

Rate expected to increase in October

Alaska's unemployment dips below 10

Alaska's unemployment rate fell below the double-digit level for the first time this year in September when it dropped one-half of one percentage point to 9.7 percent.

The comparable unemployment rate for the United States as a whole in September was 6.8 percent, according to the Alaska Department of Labor.

Typically, unemployment in Alaska hits its seasonal low in September bet-

ween 7 and 8 percent, as it did in September of 1985 when the unemployment rate was 7.3 percent. The previous high for the unemployment rate in September was 9.2 percent in September 1978.

The unemployment rate is almost certain to increase from October through the end of the year. An all-time high annual unemployment rate for Alaska appears likely for 1986, ac-

cording to the department. The previous high for unemployment during any year was 10.3 percent in 1983.

Alaska wage and salary employment dropped 5,300 from August to September as the salmon processing season wound down from its peak production month. Services employment also experienced a sharp drop in employment in September, partially caused by a slowing tourist season.

Gains in government employment offset some of the losses during September. The University of Alaska system added nearly 1,900 workers, while local school districts added another 3,400.

These government gains were partly offset by a loss of 1,200 jobs in the noneducation portion of both state and local government, but the net gain in government employment still amounted to 4,100 jobs.