Federal jobs and workers in Alaska

State ranks third for concentration of federal employment

By KARINNE WIEBOLD

Alaska has about 15,500 federal civilian jobs, representing 4.6 percent of the state's total employment. That concentration ranks third among states, after Virginia and Hawaii.

The federal government paid $1.5 billion in civilian wages in Alaska in federal fiscal fiscal year 2024, and a third of that came from the Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense is the largest agency in Alaska, with more than 6,300 civilian jobs in federal fiscal year 2024 and more than triple that number in active-duty service. The Department of the Interior is second largest at 2,300 jobs and the U.S. Postal Service is third with 1,500. (See the table on pages 6-7 for jobs and wages by department and agency.)

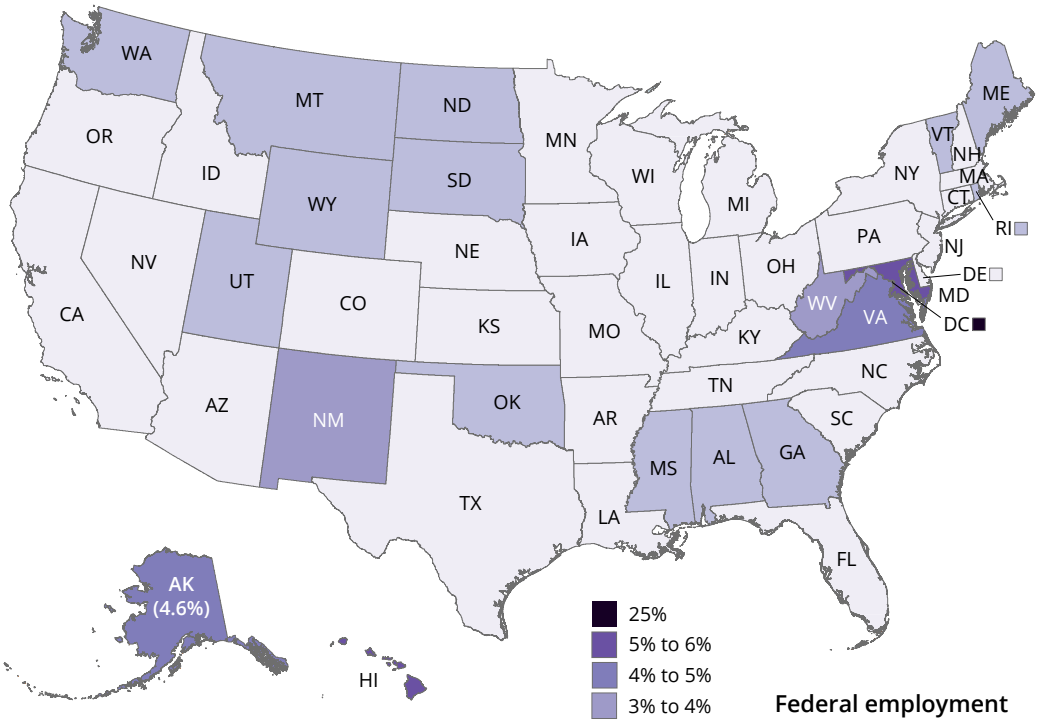
Wages by department were highest at the Department of Justice (about $143,000) and the Department of Transportation ($141,000). The average federal salary was just under $100,000.

The lowest-paying among large agencies was the Postal Service, averaging $82,000. The Department of Defense was second lowest at $86,000. Many civilian jobs at DoD are in base support services.

