

# Alaska Occupational Employment Outlook

By John Van Houten and Kelly Wheeler

**T**he latest set of occupational projections by Research and Analysis indicate some growth for nearly all occupations in Alaska between 1985 and 1990 except those heavily associated with the construction industry. Employment in white collar occupations (a broad group of professional and technical, clerical, sales, and managerial and administrative workers) is projected to provide 58 percent of the job openings that will result from growth and replacement needs.<sup>1</sup> Craft, operative, and laborer jobs are projected to provide 22 percent of the job openings. This group will continue a decline in its share of total employment as its growth is influenced by technological change and the relatively faster growth of the other groups. The service group of occupations (cleaning, food, health, and protective services) accounts for 19 percent of the projected openings. Although the smallest of the three major groups, service occupations is increasing at the fastest rate.

The employment projections were produced from an Industry-Occupation (I-O) Matrix based on Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) industry surveys that cover Alaska's nonagricultural and non-military wage and salary employment. The projections were made on the assumption that oil prices will rebound and stabilize at \$18-20 per barrel for most of the projection period. While the probability of oil returning to such a level now seems unlikely, and the projections may be somewhat high, the relative values of the projected occupational employments remain much the same. Moreover, there are some employment trends not apparent from the projection data. For example, it's likely there will be an increase in part-time and temporary employment, shorter work weeks, and job sharing. These trends are likely to become more pronounced as a consequence of the current Alaskan economic slowdown and the fact that many of the jobs resulting from industry growth are among the lowest paying. Total wages earned by an employee from a single job under these circumstances may not provide sufficient income or continue to keep pace with living costs and thus necessitate multiple job holding.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1 shows the top 32 specific occupations ranked by the number of job openings that will result from industry growth and replacement needs (retirement and death). One-half of these occupations, which account for 29 percent of the total openings for all occupations, are low-skill jobs that require training of three months or less. One in five of the top 32 requires a minimum of a baccalaureate or equivalent.

The projections show that tomorrow's job opportunities in Alaska will

be much the same as today. Despite considerable attention focused on new and emerging occupations associated with high technology, the employment opportunities they will provide are expected to be small in Alaska. The significance of new technologies is usually that they change existing jobs, changes that often require retraining, while the general occupational characteristics remain. These projections clearly indicate that most employment opportunities will continue to be concentrated in service and trade industries. Table 2 lists occupations with the highest projected growth rates. None are classified as high-tech occupations and the top 20 listed account for only 4.3 percent of total projected job growth of the 500 occupations in Alaska.

Table 3 lists 44 high employment occupations that account for 48 percent of the total projected job openings. Each occupation includes estimated 1985 employment, the percent change in employment projected between 1985 and 1990, the numerical change, and a brief employment prospects statement taken from the Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS). More detailed information for the occupations listed in this table plus more than 200 others can be obtained from the AKCIS occupational information file.

Complete results of the estimates and projections for Alaska statewide, Anchorage-MatSu, and Fairbanks North Star Borough are available in the publication *Alaska Occupational Information*. This publication is available upon request.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1/</sup> The number of job openings considered here does not include turnover openings that result when employees change jobs or occupations, or temporarily quit working. Turnover openings for some occupations may exceed growth and replacement openings, however, there is no good measurement available for turnover. Growth and replacement openings are more indicative of net needs and provide good comparative values for planners of employment, training and education programs.

<sup>2/</sup>The estimates and projections data are counts of jobs, not people. Occupational employment estimates of nonagricultural wage and salary employment do not distinguish between part-time and full-time jobs. Wage and salary employment also excludes self-employed which accounts for approximately 10 percent of all employment in Alaska.

**Table 1**  
**Thirty-Two Occupations with Largest**  
**Annual Average Job Openings\***  
**1985-1990**  
**Alaska Statewide**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Openings</b>
Helpers/Laborers Material Movers	363
Salespersons: Retail	312
Cannery Workers	295
General Managers & Top Executives	262
Janitors & Cleaners	229
Cashiers	226
Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing Clerks	209
Secretaries	198
General Office Clerks	172
Waiters & Waitresses	171
Food Preparation & Service Workers: Fast Food	170
Maintenance Repairers: General Utility	147
Teachers: Secondary School	131
Teachers: Elementary School	127
Supervisors/Managers: Clerical	109
Food Preparation Workers	96
Financial Managers	91
Managers/Supervisors: Sales	86
Registered Nurses	85
Accountants & Auditors	81
Cooks, Restaurant	80
Stock Clerks: Sales Floor	70
Typists	67
Bartenders	67
Teacher Aides: Paraprofessional	59
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	58
Aircraft Pilots/Flight Engineers	58
Guards & Watch Guards	56
Receptionists & Information Clerks	56
Ticket Agents	50
Cooks: Specialty Fast Food	50
Cooks: Institution or Cafeteria	50

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\* Job openings that result from industry growth, and replacement needs due to retirement and death. These job openings account for 50 percent of the total number of job openings.

