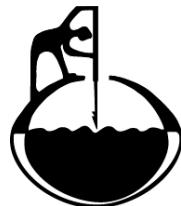


Alaska Employer Health-Care Benefits: A Survey of Alaska Employers

By

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I. Introduction

The majority of Alaskans and Americans who have health insurance coverage get it through an employer—either their own employer or the employer of a family member. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 55.4% of all Alaskans got health insurance through an employer in 2012—and 68.4% of those with health insurance got it through an employer. But those census estimates also suggest that the share of Alaskans and other Americans who get health insurance from their employers has been gradually declining (Figures I-1a and I-1b).

Figure I-1a.

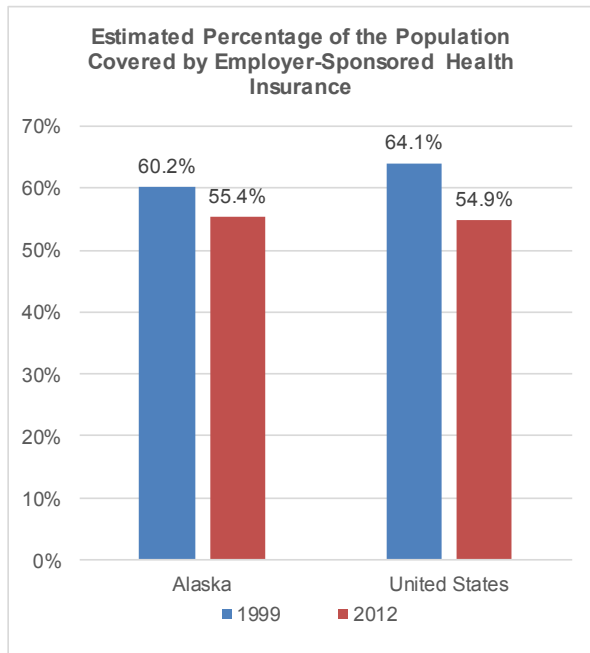
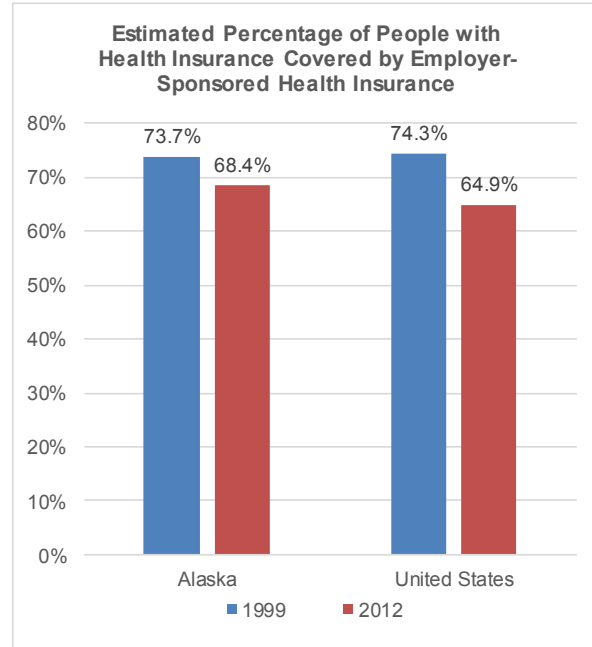


Figure I-1b.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Health Insurance Historical Tables-HIB Series, Table HIB-4: Health Insurance Coverage Status and Type of Coverage by State--All Persons: 1999 to 2012*, http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/hlthins/data/historical/HIB_tables.html.

Because employer-sponsored insurance is so important to Alaskans, the Alaska Health Care Commission sponsored a survey of businesses, local governments, and school districts statewide, asking whether they offer employees insurance or other health benefits, which employees are eligible, and what types of plans and rates they offer.

The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Alaska Anchorage collaborated with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development to design the survey, and the department conducted the survey during the winter of 2013 and spring of 2014. ISER analyzed the survey results and prepared this report. It's important to keep in mind as we report our results that this was a survey of employers, not employees: we don't have data on individual employees.

