025.

Professional services industry set to end up slightly smaller

We project a 0.9 percent job loss for the professional, scientific, and technical services sector by

2034, with legal services being the biggest drag. Softening employment in accounting and other professional services will also contribute to the losses.

Architecture and engineering are set to remain mostly flat after leveling off after the 2016 and 2020 declines. A mixture of other engineering, environmental, and testing services are likely to grow — these components feed into design and permitting projects across a range of Alaska industries.

We project nontechnical administrative and other business support services will increase by 2.5 percent. This industry supports a broad mix of other industries from which we expect both growth and loss.

The boost will come from tourism-related travel arrangement and facility support services. The former will increase by a projected 13.3 percent as tourism continues to expand, and the latter will likely decline by about 3.5 percent as projects on the North Slope wind down.

Online services will continue to shrink finance and insurance

Banking and related services haven't recovered since 2016 and are projected to make up 75 percent of the projected losses in the finance and insurance sector (-8.1 percent total). Banking online will continue to cut jobs, but it isn't clear how much AI will accelerate this trend. (See the sidebar on page 6.)

The broader insurance industry did well early in the century and appeared to approach stability in 2016 before continuing to lose jobs through 2025. We expect that decline to continue over the decade, with another 8.1 percent loss. Like banking, insurance is also susceptible to AI-induced losses, but it's too uncertain to project this year.

Jobs in public schools to fall to late-1990s levels

Declines in public school employment have picked up since the last round of projections, a response to population changes and budgetary pressures.

Before the pandemic, the 20-year average was just shy of 21,000 jobs per year. That dropped to 18,870 when COVID hit, and from there things moved

toward what looked like a reduced new normal of around 19,300 jobs in 2024.

However, in 2025, public schools lost another 417 jobs as more districts closed or consolidated schools.

It would be oversimplifying to attribute the job losses solely to fewer children, but the declines in that population are a major factor. The number of kids aged 5 to 18 in Alaska rose by 23.3 percent from 1990 to 2001, to 152,865. Over that period, education employment rose 21 percent in Alaska.

Then, from 2001 to 2025, the state's school-aged population declined by 7.7 percent and school employment dropped by 5.8 percent.

Over the projection period, the school-age population is projected to fall by 9.8 percent, and education employment by 5.8 percent. This would put elementary and secondary school employment levels at late-1990s levels.

Strong, broad growth continues for the health care industry

Health care will grow by a projected 11.4 percent over the next decade, or 5,954 new jobs.

The largest category, at 44 percent of the sector, is ambulatory health care, consisting of nonhospital services such as doctor's offices and outpatient clinics. Between 1990 and 2025, ambulatory health care averaged 500 new jobs per year, or around 4 percent annually, except during the pandemic. This category is projected to grow by 10.5 percent over the decade.

Hospitals, the second largest component, will add a projected 11.4 percent. Hospitals expanded from 6,425 jobs in 1990 to 16,911 in 2025 (16.3 percent), or about 300 new jobs a year.

Upcoming federal funding through the Rural Health Transformation program will likely drive growth, but hospital employment was already rising after stalling somewhat from 2018-2022.

With a growing population over age 65, nursing and residential care is expected to grow the most, by 25.4 percent through 2034. Over that period, the senior population will rise by a projected 18.5 percent, and the cohort that's at least 85 years old is expected to double.

State budget cuts and the pandemic caused an

employment lull from 2016 to 2022, but by 2025, employment in this category had regained its 2016 high-water mark and continued to grow.

Social assistance, public and private, grew significantly from 1990 to 2013, roughly doubling. After that, federal, state, and local funding all began to shrink, pushing employment down modestly to 8,374 total jobs the following year, where it mostly held until the pandemic sank it further, to 7,289.

Since then, employment has stabilized. We project a modest 6.3 percent gain for social assistance by 2034, which would put the job count around pre-pandemic levels.

Restaurants, accommodations to grow as bars, gambling shrink

Leisure and hospitality, which serves tourists as well as locals, is projected to grow about 3.5 percent between 2024 and 2034.

The largest drag on growth in recent years has been bars and bingo/pull tab establishments, while gains have come from restaurants, accommodations, and amusement and recreation services.

Long-term losses projected across all types of government

Government is projected to lose jobs at all levels through 2034.

Federal employment is difficult to predict with the political climate and strategic decisions continuing to shift, and Alaska's modern federal job history also reflects that susceptibility.

Between 1990 and 1993, the federal government added 1,242 jobs in Alaska, ending at a high of 16,811. Then, employment declined sharply, and declines continued throughout the 1990s. Alaska lost 3,260 federal jobs from 1993 to 1999, bringing the total to a period low of 13,552.

Closures of Cold War-era military facilities after the fall of the Soviet Union, most notably Naval Air Facility Adak, were the main reason. The Clinton administration's federal reform program, the National Partnership for Reinventing Government, also cut across agencies, including the Department of Defense, land management agencies (Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S.

Forest Service), the Department of Energy, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Decennial census data collection in 2000 temporarily reversed the declines, adding 502 jobs, but employment truly began to rebound when the U.S. entered a post-9/11 national defense expansion era that created the Transportation Security Agency and boosted federal civilian employment at military installations. Over the 2000s, federal employment in Alaska rose by 1,391.

Then, Alaska lost 2,390 federal jobs through 2014, the result of post-Great Recession budget tightening under the Budget Control Act of 2011, referred to as sequestration.

Federal employment has been mostly stable since 2014, hovering between 13,000 and 15,000 jobs, with some volatility before and after COVID.

The largest uncertainty remains the sweeping actions of the second Trump administration in 2025 and the creation of the Department of Government Efficiency. From 2024 to 2025, federal employment fell by about 2.7 percent, although most of the losses won't show up until 2026 data are available and the full effects of the deferred resignation program are clear.

Right now, we assume employment will be down by 2.7 percent overall by 2034, but we will adjust future projections to reflect any upcoming structural shifts. As history has shown, Alaska's federal employment is highly sensitive to rapid changes in federal policies governing military and civilian agencies alike.

We project a slight loss of state government jobs through 2034 (-0.6 percent), continuing a long-term structural shift. State of Alaska employment peaked in 2014 at 18,086 jobs after a strong run of high oil prices and flush budgets.

By 2017, the state had cut 1,639 jobs. Cuts continued until the pandemic pushed employment down further, to 16,208. A brief rebound in 2021 was followed by additional losses through 2023.

The tide turned in 2024, when state government employment rose by 3.2 percent and then another 1.3 percent in 2025. The sources for that growth are unclear beyond temporary increases necessary to carry out federal projects, and we expect employment to level out around 16,589 total jobs by 2034.

Continued on page 19

How we create 10-year industry and occupational projections

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section creates 10-year industry and occupational projections for Alaska every other year. These projections are the product of four steps:

Step 1: Project industry employment using a base year with solid data

We use data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages to determine the number of jobs for each industry during the first year, or "base year," of the projection period. We used 2024 as the base year because it's important to begin with a solid set of numbers that won't be revised further rather than to use newer but preliminary data.

Estimates and projections do not include self-employed workers, private household workers, most agricultural workers and fishermen (who are self-employed), and others not covered by the state's unemployment insurance program. We combine certain types of public sector employment — such as education, hospitals, rail transportation, and the U.S. Postal Service — with private sector industries because their underlying drivers differ from most government employment.

We create projections for each industry based primarily on historical trends, Alaska and U.S. population projections, and other industry-specific variables. The projections also factor in knowledge of specific projects, if certain, and observations of the current economic climate.

Step 2: Determine the occupational makeup, or staffing pattern, of each industry

To estimate base year employment for each occupation, we determine the occupational staffing pattern of each industry. Most industries have a variety of occupations. The staffing pattern is the breakdown of each occupation's share of the industry's total employment, referred to as "staffing ratios."

Employers in Alaska report their workers' occupations when they submit unemployment insurance quarterly contribution reports, which form the basis of Alaska's Occupational Database. We use an analysis of the data that corresponds to the projections' base year, the most recent Occupational Employment Statistics data available, and a baseline of historic industry staffing patterns to calculate occupational staffing ratios for the industries.