Every borough and census area has at least some federal jobs

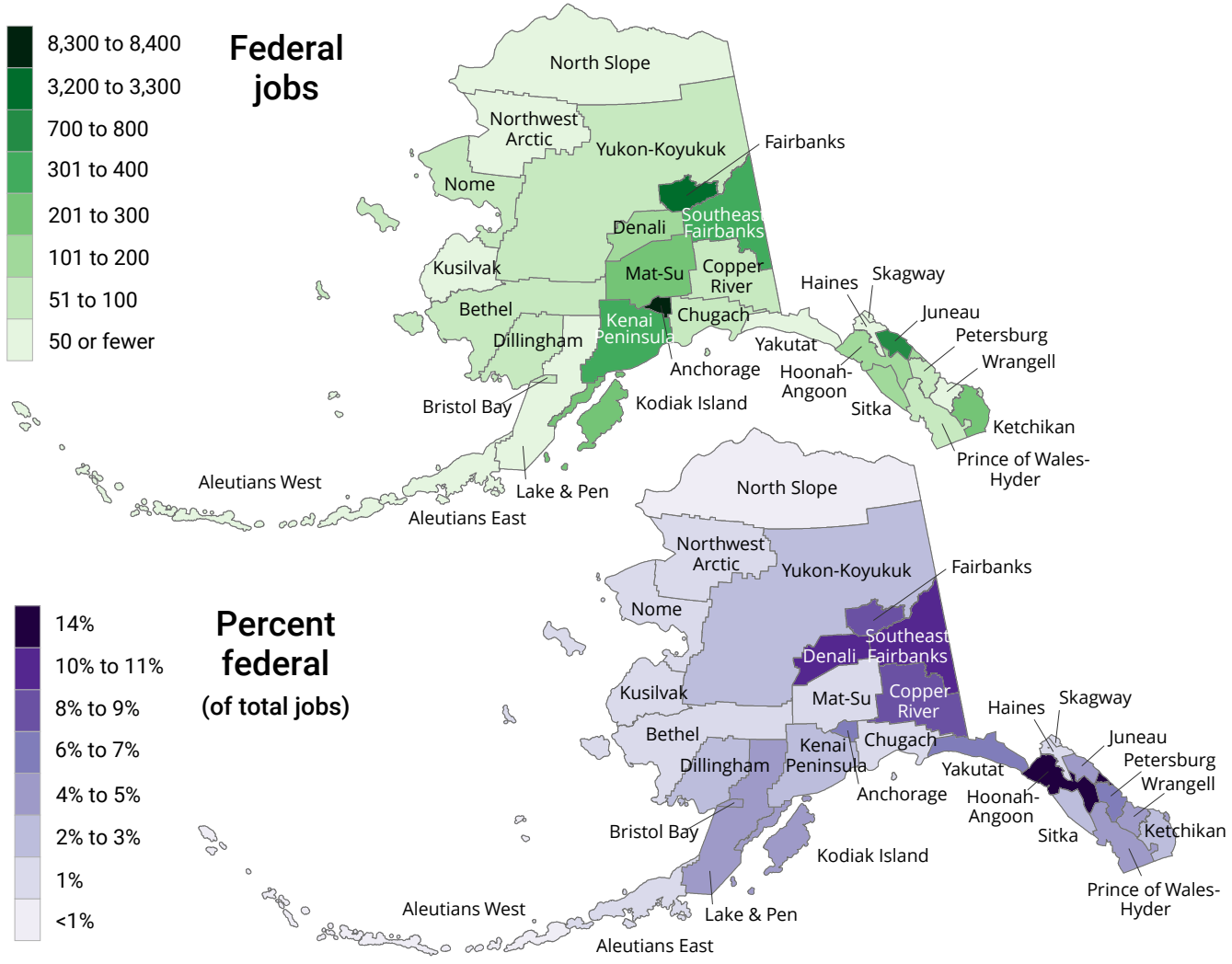
Alaska's bigger cities have more federal jobs but they represent a bigger slice of overall employment in small places. Anchorage and Fairbanks have 77

Alaska has one of the highest concentrations of federal jobs



Note: Calendar year 2023
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program

Federal employment numbers and share by Alaska area, 2024



Note: Federal fiscal year 2024
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

percent of the state's federal employment, but every borough and census area has at least some.

The federal government makes up 14 percent of the Hoonah-Angoon Census Area's total job count, primarily with the National Park Service in Glacier Bay National Park. The Southeast Fairbanks Census Area's employment is 11 percent federal because of Fort Greely. The Denali Borough's share is 10 percent, also in the National Park Service.

Although Skagway and Haines had just a handful of federal jobs, their average wages were the highest in 2024, with Skagway topping $150,000. Both are U.S.-Canada border towns where U.S. Customs and Border Control is the main federal employer.

Juneau's wage was the third highest at $118,000. The capital's largest federal employers are the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Rural areas with little federal employment had the lowest wages, nearly all at post offices. The Bethel and Yukon-Koyukuk census areas also have some jobs in the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Transportation Safety Administration.

This data set doesn't factor in the hours worked, and some of these areas' averages are lowered by part-time positions at post offices where mail service is lower-volume and less frequent. The Kusilvak Census Area in western Alaska averaged $39,000 last year.