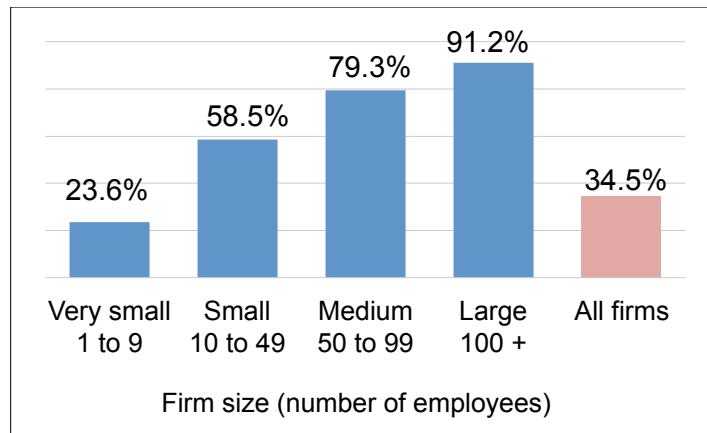
A similar study of Alaska employer-based health insurance was conducted in 2006, by the Alaska departments of Health and Social Services, Labor and Workforce Development, and Community and Economic Development. The results of that study were published in the December 2007 issue of *Alaska Economic Trends* (<http://labor.state.ak.us/trends/dec07.pdf>). The final chapter of this report compares two major findings of this survey and the 2006 survey—but differences in the surveys limit the comparisons we can make.

Four Key Concepts in Understanding Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance

At the outset—before discussing our study methodology or results—it is useful to emphasize four key concepts in understanding Alaska employer-sponsored insurance, because they drove how we designed our study and how we present the results.

1. *The percentage of employers offering health insurance varies widely, depending on the size of the employer or “firm.” Firms with large numbers of employees are much more likely to offer health insurance than firms with few employees.*

Figure I-2. Estimated Percentage of Alaska Firms Offering Health Insurance to Employees, 2013

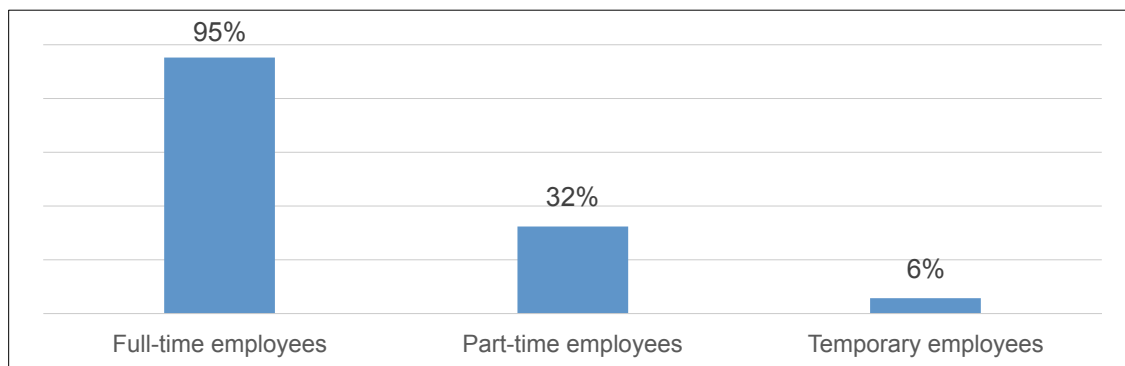


As Figure I-2 shows, 34.5% of all Alaska firms offer employees health insurance. But only 23.6% of very small firms offer insurance, while 91.2% of large firms do. So in studying the extent to which Alaska employers offer insurance, it is important to distinguish between employers of different sizes. For this study, we divide employers into four size classes:

Very small firms:	1-9 employees
Small firms	10-49 employees
Medium firms	50-99 employees
Large firms	100 + employees

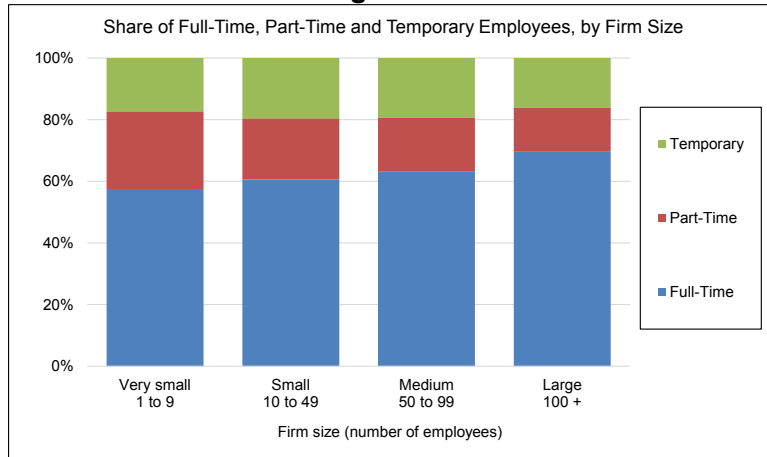
2. *Eligibility for employer-sponsored insurance varies widely among full-time, part-time, and temporary employees. Employers are much more likely to offer health-care benefits to full-time employees than to part-time or temporary employees.*