Step 3: Calculate base year and projected occupational employment

For each occupation, we multiply each industry's estimated base year employment by the staffing ratio, and then sum the results to get the base year estimate. We make some adjustments to staffing ratios within an industry, called "change factors." Change factors are multipliers that increase or decrease an occupation's estimated share of industry employment based on factors other than an industry's projected employment change. Examples include changes in consumer demand, technology, or business practices.

We then multiply each industry's projected employment by the adjusted staffing ratio for each occupation, and then sum the results by each occupation to get the projections.

Step 4: Estimate job openings

Job openings for an occupation result from new jobs and vacated positions, called separation openings. An occupation's growth openings are equal to its change over the projection period. Estimates of separation openings are based on rates provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics that account for labor force exits and occupational transfers. For more on separations, see <https://www.bls.gov/emp/documentation/separations-methods.htm>.

Job projections by occupation

Expected opportunities by the type of work from 2024 to 2034

By PAUL MARTZ

Projecting future jobs by occupation allows us to show more than just job creation or loss, as we do by industry. Occupational projections show that most job opportunities come from separations: people changing occupations, leaving the workforce for education or training, or retiring.

We estimate that between 2024 and 2034, Alaska will have 8,576 new jobs. Each year, however, 37,364 additional positions will open through people leaving their occupations.

48,500 jobs are in one category

In Alaska, 14.5 percent of jobs are in office and

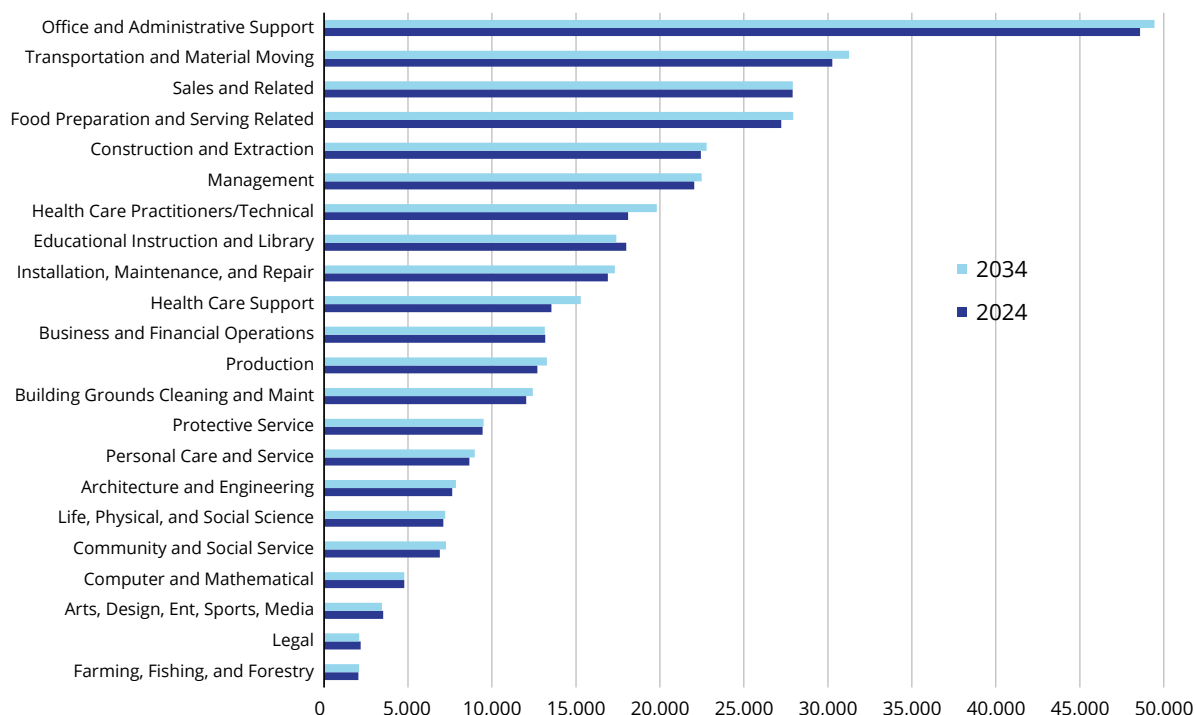
administrative support, the largest category. Office and administrative support covers 54 unique occupations representing about 48,500 jobs.

Because of its size, this category will have the largest number of job openings through separations over the 10 years. We project only about 853 new jobs over the decade (1.8 percent), but about 5,322 additional openings annually through a combination of people switching careers or leaving the workforce.

The smallest broad category is farming, fishing, and forestry, which represents about 0.6 percent of Alaska's jobs. The largest share of this category, about 38 percent, is farm workers, primarily in the cannabis industry.

These occupations grew quickly after recreational cannabis use was legalized in 2015, but as the

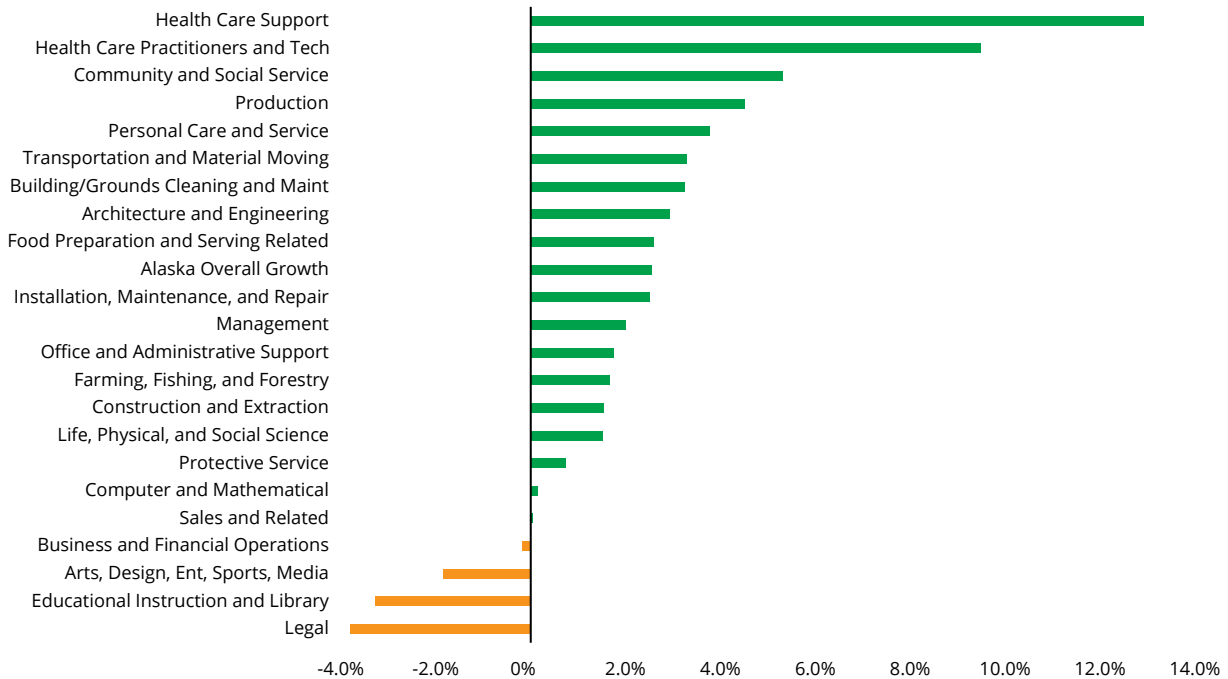
Projected total job counts by occupational group through 2034



Note: Occupational categories are based on the federal Standard Occupational Classification Manual.

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

Projected percent growth for occupational groups through 2034



Note: Occupational categories are based on the federal Standard Occupational Classification Manual.

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

industry has matured and leveled out, so has the number of greenhouse farm workers. We project just 34 new jobs in the farming, fishing, and forestry category from 2024 to 2034.

and 33 total openings a year, respectively. Total openings are a combination of annual growth and separations. Registered nurses are the largest practitioner occupation and will generate about 410 total openings per year.

Health care occupations will generate the most new jobs

The highest number of new jobs will come from health care. Support occupations in this category will grow by a projected 12.9 percent by 2034, followed by health care practitioners and technical occupations at 9.5 percent.

Combined, these two groups will represent 40 percent of all the new jobs in Alaska over the decade (about 3,500). Separations will create an additional 2,939 openings a year.

