

AEDC EMPLOYMENT REPORT

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ANCHORAGE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Anchorage Economic Development Corporation

Anchorage Employment Report

A Monthly Publication

April 2026



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President & CEO's Review



AEDC
Anchorage Economic
Development Corporation



Jon Bittner, CEO & President

There's a lot to talk about in this month's employment report. To start with, *Anchorage businesses have gained 1,300 jobs since last month*. This is largely due to the fact that Anchorage, much like the rest of Alaska, has a large number of seasonal industries who are staffing up for the summer. While the year over year employment numbers have shown an overall decline between 2026 and 2025, they are still the highest they've been since 2017 excluding 2025.

Every major industry category showed a month-over-month increase in employment, with the largest gains being seen in the Construction (+400), Trade, Transportation, Utilities (+300), and Food Services and Drinking Places (+300) industries. The year-over-year data is less positive with several industries showing an overall decline in jobs from last year including Professional & Business Services (-400), Construction (-200), and Food Services & Drinking Places (-100). For construction, it should be noted that while this year's employment is lower than 2025, it's still higher than any year since 2008 indicating that this industry is undergoing a return to normal growth after an unusually robust 2025 instead of a retraction.

This long-term trend of increasing employment is coming at the same time as a decline in Anchorage's population in the 18-64 year old range. This is causing an increasing constraint on available workforce and will continue to drive wages up across all industries if it persists. Increasing cost of living (see AEDC's COLI Index report for more on this) as well as a lack of technical and soft skills are causing employers to struggle to fill open positions. With new development projects proposed across the Municipality and new military families being stationed at JBER in the near future, these labor and population issues are going to become more acute as time goes on.

We expect to see more growth in the seasonal industries in next month's report as well as in the transportation and warehousing sectors, while also seeing a decline in the year over year numbers for Professional & Business Services, Food Services & Drinking Places and possibly Construction. Overall, the Anchorage economy seems to be going strong into the summer season with businesses hiring at a robust rate and public and private sector development projects breaking ground all over the city. Tourism numbers are strong and the other seasonal industries continue to show growth compared to pre-COVID levels.



Report Inclusion Details



Each month, AEDC publishes the **Anchorage Monthly Jobs Report**, offering a comprehensive snapshot of the city’s labor market and overall economic health.

The report tracks key indicators including unemployment trends, labor force participation, industry performance, and broader workforce dynamics.

It also highlights notable shifts across sectors, emerging trends, and year-over-year comparisons to provide important context.

Together, these insights create a clear and timely picture of Anchorage’s employment landscape—supporting informed decision-making for businesses, policymakers, educators, and job seekers alike. The report serves as a valuable tool for understanding workforce challenges, identifying opportunities for growth, and guiding strategic planning across the community.

Please note that data for the most recent months are preliminary estimates and may be subject to revision as additional information becomes available.



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Key Takeaways

- The unemployment rate is at a healthy 4.1% which is slightly higher rate than that of 3.9% at this time last year.
- 1,300 total jobs were gained from March to April, rising with the onset of tourism season.
- The year over year numbers show a decline, but 2025 had unusually high employment numbers, and 2026 is following a trend of growth when compared to previous years.