Figure I-3. Estimated Percentage of Employees Eligible for Health Insurance at Firms Offering Insurance, by Work Status, 2013

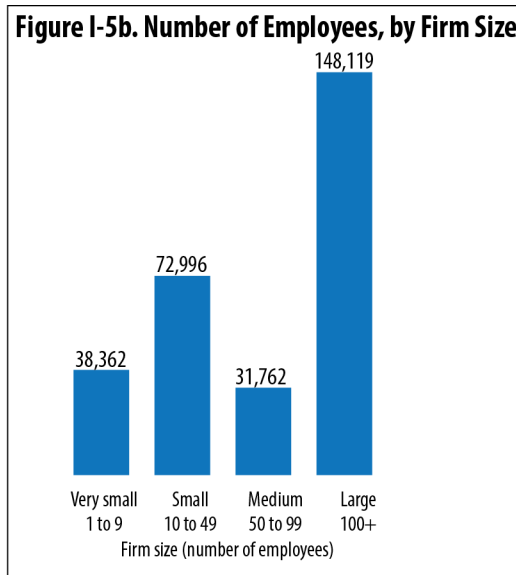
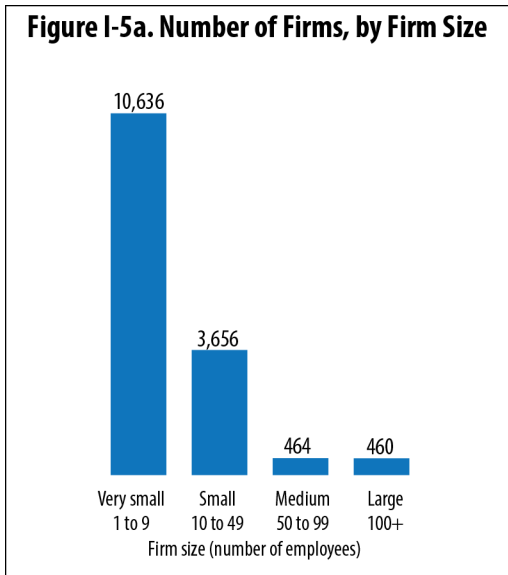


3. The percentages of full-time, part-time, and temporary (seasonal) employees differ among firms of different sizes. At large firms (those with 100 or more employees), 70% of employees work full-time. In contrast, at very small firms (fewer than 10 employees), only 58% of employees work full-time. That helps explain why fewer employees at small firms are offered health-care benefits.

Figure I-4.



4. There are many more small firms than large firms in Alaska, but more people work at large firms (Figures I-5a and I-5b). So it's important to keep in mind that characterizing health insurance offered by employers tends to reflect the types of benefits offered by small employers—because there are so many small employers—while characterizing health benefits offered to employees tends to reflect the types of benefits offered by larger employers—because they employ more people.



Characterizing benefits by numbers or percentages of employers gives a very different picture than characterizing benefits by numbers or percentages of employees (Figures I-6a and I-6b). Only about 35% of all Alaska employers offer health insurance to their employees—but 57% of all Alaska employees are offered insurance by their employers.