Within the support category, we project strong growth for home health and personal care aides (see the “top 25 and bottom 25” section for more). Among practitioners, psychiatric technicians and licensed practical and vocational nurses will grow a projected 12 percent over the decade, adding 27

Some will continue to decline

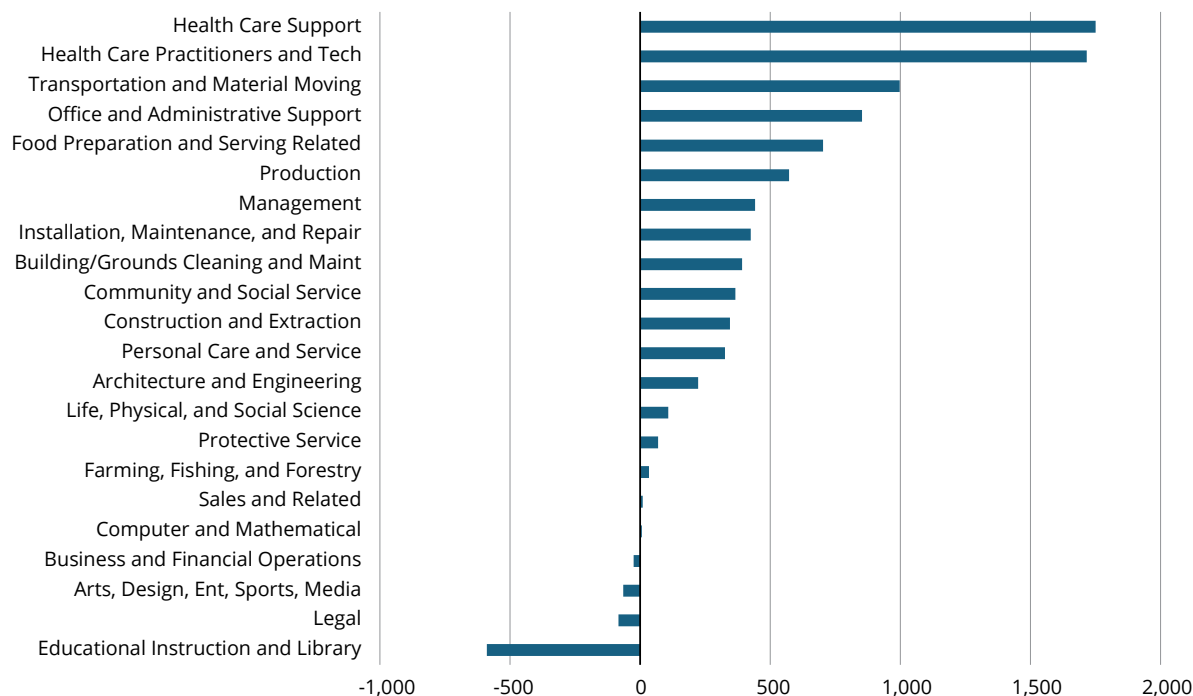
The category we expect to decline most over the decade is educational instruction and library occupations, by 589 jobs, or 3.3 percent. Because these occupations are concentrated in public schools, they will be vulnerable to the job losses we expect in education. Still, this field will generate an estimated 1,631 openings each year, even with job losses figured in.

Legal and media occupations have been decreasing for years as services become easier to obtain remotely, and others have moved to freelance or self-employment.

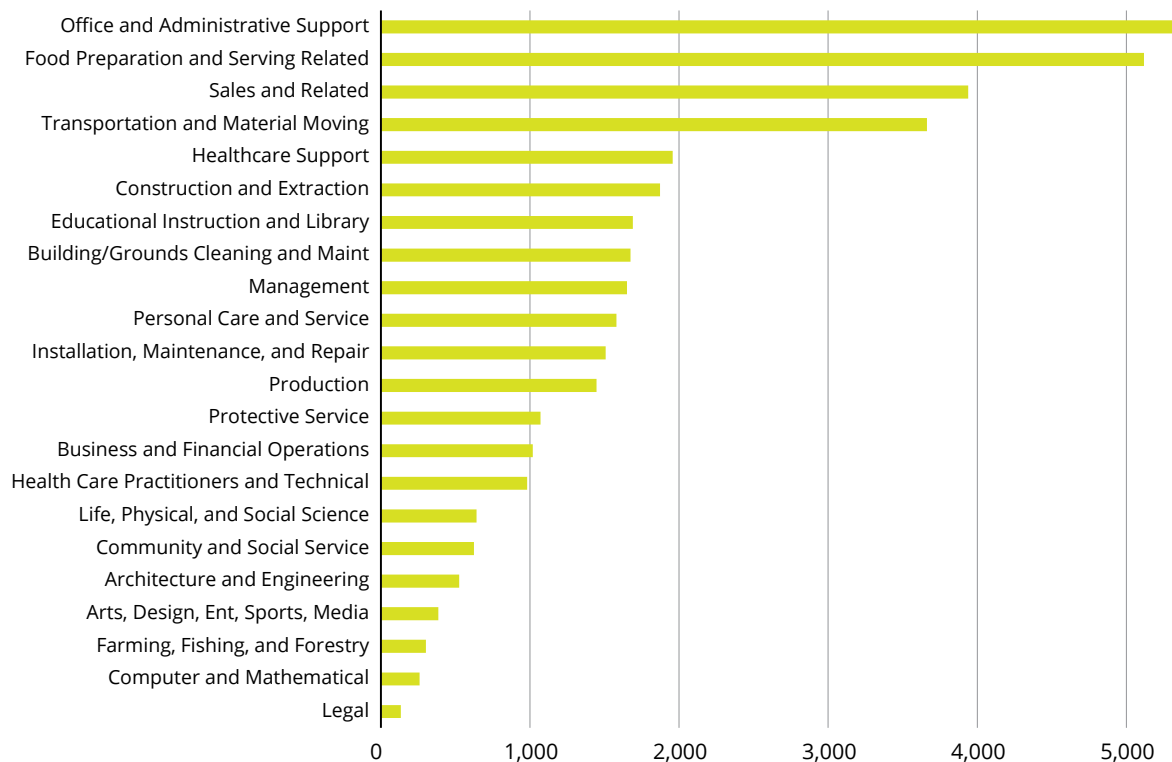
Legal occupations are projected to decline by 3.8 percent and media by 1.8 percent. The combined loss over the decade would be about 148 jobs.

Text continues on page 17

Growth openings by occupational category, 2024 to 2034



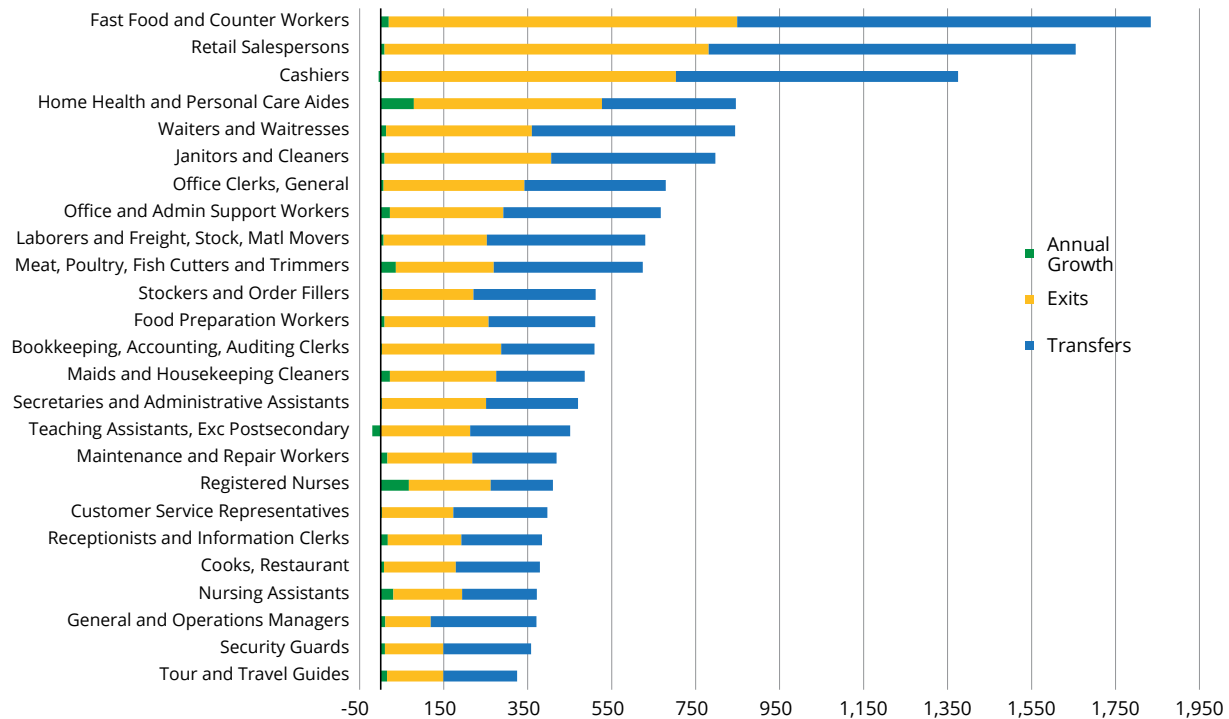
Annual separation openings by occupational category, 2024 to 2034



