

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

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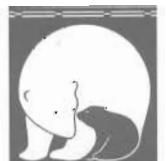
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Alaska Occupational Outlook to 1997

by JoAnn Wilson

Alaska employment is projected to increase at an annual average rate of 1.2%, from 265,396 to 281,014, between 1992 and 1997. Nearly 9,400 job openings are projected annually during this five-year period. Projected annual job openings are the combined result of employment growth and net separations from the occupation and do not include jobs resulting from employee turnover.

Large and fast-growing occupations provide excellent employment opportunities for qualified applicants. Many sales, service, clerical and labor occupations in Alaska are large in size and provide a substantial number of annual job openings. (See Figure 1.) Applicants who apply for jobs in these occupations generally receive lower pay because job openings tend to be for entry-level positions that do not require a college degree. Large occupations also tend to consist of a higher proportion of young and part-time workers than do smaller-sized occupations. Of course, there are exceptions to this. The list of Alaska occupations with the largest numerical growth between 1992 and 1997 includes managers/executives, registered nurses, and elementary school teachers. (See Table 1.) These three large occupations require the professional education and skills and provide the compensation characteristic of small-sized or fast-growing occupations.

Many fast-growing occupations are small in size and often require specific vocational or professional levels of education and skills. (See Figure 2.) Most job openings result from industry growth rather than from replacement needs. Fast-growing occupations tend to employ more prime working age, full-time workers. An applicant seeking employment in a fast-growing occupation can generally expect higher pay, more benefits and better career advancement opportunities.

Not all occupations will show positive employment growth. A number of agriculture and forestry occupations, especially in the wood processing industry, are expected to

lose employment during this forecast. (See Figure 3.)

In general, there will be job openings for workers at all levels of education and training. (See Figures 4-7.) Of the fastest-growing occupations requiring at least a bachelor's degree, more than half are tied to the health services industry. This is also true for the fastest-growing occupations requiring some postsecondary education or extensive employer training. Most of the fastest-growing occupations requiring a high school diploma or less education belong to one of two categories—precision production, craft, and repair workers or operators, fabricators, and laborers. There are also a number of craft occupations with apprenticeship training options which are growing faster than average.

Anchorage/MatSu, the largest urban area in Alaska, includes approximately 50 percent of all employment in the state. During this outlook, over 4,800 annual job openings are

Alaska Occupational Outlook to 1997, which contains detailed tables of occupational outlooks by region not shown in this article, is available at local Employment Service offices or from the Department of Labor's Research & Analysis Section, P.O. Box 22501, Juneau, Alaska 99802-5501.

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Figure • 1

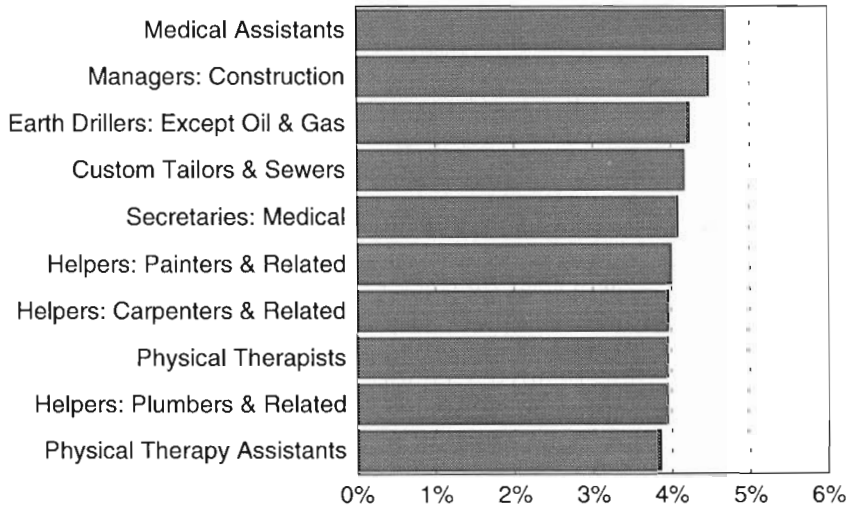
Top 10 Alaska Occupations 1992-1997 Average Annual Openings



Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 2

**Top 10 Fastest Growing Alaska Occupations*
1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)**



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

projected within this region. (See Table 2.) Over half of Alaska's executives, administrators and managers; professional specialty workers; marketing and sales workers; administrative support workers; and service workers are employed in this area. No significant changes to this labor force distribution are expected during the next five years. Employment is projected to grow 1.3% annually between 1992-1997.