4.1%
Unemployment

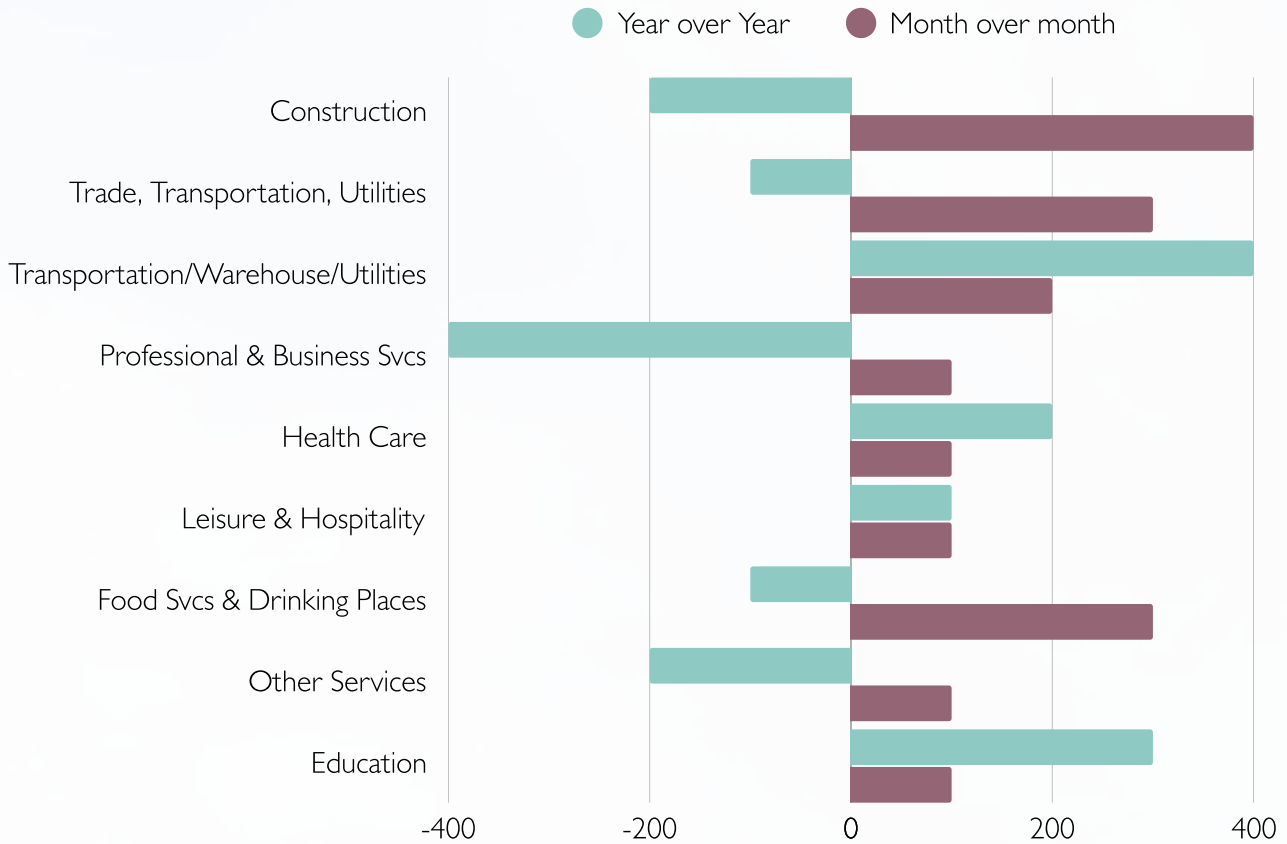
1300
Jobs Gained

**Typical
Seasonal
Employment
Trend**



Photo Credit: Wayde Carroll Anchorage Distillery, Courtesy: Visit Anchorage

April Employment Overview Year over Year and Month over Month Changes

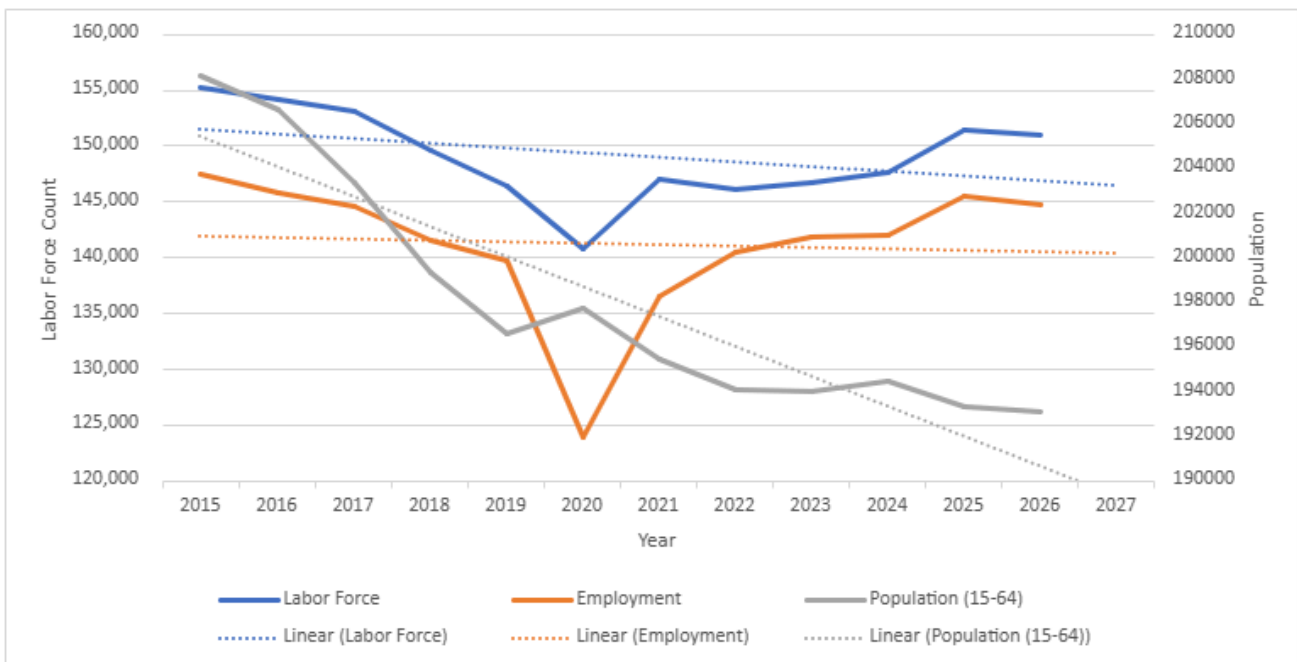


Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (CES Labor Force Data)

This chart shows year-over-year (YOY) and month-over-month (MoM) job changes across most major industries in Anchorage. Large increases in month-to-month employment are typical for this period, reflecting a rise in business tempo from the preparation for and arrival of summer tourism.

Year-over-year data shows large declines in several categories, including Construction, Professional Services, Food Service, and Other Services. However, despite the year-over-year decline, the Construction sector has actually experienced steady growth over the longer term. In April 2021, Anchorage construction employment stood at 6,500 jobs and has gradually increased to approximately 7,900 jobs over the past five