Notes: Occupational categories are based on the federal Standard Occupational Classification Manual. Occupations in decline will have no growth openings but may have openings from separations. Separations result from people leaving the labor force or transferring to a different occupations. Separations typically represent openings for new workers, but in declining occupations, not all separations result in openings (i.e. if the position is cut).

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

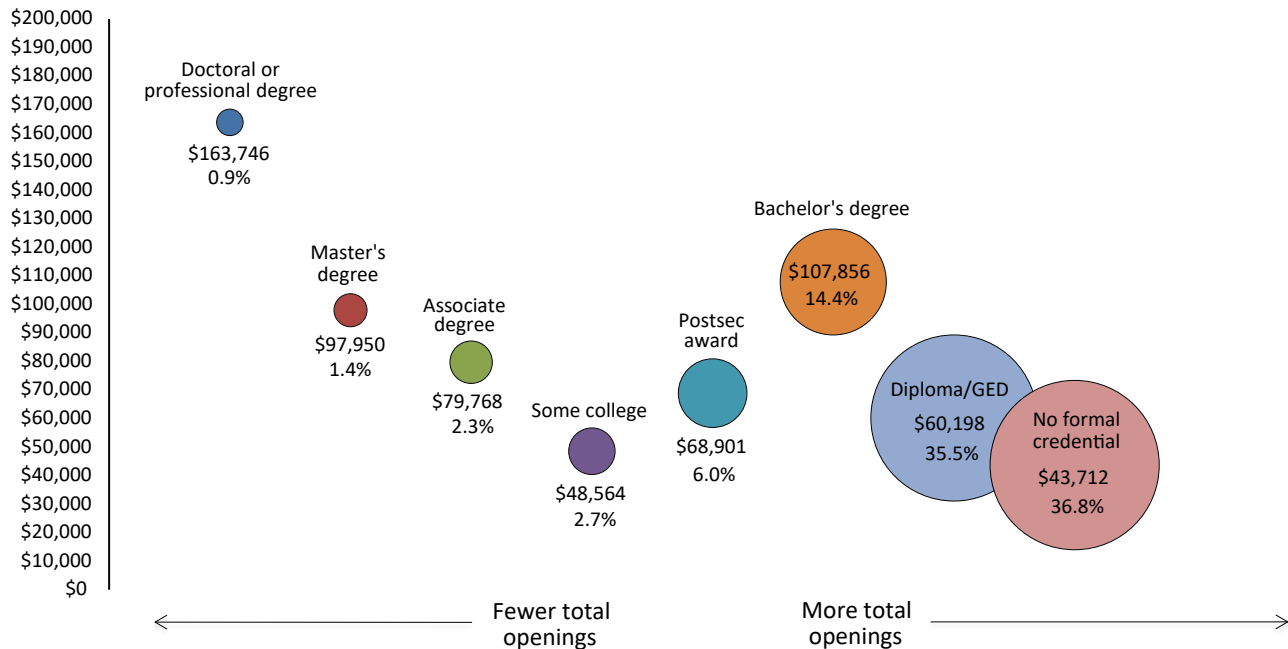
Most job openings will come from workers leaving an occupation



Notes: Annual openings for these projections are a combination of new jobs (growth), people permanently leaving the labor force (labor force exits), and people leaving an occupation for a different one (occupational transfers). Occupational separations are the sum of labor force exits and transfers. In declining occupations, not all separations result in job openings.

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

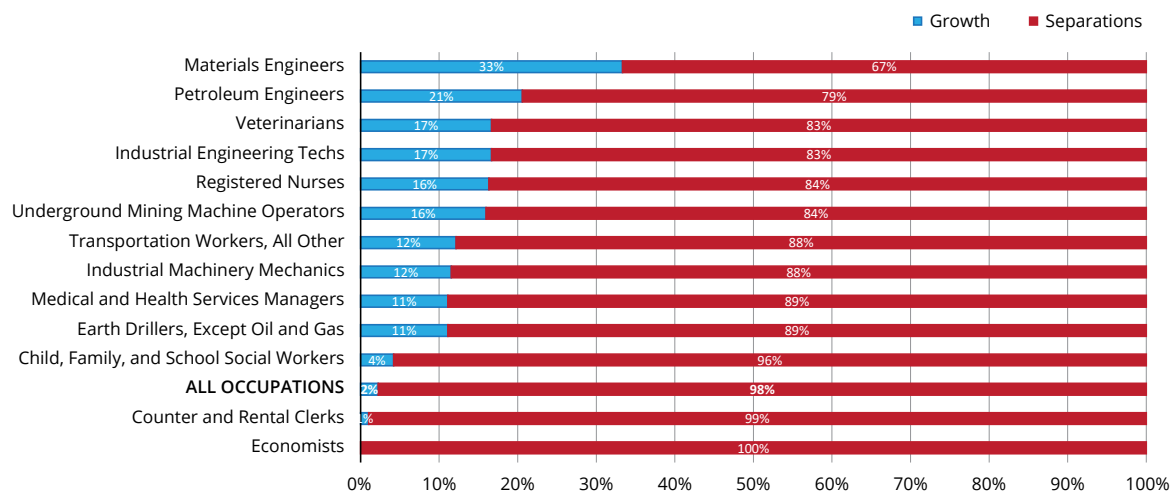
Percent of yearly openings by education level and wages, 2024-2034



Notes: Annual wage estimates are based on employment-weighted averages of 2024 Occupational Employment Statistics wage data. Occupational education levels are based on the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey Public Use microdata. Openings include annual average growth and separations for occupations with a reported OES wage.

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

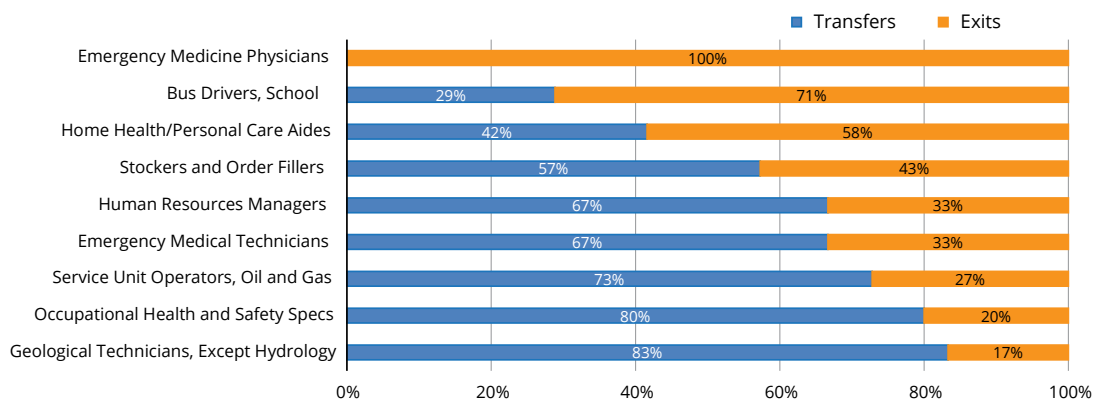
Projected growth and separation openings for select jobs



Notes: Growth openings are new jobs. Separations are the projected numbers of workers permanently leaving an occupation.