Figure I-6a. Estimated Percentage of Alaska Firms Offering Health Insurance to Employees, by Firm Size, 2013

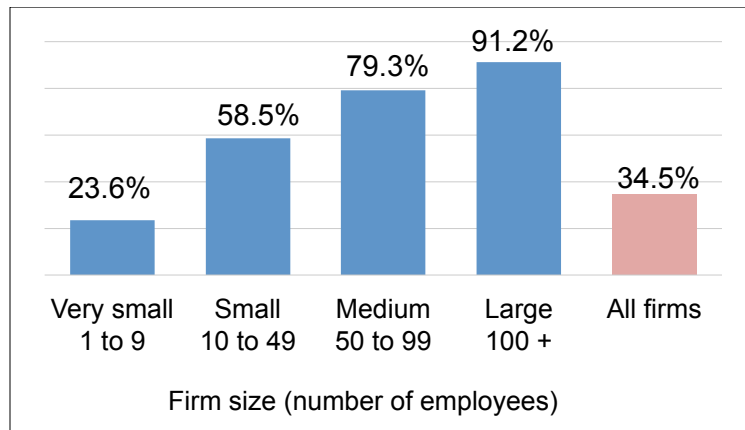
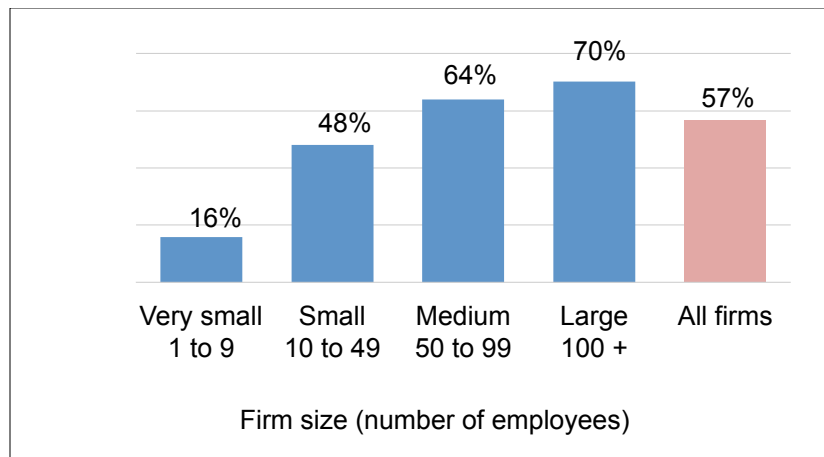


Figure I-6b. Estimated Percentage of Employees Offered Health Insurance, by Firm Size, 2013



Organization of this Report

This report has nine chapters. The table below summarizes topics addressed by chapter.

Chapter	Topics Addressed in Chapter
I. Introduction	Purpose of the study Key concepts in understanding employer health insurance and other benefits Organization of this report
II. Study Methodology	Design and administration of survey Survey sample, responses, and response rates
III. Alaska Employers And Employees Covered by Survey	Numbers of employers and employees covered by survey Employers excluded from survey and why
IV. Alaska Firms and Health-Care Benefits	Share of employers providing insurance, total and by firm size Share of employers not offering insurance and reasons why Other health benefits offered Types of health-insurance plans offered
V. Employee Coverage, Eligibility, And Participation	Employees eligible for health insurance, by firm size and work status Enrollment in employer-sponsored plans Waiting period for insurance Types of insurance plans employees carry
VI. Cost of Health Insurance and Funding	Average premiums for health insurance Employer and employee shares of premium Shares of firms carrying insurance plans and self-funding
VII. Wellness Programs and Consumer Information	Employer perceptions about wellness programs Share of employers offering wellness programs Types of wellness programs offered Types of consumer information offered employees
VIII. Comparing 2006 and 2013 Surveys	Changes in share of employers offering health insurance Changes in share of employees carrying employer-sponsored health insurance
IX. Conclusions	Summary of major findings Contribution of 2013 survey to understanding employer-sponsored health insurance

II. Study Methodology

This report is based on a survey the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development conducted of Alaska employers that are required by state law to pay unemployment insurance taxes and report their employment to the department. Those include most private for-profit and non-profit employers, as well as local governments and school districts. The state government was not included in the survey; the state has a single, broad health insurance system.

Several types of employers who do not pay unemployment insurance taxes or report employment to the Department of Labor were not surveyed; those include commercial fishermen, their crews and other agricultural workers, private household workers, and self-employed people. And the survey did not include federal agencies, because the federal government operates its own unemployment insurance system. All references in this report to “employers” and “employees” exclude these employers and their employees.

We sorted employers into four size classes: very small firms (1 to 9 employees); small firms (10 to 49 employees); medium firms (50 to 99 employees), and large firm (100 or more employees). We chose those size classes to match the ones used in the 2006 Alaska employer-based health insurance survey.