years. Construction employment levels in 2025 were exceptionally high, making current year-over-year comparisons appear negative but jobs are currently increasing in the market.

April Employment Trends Compared with Annual Population Change



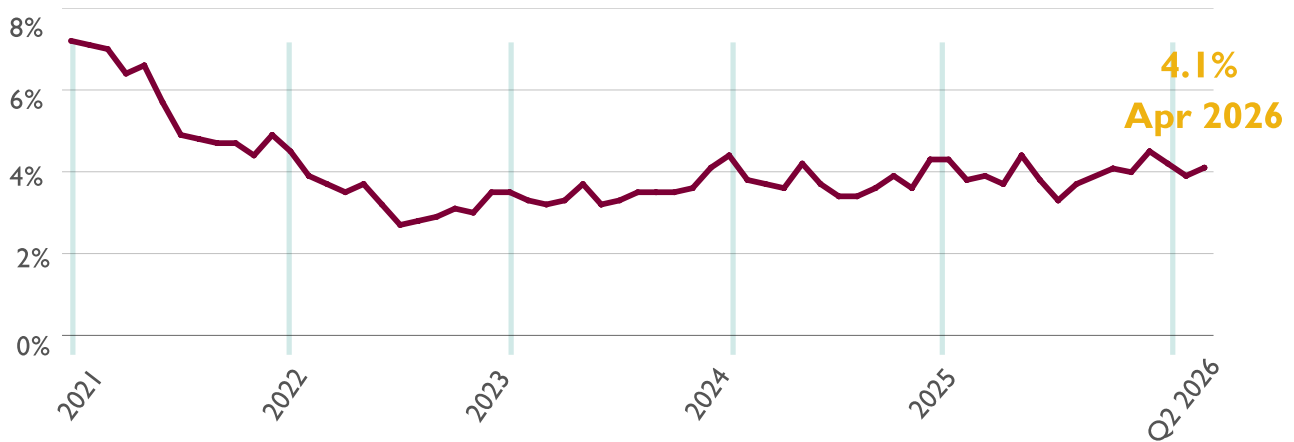
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (CES Labor Force Data); Lightcast Analyst (Demographics Table via AEDC dashboard)

Anchorage’s labor market is contracting when comparing it with April 2025 numbers. However, when compared with 2024, 2023, and earlier, the data indicates the year 2025 was a spike in positive employment while 2026 represents a continuation of steady economic growth built since 2020. 2025 was just an exceptionally good year for employment growth. Workforce population, however, continues to decrease steadily, demonstrating that the positive employment figures may be distorted by a loss in working age residents. Since the unemployment rate is based on the labor force, a shrinking labor force can sometimes make economic conditions look stronger than they really are.