**Table 2**  
**Twenty Fastest Growing Occupations**  
**1985-1990**  
**Alaska Statewide**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Percent Growth in Employment</b>	<b>Numbers of Openings 1985-1990</b>
Parking Enforcement Officer	27.3	*
Sales Agents: Real Est.	20.6	*
Loan Interviewers	20.0	17
Brokers: Real Estate	20.0	14
Metallurgical Engineers	20.0	*
Credit Authorizers	20.0	*
Property & Real Estate Managers	19.8	21
Tellers	19.4	211
Assessors	19.4	14
Transit Clerks	19.4	*
Loan & Credit Clerks	19.3	151
Sales Agents/Placers: Insurance	19.3	72
New Accounts Clerks	19.2	82
Insurance Policy Processing Clerks	19.2	40
Underwriters	19.2	38
Loan Officers & Counselors	19.1	55
Sales Agents: Securities	19.1	30
Municipal Clerks	19.1	25
Credit Analysts	18.9	17
Ticket Agents	18.8	178

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\*The projected number of openings is less than 10.

**Table 3**  
**The Job Outlook in Brief**

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>MANAGERS and ADMINISTRATORS</b>				
Education Administrators	1,029	9.4	97	Slight surplus of primary and secondary administrators in Alaska. Fewer out-of-state candidates are being recruited for these positions. Competition for positions with the State Department of Education is very keen. There is a surplus of community college and university administrators. Competition is also keen among qualified applicants for these openings.
Financial Managers	1,494	11.2	168	Surplus of applicants. An excess of qualified candidates exists in Alaska. Those with a strong area of expertise and a proven track record will have the most success. This position is usually filled by trainees or internal promotion because a thorough knowledge of the company or industry is essential.
<b>PROFESSIONAL, PARAPROFESSIONAL, and TECHNICAL</b>				
Accountants & Auditors	2,185	10.4	228	Shortage of fully trained auditors and certified public accountants (CPA). Demand exceeds the in-state yearly training capacity. Some employers are forced to recruit out-of-state. The outlook depends mainly on the health of Alaska's economy, greater use of accounting services by all sizes of firms and the public sector, complexity of tax laws, and government regulation of financial reporting. Studies indicate that these factors will generate a steady demand for accountants and auditors in Alaska. People interested in being a certified accountant should obtain good academic preparation before taking the qualifying exams.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>PROFESSIONAL (cont.)</b>				
<b>Drafters</b>	788	9.3	73	Moderate shortage of experienced drafters. Surplus of those with limited training and experience. Opportunities are good for drafters with several years of experience. Sources indicate that opportunities for drafters in federal, state, and local governments should continue to increase; experience is preferred. The outlook for architectural drafters depends upon the level of resumption of commercial and residential building.
<b>Electrical &amp; Electronic Technicians</b>	851	0.2	87	Surplus of entry-level applicants. Shortage of highly trained, skilled technicians. The outlook for this occupation in Alaska depends on the level of economic activity for organizations which use electronic equipment. Presently this use is growing and should provide additional opportunities for technicians. There may be a decline in the number of testing technician positions due to automation eliminating much of the routine work of electronics testing. The knowledge of computer programming is needed in some situations to work with software-driven equipment.
<b>Lawyers</b>	1,090	9.5	104	Surplus of applicants. The outlook depends on many factors that generate or reduce business such as new laws, landmark court decisions, intensity of law enforcement, cost of services, and replacement of lawyers leaving the profession. Currently, graduates are at record levels; thus, competition for jobs is keen and is expected to remain that way in years ahead. Alaska has a shortage of lawyers in some of the smaller rural communities. Because the state laws are not yet firmly established in this relatively "young state," it is an attractive place for ambitious lawyers. The recent oil, gas, and mineral development in Alaska is also providing job opportunities for lawyers.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>PROFESSIONAL (cont.)</b>				
<b>Nurses: Registered</b>	2,591	10.2	264	Surplus of general duty nurses; shortage of qualified workers in specialty areas. The outlook depends on expansion of medical services, extension of prepayment programs for hospitalization and medical care, and increased interest in preventative medicine and rehabilitation of the handicapped. In Alaska, the supply is unevenly distributed by geographic area and specialty. Sources indicate a shortage in some of the less populated areas of the state. Competition may increase if enrollment in nursing schools continues its upward trend. Prospects may be best for those with supervisory experience or specialty training in areas such as intensive care, coronary, emergency room, labor and delivery, operating room, pediatrics, orthopedics, newborn intensive care, and psychiatric care. Because smaller institutions must still offer a broad range of services in spite of limited staff sizes, many of them require at least a year of experience in acute care or similar specialties. Nationally, forecasts of the foreseeable future show continued growth in the nursing field.
<b>Social Workers, Exc. Medical/Psychiatric</b>	632	8.5	54	Shortage of applicants in some interior rural communities. Surplus elsewhere in the state. The outlook depends on the amount of financial support for public programs in welfare, corrections, mental health, vocational rehabilitation, and other community organizations. Currently, there is generally an over-supply of social workers, especially at the bachelor's degree level. One way people have been getting jobs is by taking clerical positions or by volunteering within an agency while waiting for social work positions to become available. For jobs in the bush, a knowledge of rural areas and cultural differences is very important.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>PROFESSIONAL (cont.)</b>				