Fairbanks will remain a major service center for many interior and outlying locations. About 11.7% of all employment can be found here. Over half the employment consists of professional specialty workers, administrative support workers, and service workers. This area is expected to produce nearly 1,200 job openings annually during this forecast. Because of the influx in large retail stores, opportunity for sales-related employment should be good. Overall, employment is expected to grow at an average rate of 1.5% annually during this forecast.

Southeast Alaska includes approximately 14 percent of the state's employment. Employment is projected to grow at an average rate of 0.9% annually during this forecast period. Employment growth will be slower

Table • 1

Occupations with Largest Numerical Growth

United States

(projected 1992-2005)

- Salespersons, Retail
- Registered Nurses
- Cashiers
- General Office Clerks
- Truckdrivers, Light and Heavy
- Waiters and Waitresses
- Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants
- Janitors and Cleaners
- Food Preparation Workers
- Systems Analysts

Alaska

(projected: 1992-1997)

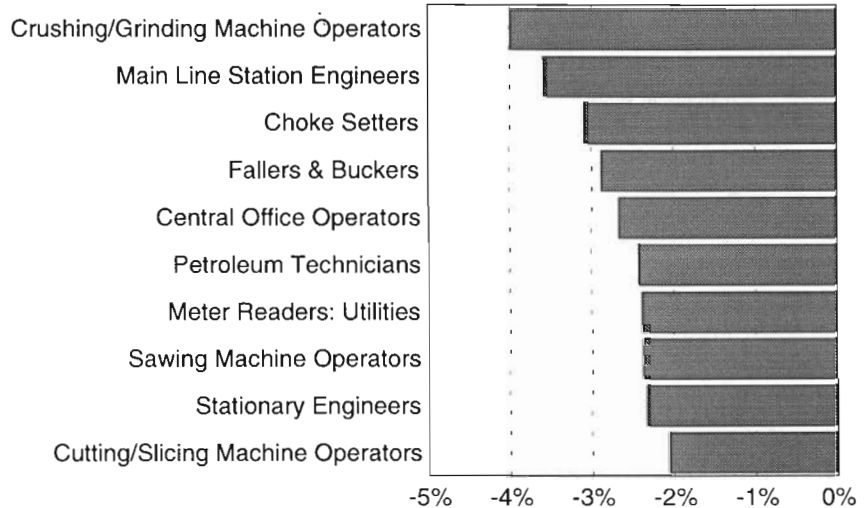
- Salespersons, Retail
- Cashiers
- General Office Clerks
- General Managers and Top Executives
- Carpenters
- Registered Nurses
- Child Care Workers
- Janitors and Cleaners
- Sales Supervisors and Managers
- Elementary School Teachers

Source: U.S. Department of Labor and Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Figure • 3

than the statewide average due to the decline in the timber cutting and wood processing industries and the downsizing in government. This region is projected to produce over 1,200 jobs annually between 1992-1997. The most openings will occur for service workers followed by marketing and sales workers and administrative support workers.

Fastest Declining Alaska Occupations* 1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Methodology

Occupational employment forecasts are the end product of a three-part system: employer surveys, construction of a matrix of industries and occupations, and industry employment forecasts.

Openings are the combined result of employment growth and net separations from the occupation. Net separations summarize movements of workers into and out of the occupation over a specific period.

Estimates of self-employed workers are made by applying ratios of self-employed workers in each occupation to estimates of wage and salary workers in the same occupation.

Table • 2

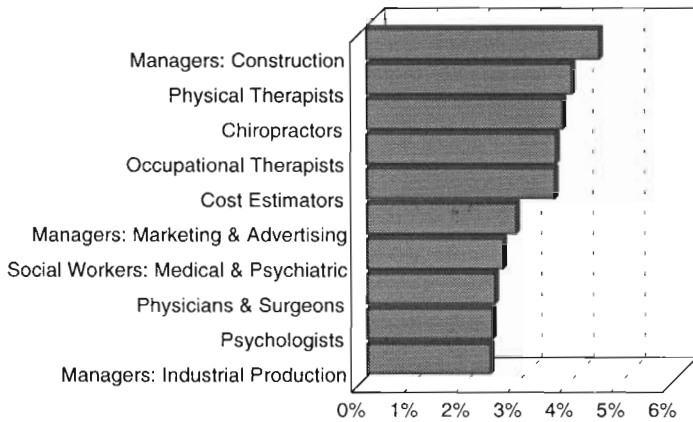
Alaska Job Openings by Occupational Category 1992-1997 Projected Average Annual Job Openings