We used employment data from 2013 because that was the most recent information available when the survey was conducted. The number of employees was based on employers’ July 2013 employment, or April 2013 employment for public or private sector K-12 schools. We asked all employers except school districts about their employment levels in July, because that is when many Alaska employers reach their peak employment. We asked school employers about employment levels in April because that is the month that best represents the time when schools are fully staffed. Most schools break for the summer months, but there is considerable variation among school districts in when they break.

Survey Sample Sizes and Confidence Intervals

Getting survey responses from all 15,216 firms around Alaska would be a nearly impossible and very expensive undertaking. So we surveyed a representative sample of those firms; “representative” means we chose the number and kinds of firms surveyed to reflect the characteristics of all the state’s private businesses, local governments, and school districts.

But because we surveyed only some rather than all Alaska employers, the numbers we extrapolate based on the survey responses are estimates that aren’t necessarily the same as the actual numbers would be, if we had responses from every employer. We designed the survey to get enough responses from the employers in each size class to achieve a confidence interval (margin of error) of $\pm 5\%$ —that is, so there is a 95% chance that the actual numbers would be within 5% (higher or lower) than our survey estimates.

For example, Alaska has 10,636 very small employers. Suppose 50% of those very small employers who responded to the survey answered “yes” to a specific question. Based on that, we would extrapolate that 5,318 of all “very small” employers would answer “yes.” Our goal was to survey enough employers in that size class so there would be a 95% confidence interval that the true number of employers for whom the answer was “yes” was between 45% and 55%.

Table II-1 shows the total number of employers in each size class, the number randomly selected for a representative sample, the number of responses required to achieve a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$, the number of responses we got, and the response rates.

Table II-1. Survey Sample, Responses, and Response Rate

Size Class Code	Size Class Description	Total number of Alaska employers in size class	Number of employers in randomly selected sample for size class	Number of responses required for confidence interval of 5% in extrapolating from survey sample to all employers in size class	Number of survey responses received	Response rate
1	0 to 9 employees	10,636	1,194	371	503	42.1%
2	10 to 49 employees	3,656	810	348	393	48.5%
3	50 to 99 employees	464	464	211	217	46.8%
4	100 or more employees	460	460	201	204	44.6%
All size classes combined		15,216	2,928	1,131	1,317	45.0%

Note that the margin of error discussed above takes account only of random sampling error. It does not account for other potential sources of error—such as response bias (if the employers that respond to the survey are not representative of all employers in their size class), or if employers give incorrect answers (for example, because they don't understand the questions or don't tell the truth).

The Department of Labor sent paper copies of the survey to all employers on January 15, 2014. Survey respondents were given the option of returning the survey by mail, completing the survey online using Survey Monkey (a free online survey software), or using a PDF file of the form or an Excel spreadsheet to return via e-mail. Survey responses from the first mailing totaled 894. A follow-up mailing and phone calls produced 424 more responses, sufficient to meet the $\pm 5\%$ margin of error for each of the four size classes.

A small number of employers were moved from one size class to another, based on their responses to a survey question asking for their current number of employees. Their initial size class was determined from their reported employment for the previous year—so they might have grown or shrunk over that period or misreported their employment. Collecting sufficient survey responses from the largest firms was most difficult, which is typical in surveys, because the burden of responding for larger and often more complicated organizations is higher. If a given percentage of employers in a specific size-class gave a particular response to a question, we assumed the same percentage for all employers in that size class.

But when we combined responses from all the firms of different sizes, we weighted responses by the total number of employers each response represented. For example, each response from an employer in the smallest size class represented 21.1 employers (10,636 total employers divided by 503 survey responses), while each response from an employer in the largest size class represented 2.24 employers (460 total employers divided by 205 survey responses).

