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WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.

Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west

Media contact: (415) 625-2270

Business Employment Dynamics in Alaska – Fourth Quarter 2020

From September 2020 to December 2020, **gross job gains** from opening and expanding private-sector establishments in Alaska were 29,978, while **gross job losses** from closing and contracting private-sector establishments were 17,110, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Chris Rosenlund noted that the difference between the number of gross job gains and the number of gross job losses yielded a **net employment gain** of 12,868 jobs in the private sector during the fourth quarter of 2020. During the previous quarter, gross job gains exceeded gross job losses by 4,924. (See [chart 1.](#))

Chart 1. Private-sector gross job gains and losses in Alaska, December 2015–December 2020, seasonally adjusted

Period	Gross job gains	Gross job losses
Dec. 2015	24,141	26,599
Mar. 2016	24,354	24,532
Jun. 2016	25,953	28,248
Sep. 2016	22,847	27,518
Dec. 2016	24,020	24,706
Mar. 2017	23,546	25,040
Jun. 2017	26,735	24,502
Sep. 2017	21,511	26,590
Dec. 2017	23,643	25,014
Mar. 2018	24,750	21,910
Jun. 2018	26,825	26,281
Sep. 2018	21,873	26,262
Dec. 2018	27,041	23,985
Mar. 2019	25,046	22,341
Jun. 2019	26,837	25,164
Sep. 2019	24,031	25,082
Dec. 2019	25,708	25,494
Mar. 2020	22,994	23,781
Jun. 2020	15,976	56,612
Sep. 2020	26,125	21,201
Dec. 2020	29,978	17,110

The change in the number of jobs over time is the net result of increases and decreases in employment that occur at all private businesses in the economy. Business Employment Dynamics (BED) statistics track these changes in employment at private-sector establishments from the third month of one quarter to the third month of the next. The difference between the number of gross job gains and the number of gross job losses is the net change in employment. (See [Technical Note.](#))

Gross job gains

In the fourth quarter of 2020, gross job gains represented 13.4 percent of private-sector employment in Alaska; nationally, gross job gains also accounted for 7.4 percent of private-sector employment. (See [chart 2.](#)) Gross job gains are the sum of increases in employment due to expansions at existing establishments and the addition of new jobs at opening establishments. In Alaska, gross job gains at **expanding** establishments totaled 25,402 in the fourth quarter of 2020, an increase of 4,364 jobs compared to the previous quarter. (See [table 1.](#))

Opening establishments accounted for 4,576 jobs gained in the fourth quarter of 2020, a decrease of 511 jobs from the previous quarter.

Chart 2. Private-sector gross job gains as a percent of employment, United States and Alaska, December 2015–December 2020, seasonally adjusted

Period	Alaska	United States
Dec. 2015	9.5	6.5
Mar. 2016	9.7	6.0
Jun. 2016	10.3	6.2
Sep. 2016	9.2	6.4
Dec. 2016	9.8	6.2
Mar. 2017	9.5	6.1
Jun. 2017	10.8	6.2
Sep. 2017	8.7	6.0
Dec. 2017	9.7	6.4
Mar. 2018	10.1	6.1
Jun. 2018	10.8	6.1
Sep. 2018	8.9	6.0
Dec. 2018	11.0	6.3
Mar. 2019	10.1	6.0
Jun. 2019	10.7	6.1
Sep. 2019	9.6	5.9
Dec. 2019	10.3	6.2
Mar. 2020	9.2	5.5
Jun. 2020	6.9	4.8
Sep. 2020	12.2	9.4
Dec. 2020	13.4	7.4

Gross job losses

In the fourth quarter of 2020, gross job losses represented 7.7 percent of private-sector employment in Alaska; nationally, gross job losses accounted for 5.7 percent of private-sector employment. (See [chart 2.](#)) Gross job losses are the result of contractions in employment at existing establishments and the loss of jobs at closing establishments. In Alaska, **contracting** establishments lost 14,207 jobs in the fourth quarter of 2020, a decrease of 2,760 jobs from the prior quarter. **Closing** establishments lost 2,903 jobs, a decrease of 1,331 jobs from the previous quarter.