The shrinking labor force is nothing new for Anchorage business owners, but will continue to have an impact on the local economy while job postings continue to rise. Day-to-day costs are particularly high in Anchorage at this moment, which may have an impact on labor force retention and attraction in the coming months, until the pressure is alleviated.

April Employment Trends

Unemployment Rate Trend (2021 - 2026)



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (CES Labor Force Data)

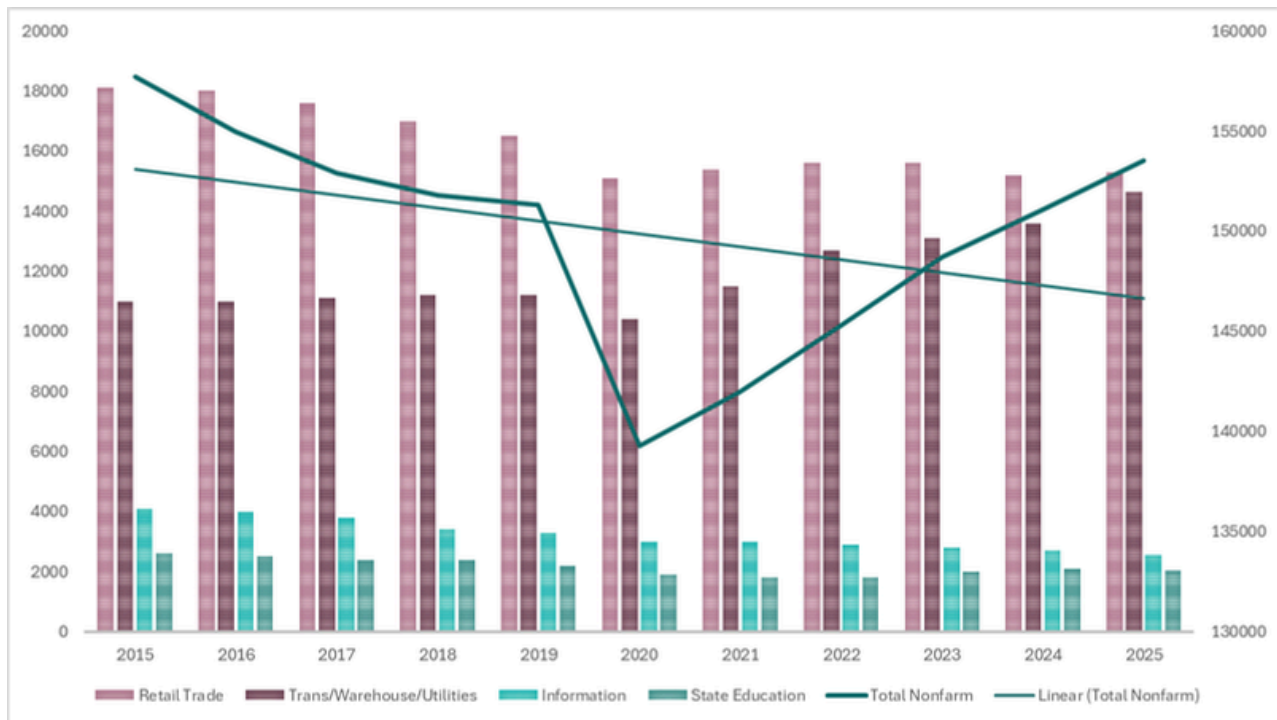
Unemployment rate increased to 4.1% (March 2026, 3.9%). This small fluctuation is likely due to an increase in the total workforce, since the total number of jobs is up month over month. **We expect this number to remain constant with the small fluctuations month-to-month.**

While the unemployment rate suggests that Anchorage is generally maintaining trends seen in past years, broader demographic and workforce factors indicate that the overall labor pool may be shrinking due to:

- Outmigration
- Retirements
- High childcare costs
- Lower labor force participation among working-age residents

This constriction of the available labor force, whether driven by outmigration or an aging population, is likely to impact the supply of labor available to the private sector. While Anchorage's unemployment rate remains relatively healthy by Alaska standards, it continues to trend slightly below the national average. These underlying workforce challenges should still be considered when identifying opportunities to strengthen and improve Anchorage's economy moving forward.