Survey Questionnaire

The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) collaborated with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to design the survey questionnaire and the cover letter (Appendix A). The questionnaire was three pages, with eleven questions, asking:

1. Contact information for person completing the survey
2. Whether the firm was a non-profit
3. Number of full-time, part-time, and temporary/seasonal employees
4. The respondent's perception of how important work-site wellness programs are for improving employee health and productivity
5. Types of wellness programs offered by the firm and their effectiveness
6. Whether the company offers health insurance or other health-related benefits for any of its employees, and if not, why not
7. Benefits offered to full-time, part-time, and temporary/seasonal employees
8. Whether the company's employee health-insurance plans are insured or self-funded
9. How long employees must wait before they are eligible for company health insurance
10. Premiums paid and employee share of premiums for health plans the firm offers
11. Whether the company's health plan includes features designed to help hold down costs, including information about price and quality of health services from different providers

In designing the questionnaire we considered:

- *The balance of survey length and complexity with time and effort required to complete the survey.* Extensive experience has shown that survey response rates and the quality of responses both decline as survey length and complexity increase. There are many questions we would have liked to ask, or to ask about in greater detail, but which we did not include because they would have made the survey too long or complex.
- *Alaska Health Care Commission priorities.* We designed the survey to gather information on certain topics of particular interest to the commission, including (for example) wellness programs offered and their effectiveness.

III. Employers and Employees Covered by the Survey

Question 3 of the survey asked:

How many employees worked for your company during the pay period that included July 12, 2013 (or for school districts, April 2013)?

Table III-1 shows the numbers of employers and employees covered by the survey, by firm size and by work status of employee (full-time, part-time, or temporary/seasonal). The survey covered 15,216 firms employing 292,245 workers. Very small firms (1-9 employees) accounted for 70.2% of the employers but only 13.1% of the employees. Large firms (100 or more employees) accounted for only 3.0% of the employers but 50.7% of the employees.

Table III-1. Numbers of Employers and Employees Covered by the Survey

		Firm size (number of employees)				Total
		1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 99	100+	
Firms	Number	10,636	3,656	464	460	15,216
	Percent	69.9%	24.0%	3.0%	3.0%	100.0%
Number of Employees	Full-Time	22,065	44,244	20,061	103,337	190,709
	Part-Time	9,680	14,485	5,578	21,045	50,789
	Temporary	6,617	14,267	6,123	23,737	50,746
	Total	38,362	72,996	31,762	148,119	292,244
Percent of Employees, by firm size	Full-Time	11.6%	23.2%	10.5%	54.2%	100.0%
	Part-Time	19.1%	28.5%	11.0%	41.4%	100.0%
	Temporary	13.0%	28.1%	12.1%	46.8%	100.0%
	Total	13.1%	25.0%	10.9%	50.7%	100.0%
Percent of Employees, by type of employment	Full-Time	57.5%	60.6%	63.2%	69.8%	65.3%
	Part-Time	25.2%	19.8%	17.6%	14.2%	17.4%
	Temporary	17.2%	19.5%	19.3%	16.0%	17.4%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

The shares of full-time, part-time, and temporary/seasonal employees differ across firms of different sizes. At large firms (more than 100 employees), 69.8% of employees are full-time. But at very small firms (1-9 employees), only 57.5% of employees work full-time.

As noted in Chapter I, these characteristics of employers and employees are important to understand because larger employers are much more likely to offer health insurance, and full-time workers are much more likely to be eligible for that insurance. Because there are many more small employers than large employers, reporting employer-sponsored health insurance by the share of employers offering insurance tends to reflect the types of benefits offered by small employers. But since there are many more employees working at large firms than at small firms, reporting employer-sponsored health insurance by numbers of eligible employees tends to reflect the types of benefits offered by large employers (Figures III-1a. and III-1b).

Figure III-1a.