Chart 3. Private-sector gross job losses as a percent of employment, United States and Alaska, December 2015–December 2020, seasonally adjusted

Period	Alaska	United States
Dec. 2015	10.5	5.8
Mar. 2016	9.7	5.8
Jun. 2016	11.3	6.0
Sep. 2016	11.1	5.8
Dec. 2016	10.0	5.9
Mar. 2017	10.1	5.6
Jun. 2017	9.9	5.8
Sep. 2017	10.7	6.1
Dec. 2017	10.2	5.6
Mar. 2018	8.9	5.5

Chart 3. Private-sector gross job losses as a percent of employment, United States and Alaska, December 2015–December 2020, seasonally adjusted - Continued

Period	Alaska	United States
Jun. 2018.....	10.6	5.8
Sep. 2018.....	10.7	6.0
Dec. 2018.....	9.8	5.6
Mar. 2019.....	9.0	5.5
Jun. 2019.....	10.1	5.9
Sep. 2019.....	10.1	5.8
Dec. 2019.....	10.2	5.5
Mar. 2020.....	9.5	6.1
Jun. 2020.....	24.5	17.0
Sep. 2020.....	9.9	6.0
Dec. 2020.....	7.7	5.7

Industries

Gross job gains exceeded gross job losses in all seven published industry sectors in Alaska in the fourth quarter of 2020. Transportation and warehousing had the largest over-the-quarter net job increase, with a gain of 2,331 jobs. This was the result of 3,326 gross job gains and 995 gross job losses. The leisure and hospitality industry had a net gain of 2,139 jobs. Retail trade had a net increase of 1,441 jobs, and education and health services showed a net job gain of 1,038.

For more information

The BED data series include gross job gains and gross job losses by industry subsector, for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, as well as gross job gains and gross job losses at the firm level by employer size class. BED data for the states have been included in [table 2](#) of this release. Additional information is available online at www.bls.gov/bdm/.

The Business Employment Dynamics for First Quarter 2021 are scheduled to be released on Wednesday, October 27, 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Effect on Fourth Quarter 2020 Business Employment Dynamics

Data collection and processing methods have been impacted because of the COVID-19 pandemic. More detail can be found at www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-business-employment-dynamics.htm.

Technical Note

The Business Employment Dynamics (BED) data are a product of a federal-state cooperative program known as Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). The BED data are compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) from existing QCEW records. Most employers in the U.S. are required to file quarterly reports on the employment and wages of workers covered by unemployment insurance (UI) laws, and to pay quarterly UI taxes. The QCEW is based largely on quarterly UI reports which are sent by businesses to the State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). These UI reports are supplemented by two additional BLS data collections to render administrative data into economic statistics. Together these data comprise the QCEW and form the basis of the Bureau's establishment universe sampling frame.

In the BED program, the QCEW records are linked across quarters to provide a longitudinal history for each establishment. The linkage process allows the tracking of net employment changes at the establishment level, which in turn allows the estimation of jobs gained at opening and expanding units and jobs lost at closing and contracting units.

The change in the number of jobs over time is the net result of increases and decreases in employment that occur at all businesses in the economy. BED statistics track these changes in employment at private business establishments from the third month of one quarter to the third month of the next. Gross job gains are the sum of increases in employment from expansions at existing establishments and the addition of new jobs at opening establishments. Gross job losses are the result of contractions in employment at existing establishments and the loss of jobs at closing establishments. The difference between the number of gross jobs gained and the number of gross jobs lost is the net change in employment.

Gross job gains and gross job losses are expressed as rates by dividing their levels by the average of employment in the current and previous quarters. The rates are calculated for the components of gross job gains and gross job losses and then summed to form their respective totals. These rates can be added and subtracted just as their levels can. For instance, the difference between the gross job gains rate and the gross job losses rate is the net growth rate.

The formal definitions of employment changes are as follows:

Openings. These are either units with positive third month employment for the first time in the current quarter, with no links to the prior quarter, or with positive third month employment in the current quarter following zero employment in the previous quarter.

Expansions. These are units with positive employment in the third month in both the previous and current quarters, with a net increase in employment over this period.

Closings. These are either units with positive third month employment in the previous quarter, with no employment or zero employment reported in the current quarter.

Contractions. These are units with positive employment in the third month in both the previous and current quarters, with a net decrease in employment over this period.

The full Technical Note for the Business Employment Dynamics program, which includes information on coverage, concepts, and methodology, can be found in the current quarterly news release online at www.bls.gov/news.release/cewbd.htm.