Teachers: College & University	1,168	3.0	35	Extreme surplus of applicants. The outlook depends on new training and research programs and on financial support of post-secondary institutions. Currently there is a surplus of applicants for teaching positions in most disciplines at both state and national levels, resulting in extremely keen competition. Some fields, such as engineering, computer science, business administration, and law will offer more employment opportunities due to teachers in these fields leaving for jobs outside the academic setting. Opportunities in college teaching are best for people with excellent academic records and experience.
∞ Teachers: Elementary & Secondary School	6,155	12.5	776	Varies by location and by teaching specialty. More than 1,000 teaching positions are filled each year statewide. There is a surplus of certificated applicants for standard teaching positions in major population centers. There is a shortage of teachers with training in special education, business education, industrial education, and music; a shortage of secondary teachers specializing in science and math. One source reports a shortage of art teachers and reading specialists. In-migration from other states of more than 300 teachers/year helps to meet the need for positions requiring specialized training. There is less competition for positions in rural areas. The turnover rate varies by school district, but is generally higher in rural areas.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SALES</b>				
<b>Cashiers</b>	5,203	14.3	743	Surplus of applicants. Qualifications are few, resulting in competition for positions. Due to the lower rates of pay in many of these positions, there are a significant number of openings created by turnover. The long-term outlook depends on expansion of business activities, replacement of those now working, and on technological advances in computerized pricing and in change-making equipment. Nationally, the number of cashier jobs is expected to increase due to a trend toward more service-related jobs.
<b>Salespersons: Retail</b>	6,571	13.3	877	Surplus of applicants, although some employers report a shortage of qualified, experienced people. The outlook depends on general business conditions, expansion of retail sales facilities, the degree to which computerized checkout systems are utilized, and replacement of those who leave the occupation. Due to low pay and employee advancement, many openings are created by turnover; however, the supply of applicants will continue to exceed the number of jobs. Those with experience and a willingness to work will fare best.
<b>Sales Agents/Placers: Insurance</b>	374	19.3	72	Shortage of qualified applicants. The outlook depends on increased demand for insured protection by industry and the general public. Beginners often find it hard to build a clientele and many quit in the first few years; therefore, jobs are always available for beginners. The long-term outlook for ambitious people who develop expertise in a wide range of insurance and financial services is good. Since insurance selling is so highly competitive, future opportunities may be limited by the trend toward more group coverage. The increasing use of computers to relieve agents of clerical tasks and routine personal contact may also limit future opportunities in this occupation.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SALES (cont.)</b>				
Stock Clerks: Sales Floor	1,339	2.8	37	Currently, there is a slight surplus of applicants, particularly for entry positions. However, due to the relatively high turnover at this level, opportunities will arise from replacement needs. The outlook depends on the expansion of manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, upon general economic stability, and the rate of automation of these tasks.
<b>CLERICAL and ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT</b>				
Bookkeeping/ Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	5,517	9.4	517	Slight surplus of entry-level applicants; balance to slight shortage of fully qualified, experienced workers. The outlook depends mainly on general business in Alaska and the replacement of those who advance to other positions or leave the occupation. The turnover rate is relatively high, although competition is often keen for entry-level positions. Some employers report a shortage of applicants with combined bookkeeping and secretarial skills. Sources indicate that in remote areas of Alaska many opportunities are for part-time employment.
General Office Clerks	5,041	8.0	403	Slight to moderate surplus of workers. The outlook depends mainly on the economy of Alaska and the need to replace workers who leave the occupation. Studies indicate a good demand for office clerks in Alaska. In addition, these are typically entry-level, low paying jobs which experience high turnover as workers move on to other positions.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>CLERICAL (cont.)</b>				
<b>Hotel Desk Clerks</b>	308	10.7	33	Slight shortage of applicants. There is always a demand for people with training and/or experience in front desk operations. Demand in the state is expected to increase as hotels and motels are built or expanded. Turnover will also create some job openings. Nationally, growth will be limited by the use of computerized reservation systems in most motel and hotel chains. The number of people employed in this occupation is less affected by economic conditions than is employment in other motel and hotel occupations. Those who are willing to work evening and night shifts improve their chances for a job.
<b>Receptionists &amp; Information Clerks</b>	1,592	11.8	188	Slight surplus of qualified applicants. Turnover and promotions will create some openings. Most employers prefer applicants with clerical skills in addition to phone answering and greeting abilities.
<b>Secretaries</b>	6,237	9.5	594	Slight surplus of applicants. Secretaries are employed in all sectors of the labor force in Alaska. Because of this, the outlook for the occupation depends mainly on the state economy and the need to replace workers who leave the occupation. The growth of the state economy has slowed, but replacement of workers who leave the occupation will provide opportunities for many workers. Those with good typing, bookkeeping, and other office skills will do best. People with training in specialty areas such as medical or legal work, or with word processing equipment, should find opportunities in more populated areas of Alaska.