Text continues on page 8

Alaska federal civilian jobs and wages by department, 2024

Department/agency	Jobs	Total wages	Avg wage
TOTAL FEDERAL	**15,469**	**$1,543,177,370**	**$99,759**
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (CIVILIAN)	**6,317**	**$544,958,203**	**$86,269**
Pacific Air Forces	2,857	$271,028,288	$94,865
Army Installation Management Command	967	$102,532,006	$106,031
Air Force Base Support Services	**531**	**$18,992,100**	**$35,767**
Military Treatment Facilities Under DHA/Defense Health Agency	476	$50,477,547	$106,045
Army Corps of Engineers	463	$52,870,394	$114,191
Army Air Force Exchange Service/PX	354	$4,723,140	$13,342
Army Morale, Welfare, and Recreation	351	$15,704,223	$44,741
Defense Commissary Agency	171	$9,743,884	$56,982
Undisclosed	67	$8,667,379	$129,364
Space Force	37	$5,276,916	$142,619
Air Force Civilian Career Training	17	$1,682,896	$98,994
Naval Sea Sys Command/Naval Special Warfare Command/Air Force Mtrl Command	16	$2,204,788	$137,799
Army National Guard Units, Title 32	10	$1,054,642	$105,464
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR	**2,264**	**$244,518,709**	**$108,003**
National Park Service	732	$68,441,725	$93,500
Bureau of Land Management	632	$72,738,887	$115,093
Fish and Wildlife Service	505	$55,984,235	$110,860
U.S. Geological Survey	166	$18,900,509	$113,858
Bureau of Indian Affairs	100	$10,875,163	$108,752
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	46	$6,388,088	$138,871
Office of the Secretary	44	$5,473,513	$124,398
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement/Bureau of Reclamation	22	$2,961,523	$134,615
Office of Inspector General/Office of the Solicitor	17	$2,755,066	$162,063
POSTAL SERVICE	**1,540**	**$125,624,176**	**$81,574**
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (includes Federal Aviation Administration)	**1,141**	**$160,927,256**	**$141,041**
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY	**1,087**	**$111,130,619**	**$102,236**
Transportation Security Administration/TSA Administrator	581	$53,863,678	$92,709
Coast Guard (Civilian)	231	$26,846,634	$116,219
Customs and Border Protection	125	$19,437,283	$155,498
Coast Guard Morale, Welfare, and Recreation	62	$1,406,663	$22,688
Federal Emergency Management Agency	33	$3,973,554	$120,411
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	20	$2,955,706	$147,785
Citizenship and Immigration Service/Secret Service	19	$2,172,774	$114,357
Coast Guard Exchange	17	$474,327	$27,902
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS	**950**	**$105,670,239**	**$111,232**
Alaska VA Health Care System	546	$59,461,786	$108,904
Veterans Affairs/Fort Richardson National Cemetery	202	$21,092,038	$104,416
Anchorage Vet Center	129	$16,617,373	$128,817
Wasilla Vet Center	25	$2,987,331	$119,493
Fairbanks Vet Center	25	$2,875,786	$115,031
Kenai Vet Center Satellite	23	$2,635,925	$114,605
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	**903**	**$91,030,985**	**$100,810**
Forest Service	711	$70,794,555	$99,570
Natural Resources Conservation Service	88	$9,831,218	$111,718
Animal and Plant Health Inspection/Food Safety and Inspection Service	67	$6,347,951	$94,746
Rural Housing Service	23	$2,835,809	$123,296
Rural Development/National Agricultural Statistics Service	7	$828,135	$118,305
Farm Service Agency County Office	6	$393,317	$65,553
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE	**525**	**$64,758,974**	**$123,350**
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	463	$62,238,537	$134,424
Bureau of the Census/Economic Development Administration	62	$2,520,437	$40,652
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	**247**	**$35,454,528**	**$143,541**
Federal Bureau of Investigation	128	$18,388,327	$143,659
U.S. Attorney's Office	68	$9,451,834	$138,998
U.S. Marshals Service	25	$3,858,882	$154,355
Drug Enforcement Administration	15	$2,139,234	$142,616
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives	11	$1,616,251	$146,932

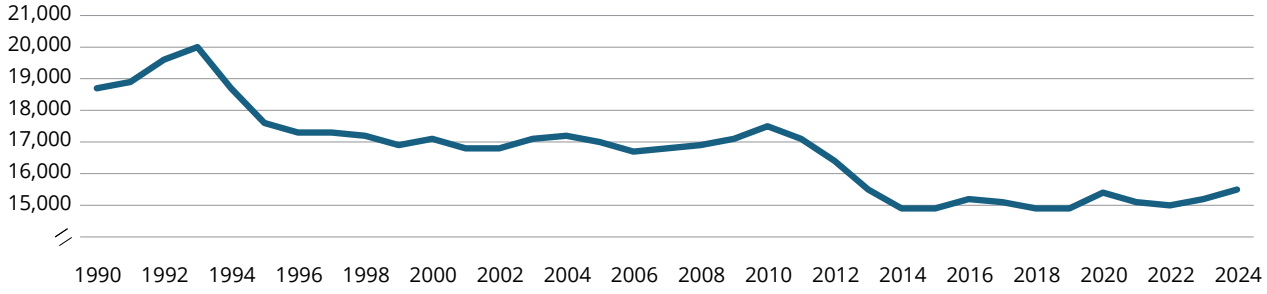
Alaska federal civilian jobs and wages by department, 2024 (continued)