Information in this release will be made available to individuals with sensory impairments upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Private sector gross job gains and losses by industry, Alaska, seasonally adjusted

Category	Gross job gains and job losses (3 months ended)					Gross job gains and job losses as a percent of employment (3 months ended)				
	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept 2020	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept 2020	Dec. 2020
Total private ⁽¹⁾										
Gross job gains	25,708	22,994	15,976	26,125	29,978	10.3	9.2	6.9	12.2	13.4
At expanding establishments	21,513	19,718	12,370	21,038	25,402	8.6	7.9	5.3	9.8	11.4
At opening establishments	4,195	3,276	3,606	5,087	4,576	1.7	1.3	1.6	2.4	2.0
Gross job losses	25,494	23,781	56,612	21,201	17,110	10.2	9.5	24.5	9.9	7.7
At contracting establishments	21,637	20,775	49,508	16,967	14,207	8.7	8.3	21.4	7.9	6.4
At closing establishments	3,857	3,006	7,104	4,234	2,903	1.5	1.2	3.1	2.0	1.3
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	214	-787	-40,636	4,924	12,868	0.1	-0.3	-17.6	2.3	5.7
Construction										
Gross job gains	3,092	3,143	2,546	2,748	2,940	18.9	18.0	15.4	18.0	18.5
At expanding establishments	2,562	2,613	2,113	2,019	2,349	15.7	15.0	12.8	13.2	14.8
At opening establishments	530	530	433	729	591	3.2	3.0	2.6	4.8	3.7
Gross job losses	2,668	2,737	4,480	2,592	2,610	16.3	15.7	27.1	17.0	16.5
At contracting establishments	2,160	2,265	3,995	2,060	2,220	13.2	13.0	24.2	13.5	14.0
At closing establishments	508	472	485	532	390	3.1	2.7	2.9	3.5	2.5
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	424	406	-1,934	156	330	2.6	2.3	-11.7	1.0	2.0
Retail trade										
Gross job gains	2,212	2,259	1,478	2,960	2,683	6.2	6.4	4.3	9.1	8.0
At expanding establishments	1,709	1,954	1,297	2,441	2,392	4.8	5.5	3.8	7.5	7.1
At opening establishments	503	305	181	519	291	1.4	0.9	0.5	1.6	0.9
Gross job losses	2,656	1,886	5,840	1,861	1,242	7.6	5.3	17.2	5.8	3.7
At contracting establishments	2,207	1,599	5,287	1,615	1,137	6.3	4.5	15.6	5.0	3.4
At closing establishments	449	287	553	246	105	1.3	0.8	1.6	0.8	0.3
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	-444	373	-4,362	1,099	1,441	-1.4	1.1	-12.9	3.3	4.3
Transportation and warehousing										
Gross job gains	1,896	1,720	894	3,110	3,326	9.3	8.6	5.2	20.1	19.3
At expanding establishments	1,564	1,573	635	2,614	3,031	7.7	7.9	3.7	16.9	17.6
At opening establishments	332	147	259	496	295	1.6	0.7	1.5	3.2	1.7
Gross job losses	2,467	2,349	5,483	1,658	995	12.2	11.8	31.8	10.7	5.8
At contracting establishments	2,005	2,187	5,135	1,210	701	9.9	11.0	29.8	7.8	4.1
At closing establishments	462	162	348	448	294	2.3	0.8	2.0	2.9	1.7
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	-571	-629	-4,589	1,452	2,331	-2.9	-3.2	-26.6	9.4	13.5
Professional and business services										
Gross job gains	2,756	3,019	1,929	3,107	2,646	10.0	10.7	7.2	12.4	10.3
At expanding establishments	2,213	2,535	1,211	2,397	2,062	8.0	9.0	4.5	9.6	8.0
At opening establishments	543	484	718	710	584	2.0	1.7	2.7	2.8	2.3
Gross job losses	2,474	2,412	5,344	2,323	2,063	9.0	8.6	20.0	9.3	8.0
At contracting establishments	2,071	1,935	4,644	1,785	1,595	7.5	6.9	17.4	7.1	6.2
At closing establishments	403	477	700	538	468	1.5	1.7	2.6	2.2	1.8
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	282	607	-3,415	784	583	1.0	2.1	-12.8	3.1	2.3
Education and health services										
Gross job gains	2,469	1,816	1,469	2,648	2,583	4.9	3.6	3.0	5.4	5.3
At expanding establishments	2,177	1,573	1,157	2,385	2,209	4.3	3.1	2.4	4.9	4.5
At opening establishments	292	243	312	263	374	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.8
Gross job losses	1,986	2,075	3,820	1,752	1,545	4.0	4.1	7.8	3.6	3.2
At contracting establishments	1,700	1,901	3,484	1,547	1,260	3.4	3.8	7.1	3.2	2.6
At closing establishments	286	174	336	205	285	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.6
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	483	-259	-2,351	896	1,038	0.9	-0.5	-4.8	1.8	2.1
Leisure and hospitality										
Gross job gains	4,914	4,681	1,678	5,647	4,991	13.5	13.0	5.7	23.5	19.3
At expanding establishments	3,741	3,659	1,021	4,245	3,848	10.3	10.2	3.5	17.7	14.9
At opening establishments	1,173	1,022	657	1,402	1,143	3.2	2.8	2.2	5.8	4.4
Gross job losses	5,893	5,073	19,511	3,676	2,852	16.1	14.1	66.0	15.3	11.0