10-Year Largest Industry Trend Shifts



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (CES Labor Force Data)

Over the past decade, Anchorage has experienced significant shifts in its industry composition. Employment losses in retail trade (16%), information (34%), state education (19%), and financial activities (14%) further point to broad-based contraction across both goods-producing and several service-oriented industries.

These declines have been partially offset by growth in healthcare (15%) as well as transportation and warehousing (24%) [combined], indicating a transition toward more population-serving and logistics-driven sectors.

Healthcare
15%
Increase

Transportation & Warehousing
24%
Increase

10-Year Largest Industry Trend Shifts

What this means for Anchorage

Anchorage’s economy is changing in a pretty significant way. Jobs in oil, gas, and other resource industries have declined, meaning the city is becoming less dependent on the high-wage industries that historically fueled a lot of economic growth. At the same time, industries like healthcare and logistics are growing, reflecting both local community needs and Anchorage’s role as a major transportation hub.

There are some tradeoffs that come with this shift. Many of the industries seeing declines typically provide higher wages and create broader economic impacts, while growing sectors like healthcare and logistics are more tied to population needs and often grow at a slower pace. Combined with a shrinking labor force and fewer working-age residents, this could make it harder for Anchorage to sustain strong long-term economic growth.

Overall, Anchorage appears to be shifting from a resource-based economy to one that is more focused on services and logistics. That may create more stability in the near term but could also mean fewer opportunities for the kind of rapid growth and high-paying jobs the city has historically relied on.

Industries of Growth

Healthcare



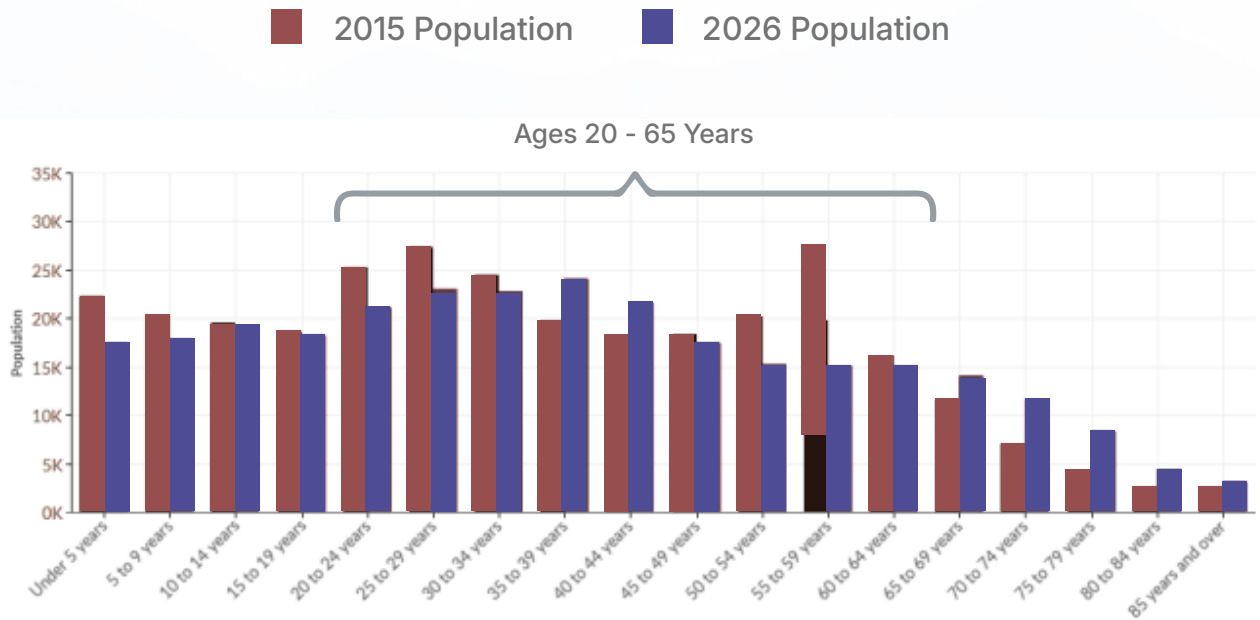
Logistics



Logistics



Appendix A- Population Change by Age (2015-2026)



Source: Lightcast. Analyst Platform: Demographics Report (Anchorage, AK). Accessed via AEDC Lightcast Analyst tool.

10 Year
Population
Change

Thank you Diamond Investors



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