<b>Stock Clerks, Stockroom/Warehouse</b>	1,397	10.2	143	Currently, there is a slight surplus of applicants, particularly for entry positions. However, due to the relatively high turnover at this level, opportunities will arise from replacement needs. The outlook depends on the expansion of manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, upon general economic stability, and the rate of automation of these tasks.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>CLERICAL (cont.) Supervisors/ Managers: Clerical</b>	2,489	11.2	278	Balance to slight surplus of applicants. These positions are often filled by promotion from within the firm, so few openings are available to entry-level applicants. Prospects are best for those in related occupations such as bookkeepers and office clerks.
<b>Teacher Aides/ Education Assistants: Clerical</b>	689	11.9	82	Large surplus of applicants. In some areas the competition is so keen that these positions are being taken by certified teachers. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation, size of student population, the role of aides within the school setting, and upon financial backing from individual school districts. Generally, those with clerical skills, some college training, experience working with young people, or special abilities in an art or craft should do best. In some programs, applicants with knowledge of a second language or experience working with handicapped students will have an advantage.
<b>Tellers</b>	1,088	19.4	211	Surplus of applicants for entry-level positions; balance of experienced, fully trained workers. The outlook depends on expansion of business and banking activities, replacement of those now working, and on technological advances in banking equipment. Several studies indicate that automation will not reduce employment prospects because of most banks' continued emphasis on personalized service. Most tellers move on to other positions after several years, creating openings. Qualifications are few, resulting in keen competition. Those possessing experience in handling money and dealing with the public will do best.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>CLERICAL (cont.)</b>				
Typists	1,809	10.0	181	Surplus of applicants. The outlook depends mainly on the economy of Alaska and the need to replace workers who leave the occupation. Clerk typist is typically an entry-level position in most offices and openings are created as workers move on to other positions. Because of the high turnover in this occupation, clerk typists with good typing and other clerical skills should find good opportunities. Highly qualified applicants should have no trouble finding employment. Sources also indicate that familiarity with computers and word-processing equipment is becoming increasingly more important.
<b>SERVICE</b>				
Bartenders	1,487	14.7	219	Slight surplus of applicants. Openings are created by those who leave the occupation. The turnover rate is moderately high and those who convey a pleasant manner and willingness to work the less desirable shifts should find jobs. It is not uncommon for people to progress from cocktail waiter or waitress to bar assistant to bartender. Demand for bartenders increases in the summer and provides some opportunities for students.
<b>Child Care Workers</b>	913	11.0	100	Balance of workers and jobs. Because of the low wages, the turnover is high, resulting in a large number of openings. The outlook depends on the demand for child care and on public and private willingness to fund child care. Demand is affected by local employment conditions. Currently, demand for child care services is great, but funds are limited. Legislation which supports child care delivery systems can be very helpful. Altogether, moderate growth is expected.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SERVICE (cont.)</b>				
<b>Cooks: Restaurant</b>	1,356	15.4	209	Balance to slight shortage of applicants. The food service industry is growing in Alaska but the trend toward fast food establishments does not create openings for cooks and chefs. Turnover and promotion create openings for positions like dishwasher and kitchen helper that can lead to employment as a cook. Highly skilled cooks and chefs are always in demand, however, it takes a number of years to qualify.
<b>Cooks: Short Order/ Specialty Fast Food</b>	981	16.9	166	Balance of workers and jobs. Employment growth depends on expansion of the number of small restaurants, diners, and short-order eating places. Many openings will occur from a need to replace those who leave the occupation. The turnover rate is relatively high, likely because of the working conditions and low wages. Opportunities usually exist for experienced persons. Related restaurant experience, such as being a kitchen helper, improves a beginner's chances for a job.
<b>Counter Attendants</b>	821	16.3	134	Balance of workers and jobs. The employment outlook depends on growth of the fast food industry and replacement of workers who leave the occupation. Employment in fast food restaurants is expected to grow, especially in the more populated areas. There is a high turnover rate in this occupation but there are also many applicants because of the minimal hiring requirements. Those who convey a pleasant manner and willingness to work the less desirable shifts should find jobs.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SERVICE (cont.) Fire Fighters</b>	581	17.7	103	Surplus of applicants for structural fire fighters in cities and towns; there are many well-qualified individuals awaiting an opportunity. The good pay, work schedule, and community appreciation make this occupation very attractive to many people. Competition is keen, especially in populous areas. Opportunities may arise as smaller communities increasingly employ one or two professional fire fighters to lead volunteer teams, conduct departmental matters, and maintain the equipment. For forest or wildfire fighters, competition for the full-time seasonal positions is keen. For occasional work the demand for forest fire fighters varies from location to location, with the time of year, and the number of fires to be suppressed in a particular area.