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Private sector gross job gains and losses by industry, Alaska, seasonally adjusted - Continued

Category	Gross job gains and job losses (3 months ended)					Gross job gains and job losses as a percent of employment (3 months ended)				
	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept 2020	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept 2020	Dec. 2020
At contracting establishments	4,747	4,244	16,141	2,406	2,126	13.0	11.8	54.6	10.0	8.2
At closing establishments	1,146	829	3,370	1,270	726	3.1	2.3	11.4	5.3	2.8
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	-979	-392	-17,833	1,971	2,139	-2.6	-1.1	-60.3	8.2	8.3
Other services ⁽³⁾										
Gross job gains	809	801	630	989	816	8.3	8.3	6.9	11.4	9.3
At expanding establishments	718	675	486	763	650	7.4	7.0	5.3	8.8	7.4
At opening establishments	91	126	144	226	166	0.9	1.3	1.6	2.6	1.9
Gross job losses	806	822	1,610	779	782	8.3	8.5	17.6	9.0	8.9
At contracting establishments	707	658	1,314	613	608	7.3	6.8	14.4	7.1	6.9
At closing establishments	99	164	296	166	174	1.0	1.7	3.2	1.9	2.0
Net employment change ⁽²⁾	3	-21	-980	210	34	0.0	-0.2	-10.7	2.4	0.4

Footnotes:

(1) Includes unclassified sector not shown separately.

(2) The net employment change is the difference between total gross job gains and total gross job losses. See the Technical Note for further information.

(3) Except public administration.

Table 2. Private sector gross job gains and losses as a percent of total employment by state, seasonally adjusted