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

Openings from exits and transfers for select jobs



Notes: Occupational transfers are the projected number of workers leaving an occupation and transferring to a different occupation. Transfers represent permanent separations from an occupation, not temporary movements. Labor force exits are the projected number of workers leaving an occupation and exiting the labor force entirely. Labor force exits are more common as workers retire, but can occur at any age. Labor force exits are not necessarily permanent exits from the labor force, though they do represent permanent separations from an occupation.

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

The top and bottom 25 jobs for growth

The fastest-growing occupations are an eclectic mix. Production occupations round out half of the top 10, with growth in mining and oil and gas pushing these jobs to the top of the list.

Nursing assistants and home health and personal care aides also made the top 10. These represent just over half of all health care support jobs in the state, and demand will remain high as the health care industry grows.

A few tourism-linked occupations also made the list. Shuttle bus drivers and tour guides are projected to increase by 13 percent and 10.8 percent, respectively.

On the low end, journalists and broadcasters will decline by a projected 27 percent. Banking, finance, and insurance-related occupations are also in the bottom 25, with 9 to 10 percent projected declines among tellers, loan interviewers, and loan officers.

A few construction occupations also made the bottom list, partly because they grew so much in 2024 and will return to typical lower levels when large projects finish.

We project an 18.5 percent decline among structural metal fabricators and fitters, mainly because they are concentrated in the industrial construction industries we expect will shrink.

Openings from separations, growth in select occupations

As mentioned earlier, most job opportunities come from people leaving existing occupations.

High, low 25 jobs for growth* through 2034

25 highest-growth occupations		Growth, 2024-34
1	Crushing, Grinding, and Polishing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	23.1%
2	Aerospace Engineering and Operations Technologists and Technicians	22.5%
3	Mining and Geological Engineers, Including Mining Safety Engineers	17.8%
4	Petroleum Engineers	16.4%
5	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	16.3%
6	Service Unit Operators, Oil and Gas	14.3%
7	Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	14.0%
8	Earth Drillers, Except Oil and Gas	13.2%
9	Nursing Assistants	13.0%
10	Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	13.0%
11	Geological Technicians, Except Hydrologic Technicians	12.3%
12	Millwrights	12.1%
13	Psychiatric Technicians	12.0%
14	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	12.0%
15	Health Care Social Workers	11.3%
16	Chemical Technicians	11.1%
17	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	11.0%
18	Surgical Technologists	11.0%
19	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	11.0%
20	Family Medicine Physicians	10.8%
21	Tour and Travel Guides	10.8%
22	Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	10.6%
22	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	10.5%
24	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	10.5%
25	Physical Therapists	10.3%

25 occupations projected to decline most		Loss, 2024-34
1	News Analysts, Reporters, and Journalists	-27.9%
2	Broadcast Announcers and Radio Disc Jockeys	-27.7%
3	Advertising Sales Agents	-20.7%
4	Producers and Directors	-18.5%
5	Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	-13.7%
6	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers	-11.5%
7	Tellers	-10.7%
8	Loan Interviewers and Clerks	-10.2%
9	Insurance Underwriters	-9.4%
10	Loan Officers	-9.2%
11	Helpers: Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	-8.7%
12	Floral Designers	-8.6%
13	Title Examiners, Abstractors, and Searchers	-8.3%
14	Packers and Packagers, Hand	-7.5%
15	Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other	-7.4%
16	Printing Press Operators	-7.4%
17	Pile Driver Operators	-6.9%
18	Postal Service Mail Carriers	-6.8%
19	Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators	-6.7%
20	Postal Service Clerks	-6.6%
21	Postmasters and Mail Superintendents	-6.5%
22	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Exc Line Installers	-6.1%
23	Insurance Sales Agents	-6.0%
24	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	-5.9%
25	Financial Specialists, All Other	-5.8%

*Small numeric gains or losses can create large percent changes in smaller occupations.

Note: The top 25 list includes only the occupations that have at least 50 workers and projected growth of at least 20 jobs. It excludes residual occupations ending with "all other" and jobs with a high ratio of self-employment to covered employment. The bottom 25 list covers only occupations with at least 50 workers.

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

The occupations with the largest numbers of exits and transfers — people moving to a different type of work or leaving the workforce entirely — tend to have the lowest wages and fewest prerequisites.

For example, the three occupations with the most separation openings are fast food workers, retail salespeople, and cashiers. These three occupations are also the largest in the state, with a combined 26,726 jobs.

Even among occupations with high percentages of projected growth openings, most opportunities still arise from separations.

Among registered nurses, for example, 84 percent of yearly openings will come from separations, and 16 percent will come from growth (67 new jobs per year).

All economist openings, on the other hand, will come from separations.

Declining occupations will also have separation openings, although some will be canceled out by job losses.

Separations and the role education level plays

Within separations, looking at the breakdown of exits and transfers can show additional trends for an occupation.

Fast food workers, retail salespeople, and cashiers all have about a 50/50 split of exits and transfer openings, meaning it's as likely someone will quit the workforce entirely from one of those jobs as it is they'll move to another type of work.

Geological technicians, however, favor transfers (83 percent) to exits (17 percent).

Emergency medicine physicians have 100 percent labor force exits, meaning those doctors never move to another occupation before retiring or leaving the state, something common for jobs that require immense amounts of education and expense.

The education required to get a certain job is a

Average annual wage by job category in 2024

Occupational category		2024 wages
1	Management Occupations	\$132,448
2	Health Care Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$121,157
3	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	\$109,403
4	Legal Occupations	\$107,743
5	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	\$90,510
6	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	\$90,424
7	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	\$86,159
8	Construction and Extraction Occupations	\$75,604
9	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	\$73,446
10	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	\$71,407
11	Protective Service Occupations	\$70,559
12	Community and Social Service Occupations	\$68,927
13	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	\$65,675
14	Production Occupations	\$55,861
15	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	\$54,504
16	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	\$51,996
17	Health Care Support Occupations	\$51,597
18	Sales and Related Occupations	\$45,983
19	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	\$45,727
20	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	\$43,629
21	Personal Care and Service Occupations	\$42,691
22	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	\$37,108

Note: Wages are based on 2024 Occupational Employment Statistics wage estimates for Alaska, weighted by base year (2024) employment.

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

major factor in its number of openings and its wages. Jobs requiring a high school diploma or less will represent over 72 percent of all job openings over the 10 years and have some of the lowest wages in the state.

Not every occupation in this category is low-wage, however, and some require other types of training or experience, such as apprenticeships. Earning higher-than-average wages in this educational category almost always requires apprenticeships or long-term on-the-job training.

On the opposite end of the scale, jobs that require doctorates, master's degrees, or other professional degrees will only represent about 2 percent of the state's job opportunities, and their wages are highest.

The bachelor's degree category is an outlier, as it will represent 14.4 percent of all openings but pay the second-highest average wage.

Looking at wages by occupational category provides additional context. On the low end, we see food preparation and serving related occupations earning \$37,108 a year on average, with 95 percent of these jobs requiring no formal education, 13 percent requiring moderate on-the-job training, and 2 percent needing five or more years of experience.

In contrast, construction and extraction occupations pay approximately double at \$75,604, and 60 percent require a diploma or GED. Even among the 40 percent of construction jobs that don't require any formal education, 42 percent still require moderate on-the-job training.

Alaska's top jobs over the decade

Long-term occupation projections are a vital planning tool for workforce development agencies, job placement and counseling professionals, job seekers, and education and training providers. To help them determine which occupations to focus on, we publish Alaska's Top Jobs list, which ranks the occupations we expect to fare well and pay well over the projection period. The list begins on the next page.

To make the top jobs list, an occupation must essentially pay higher-than-average wages plus have higher-than-average growth or many openings.

Out of 798 occupations in Alaska, 50 made the list this round. Twenty-three require a bachelor's degree, and six require an associate degree or some type of postsecondary education, such as a vocational certification or some college attendance.

Of the 20 top jobs that require a high school diploma or less, 15 require additional on-the-job training or an apprenticeship.

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BY INDUSTRY

Continued from page 10

We project local government, which excludes public schools in these projections (discussed separately above) but includes tribal governments, will dip by 0.3 percent through 2034, which is about 62 fewer jobs.

As state revenues shrank with falling oil prices in 2014 and 2015, state support for local governments declined. Local governments slowly added jobs from 2015 to 2019 as they took over those services. Then, employment jumped by 1,173 between 2020 and 2025 as federal money flooded in for pandemic relief and then Infrastructure Act spending.