<b>Food Preparation Workers</b>	2,042	14.9	304	Balance to slight shortage of applicants. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation and expansion of the restaurant industry. High job turnover will generate most openings. Most do not consider this occupation as a career because of the irregular hours, hard work, and low wages. Many are students who work part time while attending school and then find other jobs after graduation. Opportunities for advancement to cook are fairly good. There is more of a demand in more populous areas with larger restaurants.
<b>Food Preparation &amp; Service Workers: Fast Food</b>	3,238	16.9	548	Balance of workers and jobs. The employment outlook depends on growth of the fast food industry and replacement of workers who leave the occupation. Employment in fast food restaurants is expected to grow, especially in the more populated areas. There is a high turnover rate in this occupation but there are also many applicants because of the minimal hiring requirements. Those who convey a pleasant manner and willingness to work the less desirable shifts should find jobs.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SERVICE (cont.)</b>				
<b>Guards &amp; Watch Guards</b>	977	11.5	112	Balance of qualified applicants and jobs. The last several years have seen a rapid expansion of the number of firms in Alaska offering security services. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation and the use of security services by public and private enterprises and agencies. Competition is keen for the higher paying jobs. Turnover is relatively high due to low wages and the often irregular and nonstandard working hours. Part-time work is available.
<b>Janitors &amp; Cleaners, Except Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</b>	4,255	11.5	490	Balance of workers and jobs. Competition is keen for the better paying positions. Job turnover is high, especially in the lower pay ranges but there are usually applicants for these openings as well. Opportunities are best for applicants with steady work histories and experience. Part-time work is available for students.
<b>Maids &amp; Housekeeping Cleaners</b>	1,455	12.8	186	Slight surplus of applicants. The outlook depends on the replacement of those who leave the occupation, the level of commercial and tourist activity, and the number of motels, hotels, and health facilities. The high turnover rate creates a steady demand for responsible, reliable workers. Because demand for room cleaners increases in the summer, shortages will occur in some areas. These jobs provide employment opportunities for students.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>SERVICE (cont.) Nursing Aides Orderlies, &amp; Attendants</b>	881	9.0	79	Balance of workers and jobs. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation and on the number of hospitals and convalescent and nursing homes. Because of expansion of medical services, this occupation is expected to grow at a faster than average rate. Additional opportunities may arise as more duties associated with patient care, formerly done by medically trained staff, are delegated to aides and orderlies. Hospital openings are usually filled by graduates of training programs or by persons previously trained by nursing homes. Thus, turnover in nursing homes is high and openings are usually available. Low pay, undesirable shifts, and the strenuous nature of the work are other factors that influence the turnover rate.
<b>Police Patrol Officers</b>	1,048	13.0	136	Surplus of applicants. The outlook depends on expansion of current protective service forces and upon public financial support. Presently, the supply of applicants continues to exceed demand, particularly in population centers. Hiring requirements are high and competition is keen. Cutbacks in municipal budgets may affect the number of openings. Sources indicate that those with military experience and/or post-secondary investigative education should fare best. Opportunities are opening up in related areas such as private security and investigating firms.
<b>Waiters &amp; Waitresses</b>	3,874	15.6	604	Balance of applicants and jobs. Job turnover is high due to the low wages and hard work involved. Opportunities are available for those with good work records and adequate skills. Competition for the higher paying, more prestigious positions may be keen. Opportunities are best in the populous areas of the state. Prospects are fairly good for beginners who convey a pleasant manner, neat appearance, and the willingness to work the less-desirable shifts. Employment increases during the summer months and provides some opportunities for students.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>PRODUCTION/CONSTRUCTION/OPERATING/MAINTENANCE/MATERIAL HANDLING</b>				
<b>Cannery Workers</b>	5,559	8.8	489	Slight shortage of in-state applicants. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation, the size of the crop or catch, and technological changes in canning or freezing methods. Studies predict moderate employment growth. Employers of cannery workers report high turnover, much of which is due to college students working during the summer and returning to school in the fall. Freezing facilities that operate year round have a lower rate of turnover.
<b>Industrial Truck &amp; Tractor Operators</b>	699	8.2	57	Surplus of applicants. The outlook depends on replacement of those who leave the occupation, technological changes, and the level of economic activity in construction, manufacturing, and wholesale and retail trade. Studies predict a slow employment growth because of the technological improvements in material-handling methods and equipment. Replacement needs are greater than for most occupations since fork lift operators are more likely to transfer to other types of jobs.
<b>Maintenance Repairers: General Utility</b>	3,065	10.2	313	Moderate surplus of applicants. The good wages and steady work attract qualified people. Openings will arise mainly from worker retirement and moderate job turnover. Technological improvements in equipment and building materials may eliminate some jobs in the future.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
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**PRODUCTION (cont.)  
Mechanics: Aircraft**