Category	Gross job gains as a percent of employment (3 months ended)					Gross job losses as a percent of employment (3 months ended)				
	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept. 2020	Dec. 2020	Dec. 2019	Mar. 2020	June 2020	Sept. 2020	Dec. 2020
United States ⁽¹⁾	6.2	5.5	4.8	9.4	7.4	5.5	6.1	17.0	6.0	5.7
Alabama	6.2	5.5	4.8	7.8	7.8	5.5	5.9	12.6	5.9	5.0
Alaska	10.3	9.2	6.9	12.2	13.4	10.2	9.5	24.5	9.9	7.7
Arizona	6.4	5.6	5.7	7.9	7.4	5.2	5.9	11.7	6.2	4.9
Arkansas	6.5	5.1	4.8	7.5	7.1	4.9	5.5	12.0	5.6	5.1
California	6.8	6.1	5.2	8.7	8.4	6.0	6.7	18.6	7.3	6.2
Colorado	6.7	6.3	5.8	10.0	7.5	6.2	7.0	14.9	6.3	7.2
Connecticut	5.5	5.2	4.3	11.2	6.5	5.6	5.9	19.7	5.1	5.8
Delaware	6.7	6.2	4.9	10.3	6.7	6.2	6.6	17.7	6.3	5.7
District of Columbia	5.4	5.2	3.3	8.3	5.2	4.7	5.3	22.4	5.8	5.5
Florida	6.6	5.4	6.1	9.5	7.6	5.9	6.2	13.9	6.8	5.6
Georgia	6.5	5.6	5.4	9.2	7.8	5.5	5.9	15.0	6.4	5.2
Hawaii	5.7	5.2	3.6	7.4	14.7	5.2	5.8	29.8	12.7	4.6
Idaho	7.7	7.6	6.4	8.4	8.7	6.3	6.1	11.2	6.5	6.1
Illinois	5.6	5.0	4.6	9.7	6.5	5.2	6.0	18.4	5.6	6.1
Indiana	6.0	4.9	4.7	8.3	6.9	5.1	6.0	13.7	5.4	5.0
Iowa	5.8	5.2	4.4	7.4	6.8	5.5	5.9	13.0	5.6	5.1
Kansas	6.3	5.4	5.0	7.9	7.0	5.7	6.0	13.3	6.0	6.0
Kentucky	6.2	5.3	4.6	8.8	6.8	5.6	6.1	15.3	5.0	5.4
Louisiana	5.9	5.3	4.5	8.8	8.7	5.7	6.3	16.9	7.2	5.5
Maine	7.3	6.4	5.4	12.0	8.5	6.9	7.0	21.7	6.0	6.3
Maryland	6.4	5.7	4.7	11.0	7.1	5.9	6.7	21.9	5.9	5.9
Massachusetts	5.8	5.2	3.7	12.5	7.0	5.6	6.0	24.2	5.6	5.6
Michigan	5.8	5.0	4.0	10.9	6.8	5.3	5.7	20.7	4.8	7.0
Minnesota	5.8	5.0	4.3	9.0	7.0	5.6	5.6	17.6	5.4	6.9
Mississippi	6.2	5.6	5.1	8.7	7.9	5.6	6.2	12.9	5.5	4.9
Missouri	6.2	5.2	4.7	8.5	7.2	5.3	5.7	14.3	5.7	5.3
Montana	8.6	7.7	6.8	9.9	9.3	7.2	7.7	13.8	7.2	6.8
Nebraska	6.2	5.8	4.9	8.1	6.8	5.8	6.1	12.1	5.9	5.6
Nevada	6.8	5.4	5.3	12.8	8.9	5.0	6.3	29.2	6.4	5.7
New Hampshire	6.6	6.0	4.5	11.9	7.4	6.0	6.4	18.8	5.1	6.5
New Jersey	6.5	5.7	4.6	15.7	8.1	5.8	6.3	28.1	5.8	5.9
New Mexico	7.0	6.1	4.5	8.3	7.1	6.3	6.5	17.6	6.0	7.6
New York	6.0	5.5	3.9	13.3	7.4	5.7	6.4	26.9	5.9	6.4
North Carolina	6.3	5.8	4.8	8.5	7.8	5.4	5.7	14.5	5.6	5.1
North Dakota	6.7	6.8	5.2	8.8	7.2	6.6	7.0	17.2	6.9	7.1
Ohio	5.7	5.1	4.5	7.7	6.6	5.3	5.6	14.4	5.3	5.2
Oklahoma	6.5	5.4	5.6	6.8	7.8	6.2	6.7	12.3	6.4	5.6
Oregon	6.7	6.2	5.0	9.0	7.4	5.8	6.5	18.4	6.2	6.5
Pennsylvania	5.4	4.9	3.6	10.3	6.2	4.9	5.6	18.2	5.0	5.3
Rhode Island	6.5	6.1	4.5	12.9	7.5	5.9	6.5	25.2	5.3	7.1
South Carolina	6.5	5.5	5.1	8.8	8.1	5.9	6.6	14.9	6.1	5.3
South Dakota	6.4	6.0	5.1	8.6	7.2	5.8	6.6	11.6	5.5	6.2
Tennessee	5.7	4.9	4.4	8.1	7.5	5.0	5.3	13.7	5.4	4.6
Texas	6.0	5.0	4.7	7.2	7.5	5.1	5.5	13.6	6.0	4.8
Utah	6.8	6.6	6.5	9.1	8.1	6.3	6.4	10.9	6.2	5.5
Vermont	6.9	5.8	4.6	12.3	7.6	6.4	7.6	18.5	5.7	7.9
Virginia	6.5	5.6	4.7	10.2	7.0	5.5	6.1	18.2	5.3	5.3
Washington	6.6	7.4	4.9	8.9	7.1	5.8	7.4	16.9	6.2	6.0
West Virginia	6.2	6.0	5.1	8.8	7.4	7.1	6.8	13.8	7.0	6.2
Wisconsin	5.4	5.0	4.4	7.6	6.3	5.0	5.3	14.4	5.2	5.1
Wyoming	9.4	8.6	6.4	10.7	10.0	8.7	9.3	18.1	7.7	7.6
Puerto Rico	5.4	5.0	4.0	11.0	6.6	4.9	5.2	16.9	5.1	4.9
Virgin Islands	10.3	7.2	5.3	8.4	8.9	7.3	8.3	19.8	12.3	5.4

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes

(1) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.