The Infrastructure Act buoyed job levels as pandemic funding waned, but much of the continued growth has come from federal funding for tribal governments through the BIA and Indian Health Service.

Paul Martz is an economist in Juneau. Reach him at (907) 465-6028 or paul.martz@alaska.gov.

Alaska's top jobs, 2024 to 2034

	Average annual openings, 2024-2034			Pct chg 2024-34	Total openings	Training* required	Work exp required	Wage** quartile	
	2024	2034	2024-34						
Bachelor's degree									
Registered Nurses	6,580	7,252	10.2%	67	343	410	None	None	\$\$\$
General and Operations Managers	4,623	4,728	2.3%	11	360	371	None	5+ years	\$\$\$
Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	2,329	2,537	8.9%	21	269	290	Moderate OJT	<5 years	\$\$\$
Accountants and Auditors	2,364	2,394	1.3%	3	172	175	None	None	\$\$\$
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	2,113	2,003	-5.2%	-11	137	126	None	None	\$\$\$
Chief Executives	1,844	1,907	3.4%	6	124	130	None	5+ years	\$\$\$
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,665	1,577	-5.3%	-9	102	93	None	None	\$\$\$
Administrative Services Managers	1,496	1,542	3.1%	5	120	125	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Medical and Health Services Managers	1,323	1,444	9.2%	12	96	108	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Construction Managers	1,252	1,218	-2.7%	-3	90	87	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Civil Engineers	1,198	1,203	0.4%	1	69	70	None	None	\$\$\$
Financial Managers	1,086	1,084	-0.2%	0	72	72	None	5+ years	\$\$\$
Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,020	1,013	-0.7%	-1	64	63	None	5+ years	\$\$\$
Zoologists and Wildlife Biologists	925	913	-1.3%	-1	68	67	None	None	\$\$\$
Compliance Officers	806	813	0.9%	1	61	62	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Human Resources Specialists	748	765	2.3%	2	58	60	None	None	\$\$\$
Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	698	726	4.0%	3	62	65	None	None	\$\$\$
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	645	716	11.0%	7	42	49	None	None	\$\$\$
Social and Community Service Managers	690	710	2.9%	2	53	55	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Buyers and Purchasing Agents	667	691	3.6%	2	62	64	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Sales Managers	676	673	-0.4%	0	49	49	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Human Resources Managers	640	660	3.1%	2	48	50	None	5+ years	\$\$\$
Training and Development Specialists	576	596	3.5%	2	48	50	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Associate degree									
Air Traffic Controllers	494	480	-2.8%	-1	44	43	Long OJT	None	\$\$\$
Postsecondary nondegree award or some college, no degree									
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	1,568	1,687	7.6%	12	124	136	None	None	\$\$\$
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	798	850	6.5%	5	87	92	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Commercial Pilots	614	658	7.2%	4	70	74	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	562	528	-6.1%	-3	49	46	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Massage Therapists	475	520	9.5%	5	61	66	None	None	\$\$\$
High school diploma or equivalent									
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	3,324	3,272	-1.6%	-5	266	261	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Carpenters	2,406	2,291	-4.8%	-12	167	156	Apprenticeship	None	\$\$\$
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	1,972	2,027	2.8%	6	186	192	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Electricians	1,816	1,854	2.1%	4	157	161	Apprenticeship	None	\$\$\$
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	1,471	1,465	-0.4%	-1	107	106	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Correctional Officers and Jailers	1,272	1,265	-0.6%	-1	112	111	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	1,261	1,252	-0.7%	-1	101	100	Apprenticeship	None	\$\$\$
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	1,084	1,159	6.9%	8	89	97	Long OJT	None	\$\$\$
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	995	1,008	1.3%	1	74	75	None	5+ years	\$\$\$

Alaska's top jobs, 2024 to 2034, continued

	Pct chg			Average annual openings, 2024-2034					
	2024	2034	2024-34	Growth	Sepa- rations	Total openings	Training* required	Work exp required	Wage** quartile
High school diploma or equivalent, continued									
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	855	836	-2.2%	-2	81	79	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	752	737	-2.0%	-2	60	59	Long OJT	None	\$\$\$
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers, Except Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	680	711	4.6%	3	66	69	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	645	662	2.6%	2	51	53	Short OJT	<5 years	\$\$\$
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	631	661	4.8%	3	52	55	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	611	647	5.9%	4	59	63	None	<5 years	\$\$\$
Food Service Managers	596	612	2.7%	2	66	68	Short OJT	<5 years	\$\$\$
Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	541	557	3.0%	2	49	51	Long OJT	None	\$\$\$
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	490	490	0%	0	57	57	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	426	471	10.6%	5	43	48	Moderate OJT	None	\$\$\$
Power Plant Operators	444	449	1.1%	1	42	43	Long OJT	None	\$\$\$
No formal educational credential									
Service Unit Operators, Oil and Gas	1,410	1,612	14.3%	20	136	156	Moderate OJT	<5 years	\$\$\$

Notes: To rank as a "top job," an occupation must: 1) rank in the top two wage quartiles; AND 2) have total 10-year projected growth of at least 75 jobs and greater percentage growth than all occupations combined, OR be among the 50 occupations with the most projected average annual openings (of those with wages in the top two quartiles). Residual "all other" occupations are excluded.

*OJT = on-the-job training. Moderate-term is one to 12 months and long-term is more than 12 months.

**Wages: \$\$\$ = \$70,040 to \$92,900 annually (\$33.67 to \$44.66 hourly). \$\$\$\$ = More than \$92,900 annually (\$44.66 hourly), based on Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics' May 2024 Estimates for Alaska

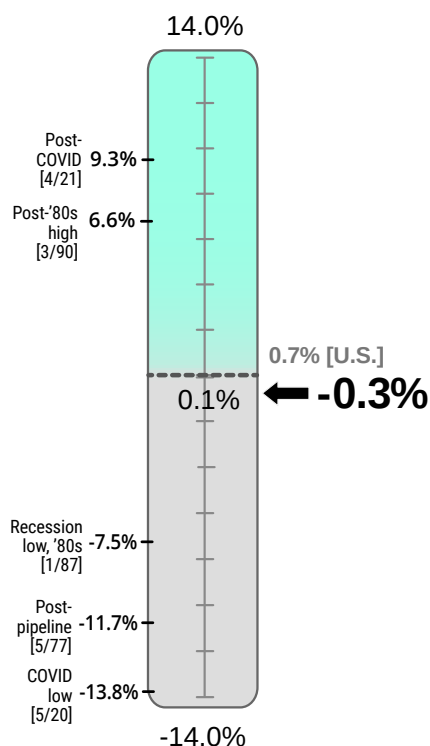
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Gauging The Economy



Job Growth

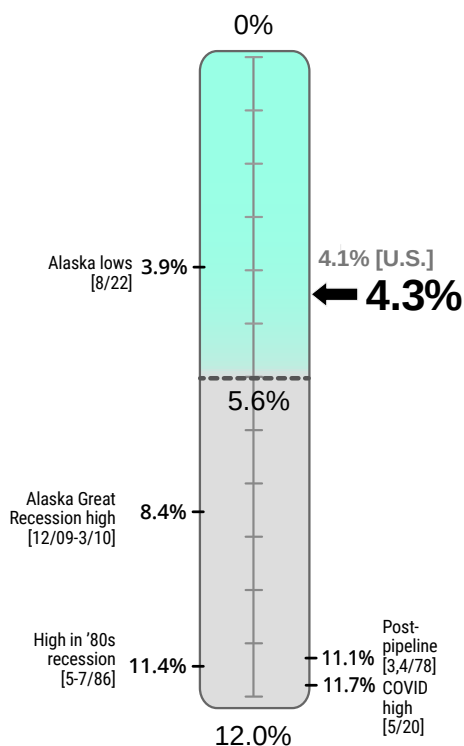
August 2026
Over-the-year percent change



Alaska's July employment was down by 0.3 percent from last August. U.S. employment was up by 0.7 percent.