Department/agency	Jobs	Total wages	Avg wage
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES	**154**	**$18,974,614**	**$123,212**
Environmental Protection Agency	40	$5,154,965	$128,874
General Services Administration	40	$4,669,799	$116,745
Social Security Administration	34	$3,513,753	$103,346
Denali Commission	16	$2,348,714	$146,795
Small Business Administration	11	$1,373,500	$124,864
All Other	10	$1,235,486	$123,549
National Transportation Safety Board	5	$678,397	$135,679
FEDERAL COURTS	**116**	**$12,586,884**	**$108,508**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	**94**	**$10,529,804**	**$112,019**
Indian Health Service	46	$5,628,199	$122,352
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	32	$3,744,011	$117,000
All Other	16	$1,157,594	$72,350
DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY	**60**	**$7,553,757**	**$125,896**
Internal Revenue Service/Office of the Comptroller of the Currency	60	$7,553,757	$125,896
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT	**35**	**$4,657,835**	**$133,081**
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR	**23**	**$3,025,510**	**$131,544**
All Other	12	$1,466,806	$122,234
Occupational Safety and Health Administration/Mine Safety and Health Administration	11	$1,558,704	$141,700
DEPARTMENT OF STATE/DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY	**14**	**$1,775,277**	**$126,806**

Notes: Federal fiscal year 2024, which was Oct. 1, 2023 through Sept. 30, 2024. Does not include active-duty military. Agencies may not sum because of rounding. A "/" indicates we combined agencies from the federal agency breakouts derived from federal wage records.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Federal employment in Alaska has declined over the last three decades



Note: Calendar years

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, Current Employment Statistics

Federal employment by Alaska area, 2024

Borough or census area	Total jobs	Federal jobs	Percent federal	Average federal wage
Aleutians East Borough	1,833	15	1%	$69,733
Aleutians West Census Area	3,240	14	0%	$96,112
Anchorage, Municipality	146,375	8,397	6%	$102,304
Bethel Census Area	6,382	69	1%	$66,926
Bristol Bay Borough	1,232	54	4%	$105,111
Chugach Census Area	3,730	55	1%	$94,381
Copper River Census Area	1,099	92	8%	$91,054
Denali Borough	1,955	197	10%	$90,802
Dillingham Census Area	2,086	64	3%	$84,266
Fairbanks North Star Borough	36,849	3,234	9%	$90,769
Haines Borough	1,028	12	1%	$138,927
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,016	147	14%	$79,630
Juneau, City and Borough	17,626	715	4%	$118,267
Kenai Peninsula Borough	21,294	391	2%	$99,217
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,237	204	3%	$103,980
Kodiak Island Borough	5,537	251	5%	$78,502
Kusilvak Census Area	1,948	26	1%	$39,340
Lake and Peninsula Borough	871	35	4%	$57,383
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	29,195	283	1%	$113,137
Nome Census Area	3,861	51	1%	$73,870
North Slope Borough	11,302	18	0%	$78,452
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,971	44	1%	$79,072
Petersburg Borough	1,236	82	7%	$95,207
Prince of Wales-Hyder CA	2,103	89	4%	$84,679
Sitka, City and Borough	4,319	109	3%	$97,004
Skagway Municipality	909	10	1%	$152,372
Southeast Fairbanks CA	3,153	355	11%	$106,543
Wrangell, City and Borough	772	40	5%	$86,885
Yakutat, City and Borough	334	19	6%	$91,316
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,223	62	3%	$66,702

Notes: Federal fiscal year 2024. May not sum to total employment because some jobs are not assigned to a specific location.

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

Other lower wages — although considerably higher than Kusilvak — were in the Lake and Peninsula Borough ($57,000) and the Yukon-Koyukuk and Bethel census areas ($67,000).

Defense, Interior are the largest and visible

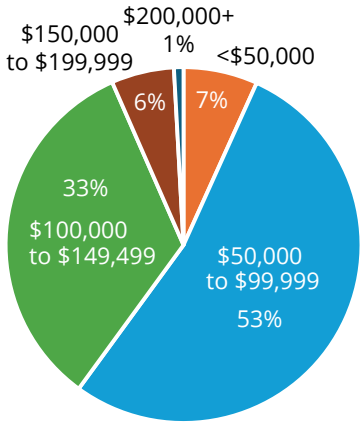
Department of Defense eclipses the rest

The active-duty military isn't part of Alaska's regular job numbers, but they show their numbers are higher than all federal civilian employment combined. The state has almost 22,000 service members and roughly 29,000 dependents.