| Occupational Category | Anchorage/ | | | |
|--|------------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| | Statewide | Mat-Su | Fairbanks | Southeast |
| Executives, Administrators & Managers | 694 | 391 | 83 | 84 |
| Professional Specialty Workers | 1,185 | 641 | 172 | 154 |
| Technicians & Related Support Workers | 326 | 178 | 37 | 44 |
| Marketing & Sales Workers | 1,395 | 826 | 170 | 198 |
| Administrative Support Workers Incl. Clerical | 1,444 | 804 | 162 | 178 |
| Service Workers | 2,166 | 1,123 | 307 | 276 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Related Workers | 127 | 34 | 13 | 54 |
| Precision Production, Craft & Repair Workers | 1,073 | 527 | 138 | 113 |
| Operators, Fabricators & Laborers | 946 | 333 | 97 | 143 |
| Total | 9,356 | 4,857 | 1,179 | 1,244 |

Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section.

Figure • 4

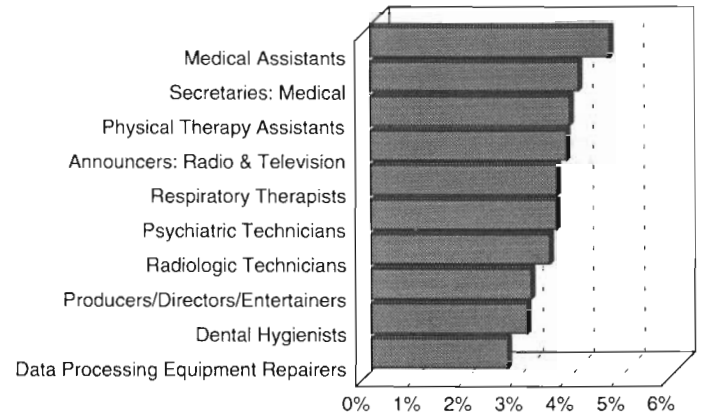
**Fastest Growing Alaska Occupations*
Requiring at Least A Bachelor's Degree
Projected 1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)**



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 5

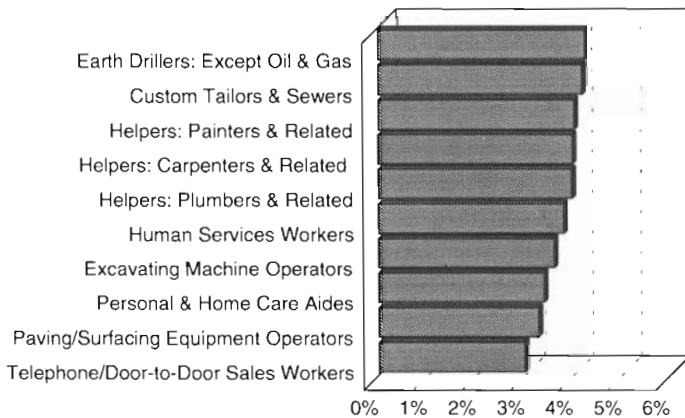
**Fastest Growing Alaska Occupations*
Requiring Some Postsecondary or
Extensive Employer Training
Projected 1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)**



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 6

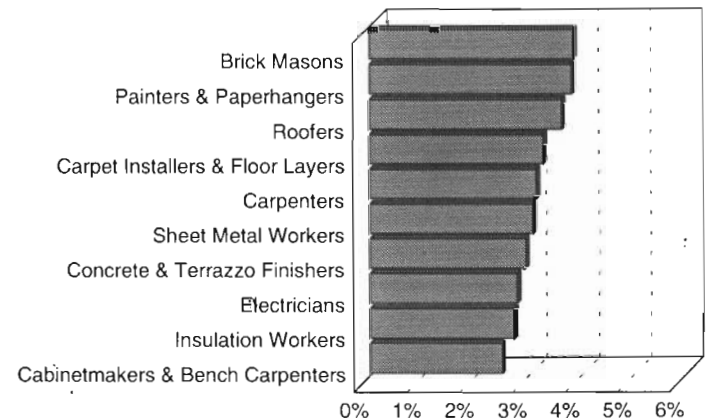
**Fastest Growing Alaska Occupations*
Requiring H.S. Diploma or Less Education
Projected 1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)**



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.

Figure • 7

**Fastest Growing Alaska Occupations*
With Apprenticeship Training Options
Projected 1992-1997 (Average Annual Growth)**



* 1992 employment = 50 or more.
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Section.