



# Alaska Employer

Newsletter

## Unemployment Insurance Tax



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Bill Walker, Governor

Heidi Drygas, Commissioner

Ed Flanagan, Division Director

December 2016

**Questions about  
your rate, account  
or contributions?**

### CONTACTS

#### Juneau Central Office

P.O. Box 115509  
Juneau, AK 99811-5509  
Phone: (907) 465-2757  
Toll free: (888) 448-3527  
Fax: (907) 465-2374  
Email: ESD.Tax@Alaska.Gov  
Relay Alaska: (800) 770-8973

#### UI TAX OFFICES

##### Anchorage

P.O. Box 241767  
Anchorage, AK 99524-1767  
Phone: (907) 269-4850  
Fax: (907) 269-4845

##### Fairbanks

675 7th Ave., Station L  
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4595  
Phone: (907) 451-2876  
Fax: (907) 451-2883

##### Juneau

P.O. Box 115509  
Juneau, AK 99811-5509  
Phone: (907) 465-2787  
Fax: (907) 465-2374

##### Kenai

145 Main Street Loop,  
Suite 143, Kenai, AK 99611  
Phone: (907) 283-0350  
Fax: (907) 283-5152

##### Wasilla

877 Commercial Drive  
Wasilla, AK 99654-6937  
Phone: (907) 352-2535  
Fax: (907) 352-2581

#### UI Tax Representative

Toll free: (888) 448-2937

## 2017 Annual Rates

The 2017 tax rate notices will be mailed in early December. The notice will include the 2017 rate and the individual taxable wage base amount. For questions regarding your rate notice, contact the Tax Central Office in Juneau at [esd.tax@alaska.gov](mailto:esd.tax@alaska.gov) or phone (888) 448-3527 toll free or (907) 465-2757.

## Reports and Payments Received by January 31 are Eligible for FUTA Tax Reduction

Under the Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA), an employer may receive a 5.4 percent offset against the six percent FUTA tax imposed if their state has an approved Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, the state has no delinquent federal loans, and the employer's quarterly reports and payments are filed timely.

To ensure your reports and payments are received by the ES Tax Office timely, use the "Online Employer Services" link at [labor.alaska.gov/estax](http://labor.alaska.gov/estax). Reports and payments received in the ES Tax Office after January 31 may not be considered timely to receive the FUTA tax credit. Additionally, the federal government does not allow a grace period for this requirement.

## DO YOU PROVIDE JOB TRAINING TO YOUR EMPLOYEES? WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR GRANTS TO FUND THAT TRAINING?

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development administers grant programs through the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the State Training and Employment Program (STEP) which can fund worker training.

For information go to [labor.alaska.gov/bp/programs.htm](http://labor.alaska.gov/bp/programs.htm) or contact Shawna Harper, Program Coordinator, at (907) 465-1882 or [Shawna.Harper@alaska.gov](mailto:Shawna.Harper@alaska.gov).

## Employer Option Forms

Alaska Unemployment Insurance contribution rates are based on quarterly wage declines. A decline in quarterly wages exists when the amount of total wages reported in one quarter decreases in the next quarter. The larger the decline in wages, the higher your contribution rate may be.

*Several factors that may create artificial quarterly declines include the following:*

- Bonus payments
- Bi-weekly payroll systems
- Issuance of lump-sum payments
- Paying a labor dispute settlement
- Changes in your accounting or payroll methods

“Employer Option Forms” will be enclosed with your Annual Rate Notice and may be used to help equalize any quarterly declines caused by these anomalies. Employer Options may help stabilize your payroll from one quarter to the next, thus obtaining a more favorable rate.

Employers have until June 30 each year to submit the form to reduce the previous year’s contribution rate. It’s important to note that submitted Option Forms must include all years in the rating period. The applicable quarters can be found on the annual rate notice.

Questions should be directed to the UI Employer Account Unit at (888) 448-3527. Employer Option Forms, and a variety of other UI forms, are available online at:

**[labor.alaska.gov/estax/forms/toc\\_forms.htm](http://labor.alaska.gov/estax/forms/toc_forms.htm)**.

## Paper-Free Unemployment Insurance Forms

Are you interested in freeing your business from paper UI forms?

We have a solution. Developed through a partnership between the U.S. Department of Labor and the state UI Program, State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES) offers employers electronic, standardized forms to respond to requests for information from the UI Program. Requests for information

regarding separation from employment can be handled easily and efficiently, and now SIDES can also help respond to wage verification audit requests. This system is free of charge and secure, reduces administrative costs and saves time. If you are interested, please contact **Kim Schnell** at **(907) 269-4758** or **[dol.sides@alaska.gov](mailto:dol.sides@alaska.gov)** for more information.



### DID YOU KNOW ...

Required employee posters are available for free at **[labor.alaska.gov/lss/posters.htm](http://labor.alaska.gov/lss/posters.htm)**.

**Quarterly reports and payments are due  
in our office no later than January 31.**