Although multiple installations have come and gone throughout Alaska's history, the military has been a stable component of Alaska's population in the recent past. The active-duty count in 2024 was close to the 15-year average.

The Department of Defense is most visible in its large bases near Anchorage and Fairbanks, where over

How much Alaska federal workers earned in 2023



Sources: U.S. Office of Personnel Management; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Active-duty military by area, 2024

Borough or census area	Service members
Statewide total	**21,785**
Fairbanks North Star Borough	10,012
Anchorage	9,883
Kodiak Island Borough	720
Juneau, City and Borough	223
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	220
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	205
Sitka, City and Borough	181
Chugach Census Area	136
Kenai Peninsula Borough	90
Denali Borough	80
Petersburg Borough	23
Aleutians West Census Area	12

Notes: As of July 2024. Includes the Coast Guard. Location is based on on the installation to which the person is assigned. Excludes service members deployed overseas.

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

90 percent of Alaska service members are stationed. Alaska's main military bases are Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Fort Wainwright and Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, and Coast Guard bases in Kodiak, Juneau, Sitka, and Ketchikan. The state houses smaller operations at Clear Space Force Station and Fort Greely, and a handful of other minor installations.

The Coast Guard is part of the Department of Homeland Security rather than Defense, although during wartime it functionally transfers to the Navy. The Coast Guard is included in the active-duty table on the previous page but is listed under DHS in the military civilian employment table on pages 6 and 7.

DoD's influence goes beyond direct jobs

Defense's economic role in the state goes well beyond its direct employment. The department spent $4.7 billion in Alaska in fiscal year 2023. (DoD's 2023 Defense Spending by State report is the most recent available.)

While that amount represented less than 1 percent of DoD's total spending that year, those funds have an outsized impact on Alaska. Defense spending per Alaska resident ranked fourth among states at $6,405, more than triple the national average of $1,819.

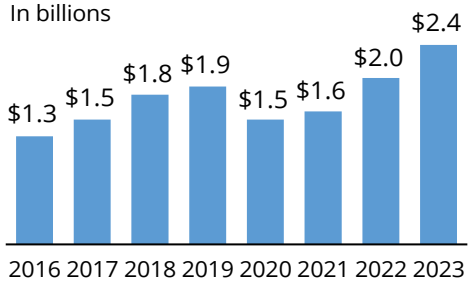
Federal defense spending made up 7 percent of Alaska's gross domestic product — the value of all our goods and services — again ranking us fourth among states.

Top defense contractors in 2023

Contractor	In millions
Arctic Slope Regional Corp.	$389.5
Doyon, Ltd.	$107.4
Siemens	$76.5
Kiewit Corp.	$68.1
Triton Marine	$67.9
Chugach Alaska Corp.	$65.5
Amentum Alaska Decommissioning, LLC	$65.3
The Aleut Corporation	$44.3
Unit Co.	$41.5
Koniag, Inc.	$41.0

Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation, Defense Spending by State report, federal fiscal year 2023

Defense contract spending



Source: U.S. Department of Defense, Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation, Defense Spending by State report, federal fiscal year 2023

About the state and federal data sources

The State of Alaska works with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to collect employment and wage data through the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages and Current Employment Statistics programs.

