



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

## Department of Labor and Workforce Development

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
Research and Analysis

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October 1, 2024

Tamika Ledbetter  
Regional Administrator  
San Francisco Regional Office  
U.S. Department of Labor  
Employment and Training Administration  
90 Seventh Street, Suite 17-300  
San Francisco, California 94103

Dear Ms. Ledbetter,

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development respectfully submits our PY23 Workforce Information Core Deliverables and Activities Grant Performance Report. During PY23, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section completed work in the core deliverables and activities outlined:

- Workforce Information Database (WID)
- Industry and occupational employment projections
- LMI training for service delivery
- Annual economic analysis and other reports

Alaska's detailed performance report is attached.

Sincerely,

*Dan Robinson*

Dan Robinson, Research Chief  
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Enclosure

cc: Violet Jackson, Federal Project Officer

# **State of Alaska PY 2023 Workforce Information Grant**

## ***Performance Report***

July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

# **Introduction**

During Program Year 2023, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Research and Analysis Section (R&A) met the requirements of the Workforce Information Grant to States as detailed below.

## **I. Workforce Information Database (WID)**

R&A updated the Workforce Information Database (WID) core tables with all of the required data sets, which were also used to deliver data and analysis to state users in a variety of formats, articles, data products, and special reports.

The WID is a collection of what ETA describes as “the most important workforce-related data elements” defined consistently to ensure comparability across jurisdictions. Customer consultation relative to the WID is indirect and at least partially through ETA since ETA uses the WID to provide a wide variety of career information and guidance through its CareerOneStop system.

Separate from ETA's uses, R&A uses data in the WID format to populate much of its web site and many of its internal databases. Customer consultation occurs as R&A responds to large volume of information requests and data product requests. Where feasible, those requests are a vehicle to additions and updates to web-based products, economic analyses, and insights presented in custom presentations to a variety of audiences.

Specific customer needs met by updating the WID core tables include a better general understanding of the state's labor market and economic drivers and occupation-specific projections for openings from growth and separations.

Collaborations and leveraged funds with some connection to WID data include many of the state's sister agencies (Departments of Education, Health and Social Services, Revenue, Commerce, Community and Economic Development) as well as the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, Alaska Mental Health Trust, and the University of Alaska System.

## **II. Industry and Occupational Employment Projections**

Alaska met its short-term and long-term occupational forecast deliverables prior to the deadline set by the Projections Management Partnership.

R&A solicits industry-specific knowledge and expertise as an essential part of its projections methodology and uses long-term occupational and industry projections in dozens of

presentations to industry and educational audiences to help them plan, customize curricula, and identify patterns and trends that will affect their operations.

The Alaska Workforce Information Board (AWIB), the state's only workforce investment board, uses them to help determine priorities in workforce training and otherwise guide workforce development efforts. The projections also play an important role in the states Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan and related updates.

One example of many collaborations and associated leveraging of funds made possible by the projections work is a recent effort with the University of Alaska to identify eleven key focus areas and track employment and wage outcomes for those graduates (the reports are now in their second iteration and the third iteration, with relatively minor changes, is in progress):

<https://www.alaska.edu/research/wd/reports.php>

R&A publishes the industry and occupational projections on its web site and has incorporated them into many R&A product web pages, presentations, and special reports. Industry and occupational projections can be found here:

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/article/projections>

The projections and related analysis are included in the recently released articles in the department's monthly publication, *Alaska Economic Trends*:

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends-magazine/2024/October/alaska-industry-and-occupational-projections-for-2022-2032>

### **III. LMI Training for Service Delivery**

R&A conducted more than 50 LMI focused presentations in PY 2023 to a wide variety of audiences, including legislative committees, resource development associations, the state workforce development board, university departments and workforce development entities, and various business and community groups.

Less formally, R&A receives hundreds of information requests annually from a wide variety of users. Each call or email is an opportunity to train the person contacting us about the LMI data available on our site, and on the sites of state and federal data partners.

The large number of custom economic and labor market presentations provide an opportunity for regular and varied consultation with users. Importantly, most of the presentations are repeat requests from previous years, signaling the value to those groups of the information provided and the insights offered.

The customer need most often cited in response to requests for presentations is an awareness of trends and an understanding of the basic economic landscape with particular relevance to the requesting customer and the expected audience (home builders, for example, are especially interested to hear about construction trends, inflation, and demographics). As noted elsewhere above, requests for data and information frequently leads to opportunities to leverage funding, especially when requests are complicated and labor-intensive (customers such as academic researchers and economic consultants often offer to pay for more complicated work).

## IV. Annual Economic Analysis and Other Reports

Workforce Information Grants to States (WIGS) funding helps support data and analysis used in R&A's monthly economic publication, *Alaska Economic Trends* (<https://labor.alaska.gov/trends/>).

R&A distributed more than 100,000 electronic copies of *Trends* to email subscribers in PY 2023, and an additional 6,000+ were distributed in hard copy. *Trends* articles were viewed online an additional 100,000+ times.

*Trends* frequently cites data produced under WIGS deliverables in its industry and geographic profile articles and an entire issue is devoted to new long-term projections when they are published every two years.

In PY 2023, R&A published the following articles, among many others (there are usually 2-3 articles in each monthly issue):

- An analysis of the state's worker shortage and how it makes retention efforts more important than ever:

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends-magazine/2023/October/worker-shortage-raises-the-stakes-on-retention>

- Annual estimates of employment in Alaska's large commercial fishing industry (excluded from standard wage and hour employment data sets):

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends-magazine/2023/November/fishing-jobs-show-small-decline>

- 2024 employment forecasts for the state and sub-state regions:

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends-magazine/2024/January/outlook-for-alaska-jobs-in-2024>

- An analysis of the number and percentage of women working in construction jobs and how the numbers have changed over time:

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends-magazine/2024/June/alaska-women-in-construction>

R&A's web site ([laborstats.alaska.gov/](https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/)) is a key dissemination tool for R&A products, reports, and data. WIGS funding plays an important role in funding both data production and dissemination. In PY 2023, R&A's web site had more than 800,000 visits and 200,000 downloads of publications and products.

Although customer consultation on possible analyses and articles are encouraged, requests for certain types of articles are handled with care to ensure that R&A's commitment to objective, policy-neutral work is maintained. Long-term credibility depends on the publication and articles being free from advocacy or political bias.

## **Recommendations for Improving Use of WIGS Funding**

WIGS funding is particularly valuable to states because it is used to produce one of the most valued data sets — long-term industry and occupational projections. Although those tasks along with the work required to produce the WID-formatted data use up most of the WIGS funding, the flexibility to use the remaining dollars in the ways determined to be most useful to state users is valuable and smart.

A minor recommendation for an improvement to the WIGS grant and grant management is to streamline and update the annual reporting language and requirements. Once the projections and the WID deliverables are complete, there's a relatively small amount of funding remaining. The annual performance report would likely be more useful for both states and ETA if the request was left more open ended to explain how the remaining funds were put to good use to produce data or analysis beyond the projections and the WID-related work.