870

16.9

147

Surplus of certified mechanics. The outlook depends on wages, the amount of aviation activity, the further improvement of repair facilities, and the availability of training opportunities. As the amount of aviation activity increases, so too will the demand for mechanics; however, labor-saving advances in aircraft maintenance will limit the growth in this field. Job opportunities, especially in general aviation, appear to be best for those mechanics who are willing to relocate. Those who want to work for major airlines will find the best opportunities in cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Kansas City, and Dallas where maintenance bases for major airlines are located.

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**Mechanics:  
Automotive**

1,235

9.6

119

Slight shortage of fully qualified workers. The outlook depends on general economic conditions in Alaska, the cost and supply of gasoline, and the willingness of employers to provide on-the-job training. Many employers indicate a surplus of applicants with some training and no practical experience. The development of more effective methods of training may enable more people to move right into journeyman-level positions. The growing complexity and cost of automobiles should increase demand for repair and maintenance work. Currently, there is a moderate demand for mechanics because many people are having their cars repaired rather than buying new ones. Turnover in this large occupation will create quite a few openings.

Occupation	Estimated Employment 1985	Percent Change in Employment 1985-1990	Numerical Change in Employment 1985-1990	Employment Prospects
<b>PRODUCTION (cont.) Truck Drivers: Light—Include Delivery &amp; Route Workers</b>	1,752	8.7	152	Surplus of local truck drivers. The outlook depends on the level of economic activity in construction, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and replacement of those who leave the occupation. Because construction and logging activity is seasonal, there is a lower demand for drivers in the winter. Studies predict moderate employment growth for this occupation in Alaska, although the number employed varies from year to year depending on the economy. Competition is stiff, due to the high wages and low entrance requirements. Applicants with good driving records have the best chance of being hired.