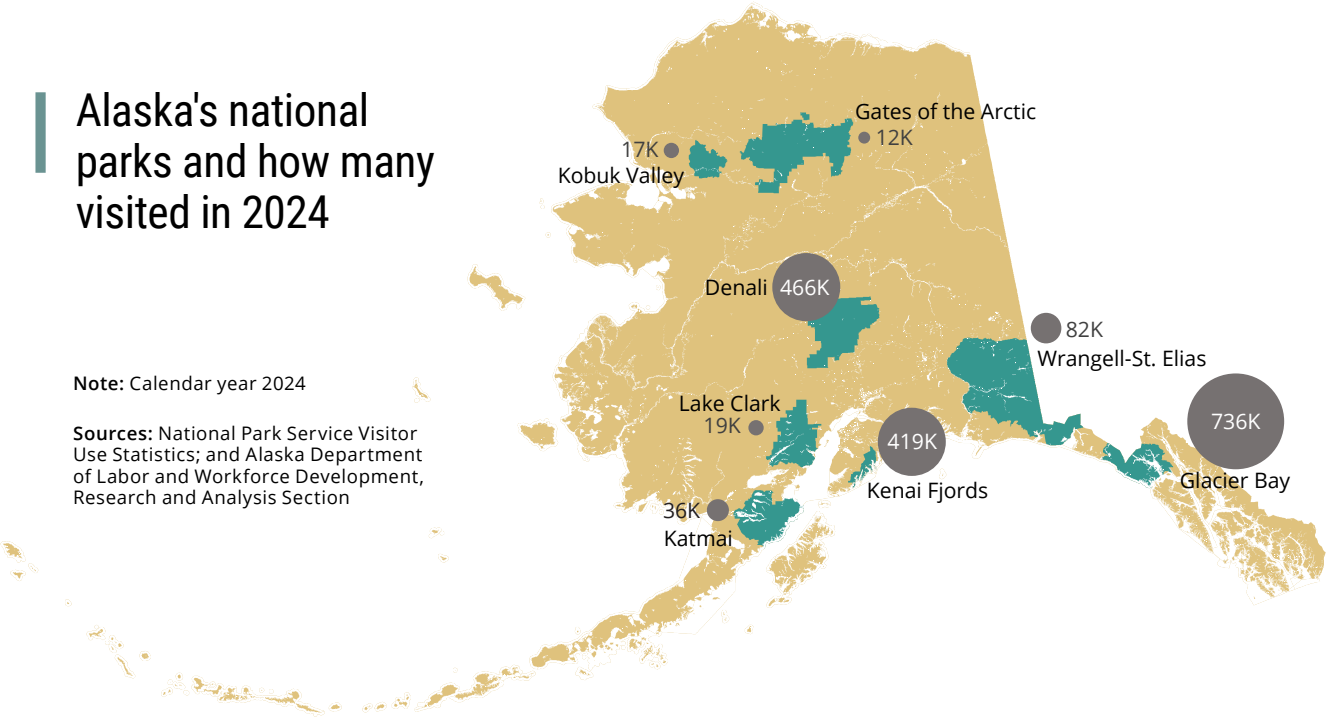
Detailed occupational data for federal workers come from the federal Office of Personnel Management, which provides quarterly snapshots of the federal workforce.

The two sources differ in the positions and departments they cover. The State of Alaska data cover all departments and include more than 15,000 jobs. The OPM's worker count of about 11,000 excludes the Postal Service and Transportation Safety Administration, positions in the Department of Defense that are paid through nonappropriated funds, the judiciary, and a few other small categories. For more information, visit the OPM's FedScope.

We used the federal fiscal year for the employment analysis, except where otherwise noted. The federal fiscal year is Oct. 1 through the following Sept. 30. OPM data are by calendar year.

We used the most recent year available for each data source.

Alaska's national parks and how many visited in 2024



Note: Calendar year 2024

Sources: National Park Service Visitor Use Statistics; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

The biggest federal job categories in 2023

Category	Workers	% of all federal*	Average salary
Business and Financial Operations	2,520	23%	$102,600
Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	2,013	18%	$96,800
Transportation and Material Moving	1,110	10%	$102,500
Office and Administrative Support	1,032	9%	$57,400
Management	859	8%	$113,700
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	763	7%	$86,400
Architecture and Engineering	704	6%	$113,300
Health Care Practitioners and Technical	547	5%	$112,500
Protective Services	409	4%	$73,900
Educational Instruction and Library	184	2%	$75,800
Production	161	1%	$77,200
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media	147	1%	$93,600
Legal	145	1%	$112,300
Community and Social Services	145	1%	$100,500
Construction and Extraction	139	1%	$86,000
Personal Care and Service	68	1%	$70,400
Health Care Support	60	1%	$58,500
Food Preparation and Serving	50	0%	$65,900
Computer and Mathematical	37	0%	$105,400
Sales and Related	19	0%	$40,000
Building, Grounds Cleaning/Maintenance	8	0%	$70,300

*Percentage of all the federal workers covered by the Office of Personnel Management, which excludes certain departments. See the sidebar on the previous page.

Note: Calendar year 2023

Sources: U.S. Office of Personnel Management and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Alaska-specific defense contracts totaled $2.4 billion in 2023, significantly more than in previous years. Jobs created by defense contracts are in the private sector, but direct federal government support can blur that line.