Unemployment Rate

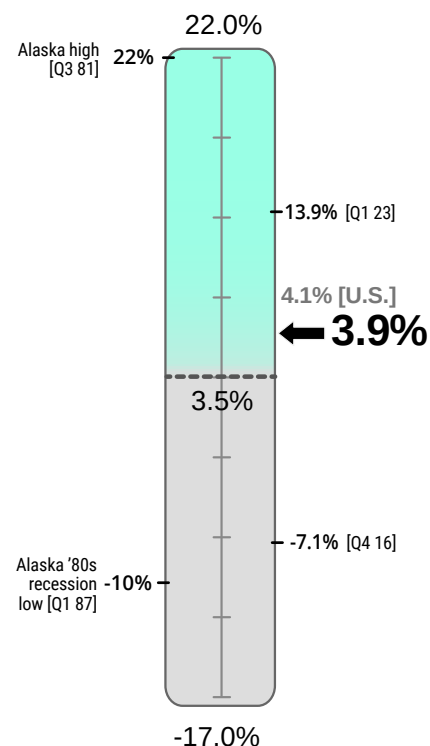
August 2026
Seasonally adjusted



Alaska's unemployment rate was up by about half of one percentage point from mid-2022 but remains well below its 10-year average.

Wage Growth

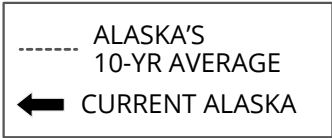
1st Quarter 2026
Over-the-year percent change



Total wages paid by Alaska employers have shown strong growth in recent quarters.

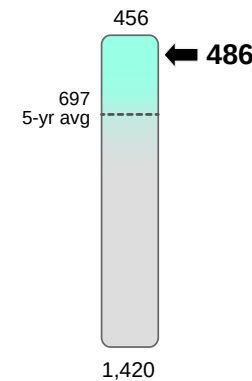
Wages were up 3.9 percent from year-ago levels in the first quarter of 2026.

Gauging The Economy



Initial Claims

Unemployment, week ending Sep. 5, 2026*

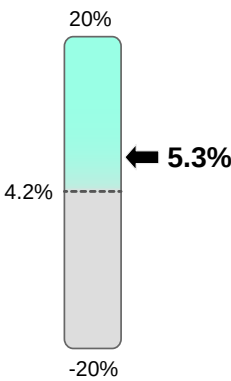


Pandemic-driven high claims loads have fallen, and new claims for benefits are well below their long-term average.

*Four-week moving average ending with specified week

GDP Growth

1st Quarter 2026
Over-the-year percent change*

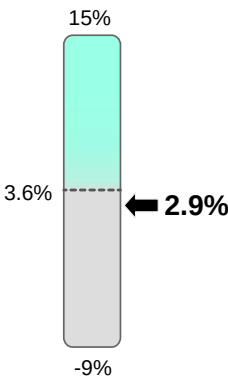


Gross domestic product is the value of the goods and services a state produces. It's an important economic measure but also a volatile one for Alaska because commodity prices influence the numbers so much — especially oil prices.

*In current dollars

Personal Income Growth

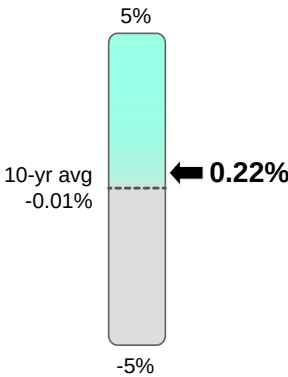
1st Quarter 2026
Over-the-year percent change



Personal income consists of three main parts: 1) wages and salaries; 2) dividends, interest, and rents; and 3) transfer payments (payments from governments to individuals).

Population Growth

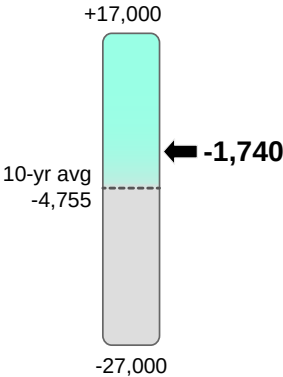
2024 to 2025



After an overall population loss from 2021 to 2022, Alaska's population has grown slightly over each of the last three years.

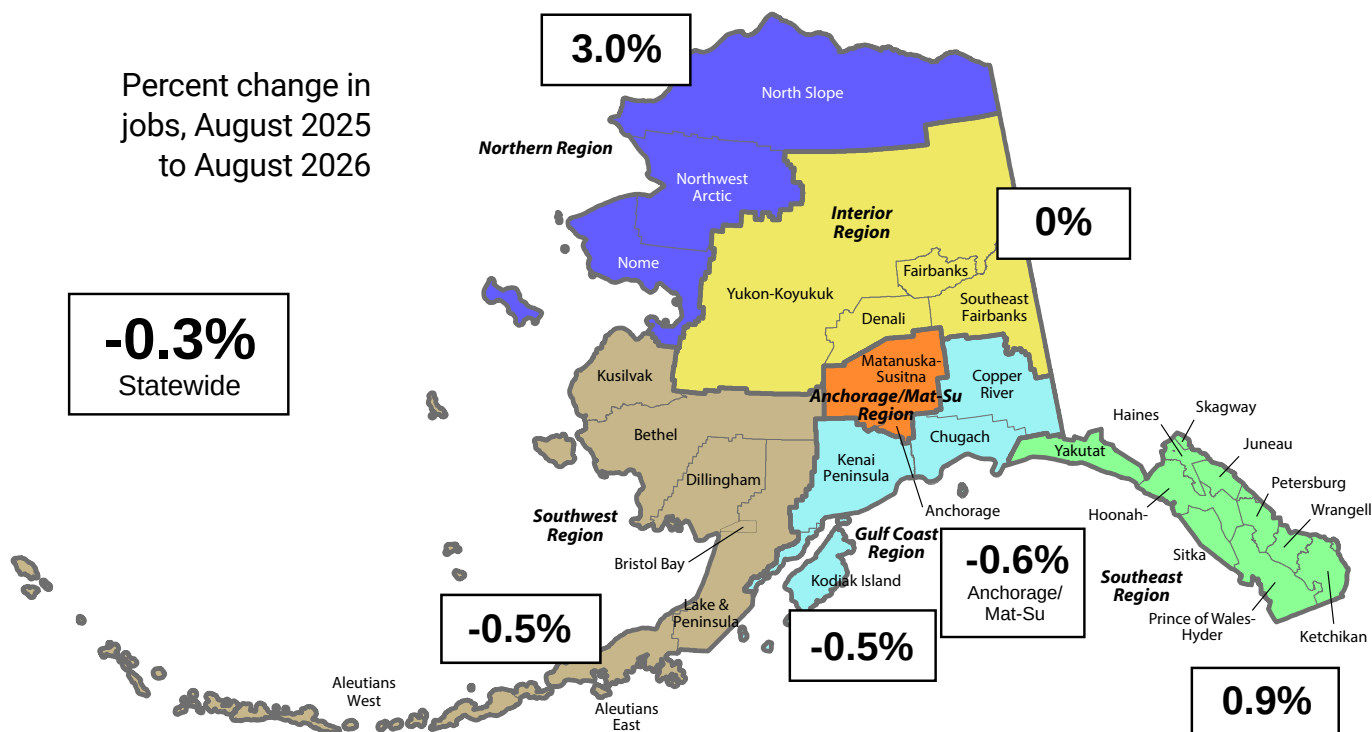
Net Migration

2024 to 2025



Net migration is the number who moved to Alaska minus the number who left.