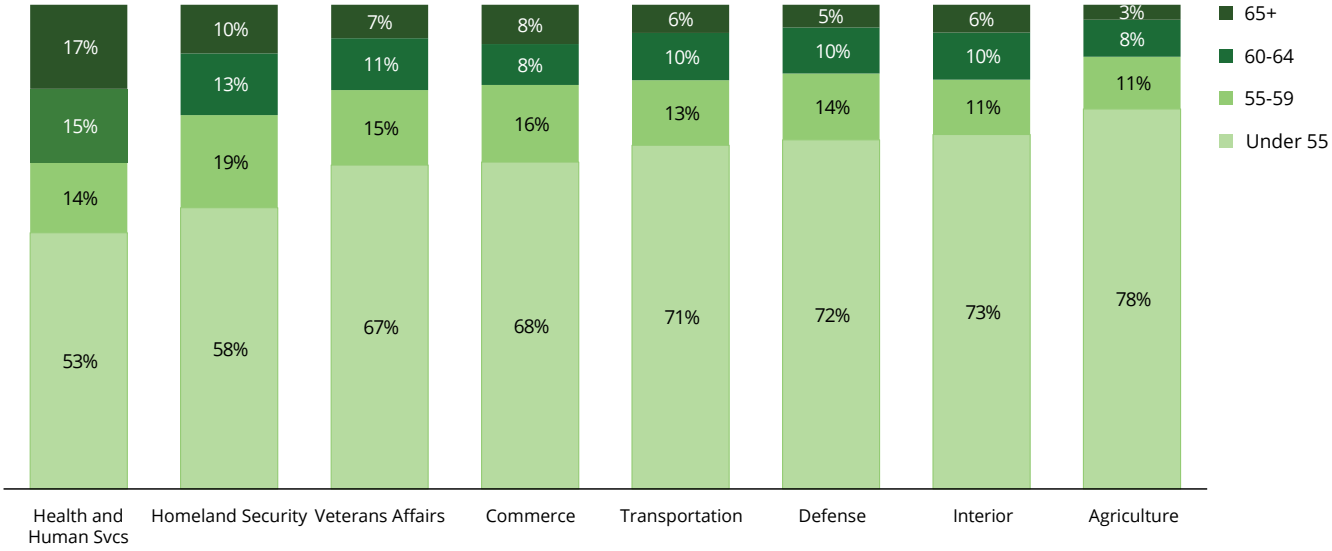
As the table on the previous page shows, several of the largest recipients are Alaska Native Corporations, which receive federal contract preference. Arctic Slope Regional Corporation and Doyon Ltd. were the largest federal contractors in Alaska in 2023.

Hundreds of thousands visit Alaska's parks each year

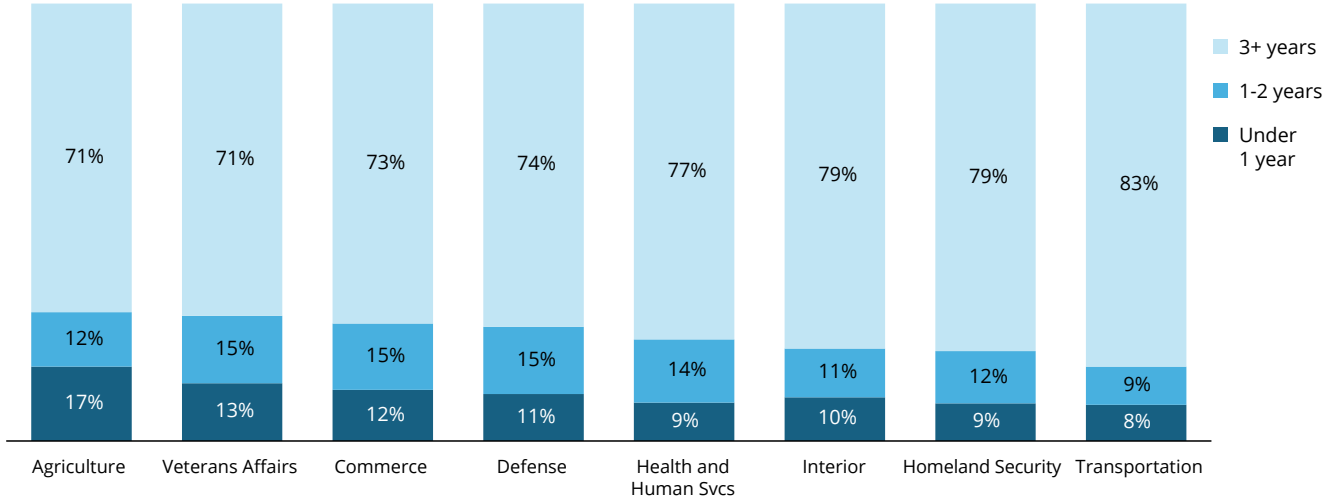
The Department of Interior is a distant second for the number of jobs in Alaska at almost 2,300, but its largest agency, the National Park Service, has a highly visible presence throughout the state in eight national parks and multiple monuments, historic places, and preserves.

Glacier Bay National Park in Southeast hosted more than 700,000 visitors in 2024. Glacier Bay is a common destination for cruise passengers and the fourth most popular cruise ship stop, with even more visitors scheduled for this year.

Health has the oldest workers, with nearly half over age 55 in 2023



Average length of total federal service by department, 2023



Note: Calendar year 2023. Includes only the departments with at least 100 employees. The Department of Defense includes the Air Force, Army, and Navy. Homeland Security includes the Coast Guard.