Employment Growth by Region



Unemployment Rates

Seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/26	7/26	8/25
United States	4.1	4.1	4.3
Alaska	4.3	4.3	4.6

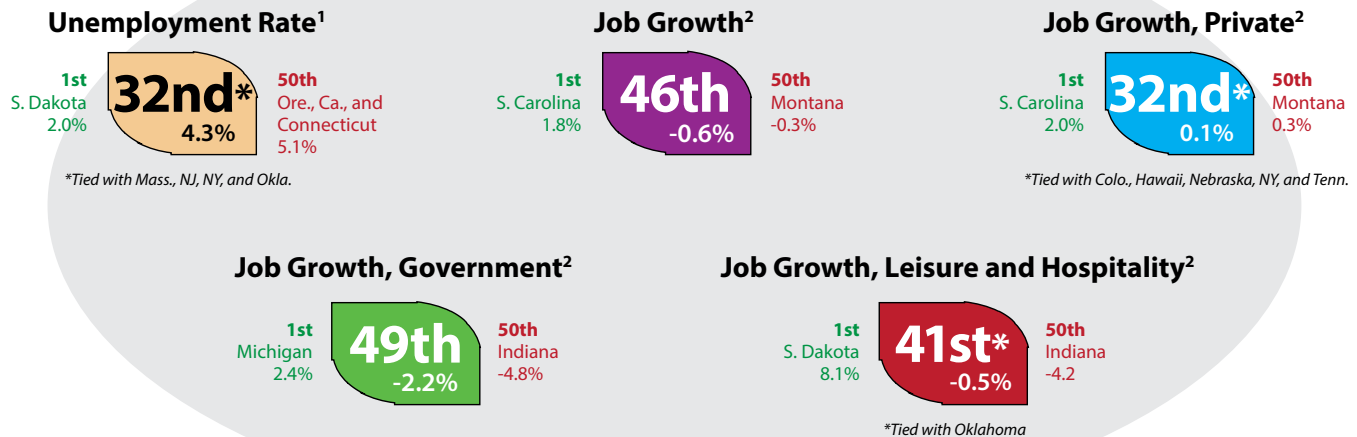
Not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised	
	8/26	7/26	8/25
United States	4.3	4.4	4.5
Alaska	3.5	3.6	3.7

Regional, not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revised			Prelim.	Revised			Prelim.	Revised	
	8/26	7/26	8/25		8/26	7/26	8/25		8/26	7/26	8/25
Interior Region	3.4	3.6	3.5	Southwest Region	7.3	7.2	8.1	Southeast Region	2.8	2.9	3.0
Denali Borough	1.8	1.9	1.6	Aleutians East Borough	1.7	1.8	1.7	Haines Borough	4.9	5.2	5.5
Fairbanks N Star Borough	3.1	3.3	3.1	Aleutians West Census Area	2.0	2.1	2.2	Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	3.8	4.1	3.5
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	5.2	5.4	5.8	Bethel Census Area	10.3	10.7	12.6	Juneau, City and Borough	2.3	2.4	2.5
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	8.7	9.1	8.7	Bristol Bay Borough	2.2	1.1	1.5	Ketchikan Gateway Borough	2.5	2.6	3.2
Northern Region	6.0	6.1	6.7	Dillingham Census Area	6.1	5.4	5.6	Petersburg Borough	2.2	2.2	3.3
Nome Census Area	8.5	8.5	10.3	Kusilvak Census Area	18.2	21.0	18.4	Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	6.8	7.1	7.4
North Slope Borough	3.0	2.9	2.9	Lake and Peninsula Borough	5.3	4.4	5.9	Sitka, City and Borough	2.1	2.1	1.8
Northwest Arctic Borough	8.8	9.5	9.5	Gulf Coast Region	3.3	3.4	3.5	Skagway, Municipality	2.3	2.5	1.5
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	3.2	3.3	3.4	Kenai Peninsula Borough	3.4	3.7	3.6	Wrangell, City and Borough	3.0	3.6	4.4
Anchorage, Municipality	3.0	3.2	3.2	Kodiak Island Borough	2.4	2.5	2.9	Yakutat, City and Borough	4.0	4.3	2.7
Mat-Su Borough	3.5	3.8	3.9	Chugach Census Area	3.0	2.9	3.0				
				Copper River Census Area	5.3	5.2	4.7				

How Alaska Ranks



Note: Government employment includes federal, state, and local government plus public schools and universities.

¹August seasonally adjusted unemployment rates

²August 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: 1982-84=100)	278.409	1st half 2026	270.441	+2.9%
Commodity prices				
Crude oil, Alaska North Slope,* per barrel	\$85.96	Aug 2026	\$69.28	+24.1%
Natural gas, Henry Hub, per thousand cubic feet (mcf)	\$2.77	Aug 2026	\$2.89	-4.2%
Gold, per oz. COMEX	\$4,308.70	9/24/26	\$3,768.10	+14.3%
Silver, per oz. COMEX	\$64.19	9/24/26	\$43.78	+46.6%
Copper, per lb. COMEX	\$6.78	9/24/26	\$4.75	+42.7%
Bankruptcies				
Business	92	Q2 2026	54	+70.4%
Personal	12	Q2 2026	7	+71.4%
	80	Q2 2026	47	+70.2%
Unemployment insurance claims				
Initial filings	2,024	Aug 2026	2,256	-10.3%
Continued filings	15,212	Aug 2026	15,960	-4.7%
Claimant count	3,690	Aug 2026	3,881	-4.9%

*Department of Revenue estimate

Sources for this page and the preceding three pages include Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; Bloomberg; U.S. Census Bureau; Yahoo Finance: COMEX; Alaska Department of Revenue; and U.S. Courts, 9th Circuit

EMPLOYER RESOURCES

The Alaska Seafood Office helps with a range of industry needs

The Alaska Seafood Office, located in the Anchorage Midtown Job Center, provides no cost support for all seafood industry workforce needs. Staff are trained to help employers create and post job orders in [AlaskaJobs](#), publish flyers, and promote openings through online platforms, Facebook, email lists, press releases, community partners, and even local radio.

The office offers applicant orientation and skills assessments and can quickly verify rehire status to ensure employers receive the most qualified candidates. Employers can also benefit from the Traveling Seafood Workforce Program, which helps identify and recruit experienced Alaskan workers who have completed similar seasonal contracts.

Customized job fairs and recruitment events are available, with meeting space in Anchorage and

interview rooms in job centers statewide. The office can also coordinate recruitments in rural communities when needed.

In addition, employers can participate in workshops focused on labor laws, hiring incentives, and market trends; connect with other seafood industry employers; receive guidance on apprenticeships and training for hard to fill jobs; and access the Seafood Employment Report to support recruitment planning and upcoming job fair participation.

Contact the Seafood Office today at dol.seafood@alaska.gov, (907) 269-0031, toll-free (800) 473-0688, or (800)770-8973 for Relay Alaska.

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

SAFETY MINUTE

OSHA Hazard Communication requirements change on Nov. 20

A major deadline is coming for all Alaska employers who use hazardous chemicals. OSHA updated its Hazard Communication Standard, and by Nov. 20, employers must comply with important new requirements. The changes may sound technical, but the steps to stay compliant are straightforward.

What changed?

By May 19 of this year, chemical manufacturers and suppliers should have updated their labels and Safety Data Sheets for substances (they have until Nov. 19, 2027, for mixtures). Therefore, SDSs will have recently been updated to meet the new hazard definitions and classification criteria, revised labeling requirements, and SDS format and content, and to reflect specific prescribed concentration ranges when claiming trade secrets.

By Nov. 20, employers must begin updating workplace labels, written programs, and training related to chemical substances (May 19, 2028 for mixtures).

What this means for employers in Alaska is simple: update your hazard communication program when updated SDSs arrive from your supplier or when you purchase a new chemical and obtain the SDS and update the SDS book and hazard assessments, and train your employees on any new hazards listed or controls replaced.

What employers should do now

- Review your written Hazard Communication (HazCom) program. Make sure it includes a current list of all chemical products onsite, instructions for labeling containers, and clear procedures for providing SDSs to workers. Update workplace labels so they match the new label elements from suppliers.
- Ensure employees are trained to understand chemical hazards, SDSs, and label elements.

Training should be easy to follow and provided in a way employees understand. If respirators are required for certain tasks, make sure you have a written respiratory protection program that includes medical evaluations, fit testing, and proper instruction.

- Keep basic hygiene rules in place. Do not allow eating, drinking, smoking, or applying cosmetics where chemicals are used or stored. Encourage employees to wash their hands and face before breaks and after handling chemicals.

Not sure where to start?

You don't have to tackle these updates alone. The Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Training program, provides free, confidential help to Alaska employers. Consultation and Training consultants can visit your work site, identify hazards, provide additional information on changes to the 2024 Hazard Communication Standard, offer sample written programs, and provide employee training tailored to your needs. Best of all, services never result in citations or penalties—it's assistance designed to help you succeed. To request help, contact AKOSH C&T at (800) 656 4972 or (907) 269 4955.

References

- [AKOSH Program Directive #26-06, dated 7/28/26](#)
- [OSHA Hazard Communication website](#)
- [OSHA FactSheet, Final Rule Modifying the HCS to Maintain Alignment with the GHS](#)

This Safety Minute was provided by the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Training Section of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.