Sources: U.S. Office of Personnel Management; and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

The second most-visited park is Denali. On the road system and rail belt, the park is popular with Alaskans and independent travelers as well as cruise ship passengers who take the bus or train north.

Denali visitor numbers have been depressed in recent years because of the 2024 wildfires and the Pretty Rocks landslide that closed the only road into the park in 2021. The road is scheduled to reopen in 2026 after a $100 million reconstruction.

Outside of department headquarters in Anchorage, the two parks had the most NPS jobs. Denali had 150 jobs and Glacier Bay had 121, although these are annual averages. Park employment roughly doubles from winter to the summer peak.

A closer look at the federal workforce and what they do

Nearly half are older than 50

We used data from the federal Office of Personnel Management to take a closer look at the workers, as the OPM provides age, tenure, and pay ranges. It

The 25 most common federal jobs that pay *more* than $100,000

Occupation title	Average salary	Workers
Business Operations Specialists	$103,488	1,638
Air Traffic Controllers	$123,177	457
Biological Scientists	$103,335	444
Computer and Information Sys	$112,935	410
Registered Nurses	$129,342	281
Management Analysts	$104,886	280
Zoologists and Wildlife Biologists	$105,159	243
Civil Engineers	$115,867	178
Transportation Inspectors	$137,802	143
Purchasing Agents	$104,456	139
Social Workers	$101,467	125
Engineers	$126,933	121
Physical Scientists	$115,410	116
Conservation Scientists	$120,138	115
Geoscientists, Exc Hydrologists/Geographers	$122,054	85
Atmospheric and Space Scientists	$110,258	84
Lawyers	$146,028	67
Environmental Science/Protection Techs	$116,035	65
Public Relations Specialists	$104,560	62
Financial Specialists	$104,586	60
Medical and Health Services Managers	$257,195	56
Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	$107,684	53
Hydrologists	$106,023	48
Electrical Engineers	$127,307	47
Environmental Engineers	$120,334	47

The 25 most common federal jobs that pay *less* than $100,000

Occupation title	Average salary	Workers
Office Clerks, General	$54,100	349
Forest and Conservation Technicians	$59,400	233
Fish and Game Wardens	$82,100	201
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	$78,700	201
Information and Record Clerks	$52,100	201
Firefighters	$69,500	188
Logisticians	$99,600	162
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians	$90,400	155
Budget Analysts	$91,600	141
Motor Vehicle Operators	$72,900	136
Property, Real Estate, Comm Assoc Mgrs	$85,300	135
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics	$88,400	133
Human Resources Managers	$99,400	132
Social Scientists and Related Workers	$91,400	119
Biological Technicians	$51,600	113
Laborers/Freight, Stock, Matl Movers. Hand	$63,300	113
Engineering Techs, Except Drafters	$95,600	112
Office and Administrative Support Workers	$63,100	108
Stockers and Order Fillers	$58,000	92
Teachers and Instructors	$90,500	92
Elec Repairers, Commercial and Industrial	$94,400	89
Anthropologists and Archeologists	$94,000	76
Material Moving Workers	$86,900	72
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians	$71,100	69
Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	$82,200	68

Note: Calendar year 2023

Sources: U.S. Office of Personnel Management and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

covers slightly different departments than our data, as the sidebar on page 9 explains, but it encompasses more than 11,000 federal workers and is the only source for these details.

Alaska's federal workforce skews older. In 2023, 43 percent were over 50 and only 9 percent were younger than 30. While the federal retirement age varies depending on the length of service, nearly 30 percent are over 55.

Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Veterans Affairs, and Commerce have the oldest workforces. (See the exhibits on the previous page.)

About one in five federal workers in Alaska have more than 20 years of service. One in four have less than two years, meaning many are probationary and don't yet have the protections of permanent employees. More federal workers are probably on probation than these data suggest because probationary status is usually based on someone's current position rather than the total length of federal service.

The most common federal occupations

Alaska has 216 distinct federal occupations, although 61 of those have just a handful of workers.

The largest federal occupations are broad. The biggest is business operations specialists at 15 percent of all federal workers, as this occupation spans departments.

The next-largest is air traffic controllers — Alaska has 457 and they earn $123,000 a year on average. Biological scientists are third, with 444 workers averaging $103,000.

These three also top the list of federal occupations that pay more than $100,000. (See the tables above.)

Big picture, wages are highest in management occupations (just under $114,000), followed closely by architecture and engineering and health care practitioners and legal occupations. The table on page 10 shows the most common occupational groupings for federal workers.

Wages were lowest in sales-related occupations ($40,000), office and administrative work ($57,000), and health care support ($59,000).

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