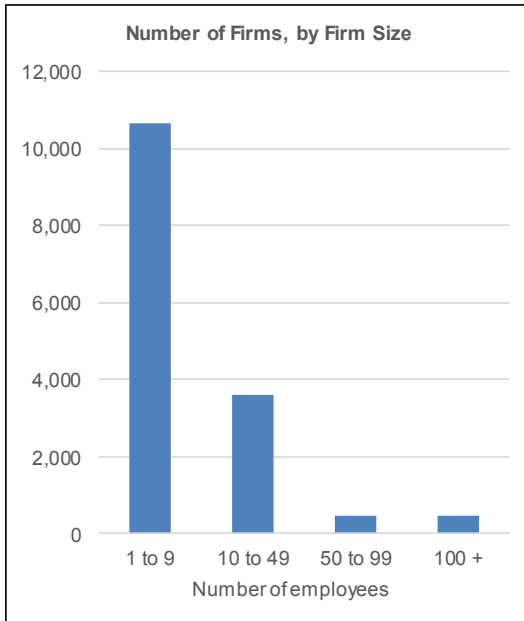
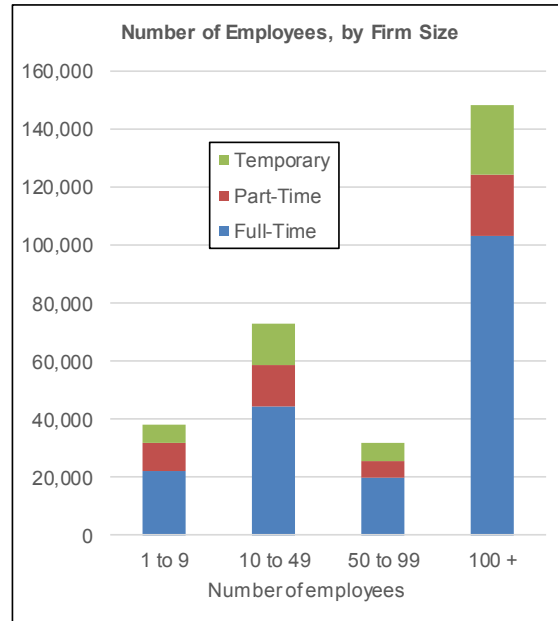


Figure III-1b.



Employers and Workers Not Covered by the Survey

As discussed in Chapter II, the survey covered employers that are required by state law to pay unemployment insurance taxes and report their employment to the Alaska Department of Labor—excluding the state government, which has a single broad health-insurance system. The surveyed firms included most private for-profit and non-profit firms, as well as local governments and school districts.

We were not able to survey several types of employers who do not pay unemployment insurance taxes or report employment to the Alaska Department of Labor—including commercial fishermen, their crews, and other agricultural workers; private household workers; and self-employed people. We also could not survey federal employers, because the federal government operates its own unemployment insurance system.

Table III-2 shows the best available comprehensive estimates of total Alaska employment for the most recent year available (2012). These estimates suggest that employers covered by the survey accounted for about 64% of total Alaska employment in 2012, while employers not covered by the survey accounted for nearly 36%.

Table III-2. BEA Estimates of Alaska Annual Average Employment, 2012

Employers	Annual Average Employment	Share of employment
Employment at Employers Covered by the Survey	295,000	64.4%
Private sector wage & salary employers	256,156	55.9%
Local government and school districts	38,844	8.5%
Employment at Employers Not Covered by the Survey	163,403	35.6%
Proprietors	93,372	20.4%
Federal government, civilian	16,420	3.6%
Federal government, military	27,898	6.1%
State government	25,713	5.6%
Total employment	458,403	100.0%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Data, downloaded September 6, 2014 from www.bea.gov.

IV. Alaska Firms and Health-Care Benefits

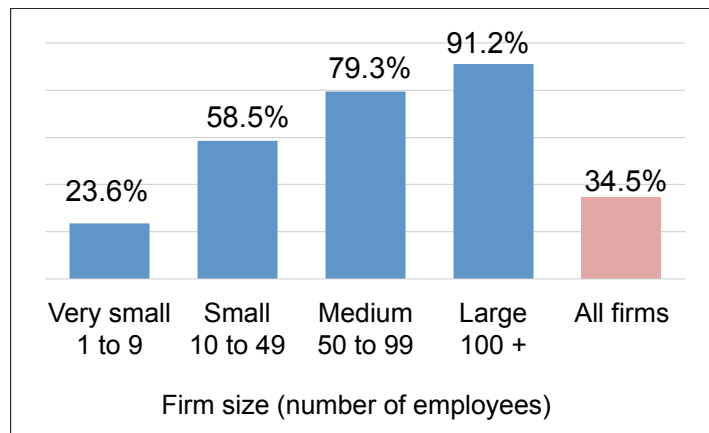
Share of Firms Offering Health Insurance

The first part of question 6 of the survey asked:

Does your company offer health-related benefits or services for any of your employees?

Overall, an estimated 34.5% of all Alaska firms offer insurance to employees. But the offer rates vary widely across firm size classes (Figure IV-1). Only 23.6% of very small firms (1-9 employees) offer health insurance, compared with 91.2% of large firms (100 or more employees).

Figure IV-1. Estimated Percentage of Alaska Firms Offering Health Insurance to Employees, 2013



Reasons Why Firms Don't Offer Health Insurance

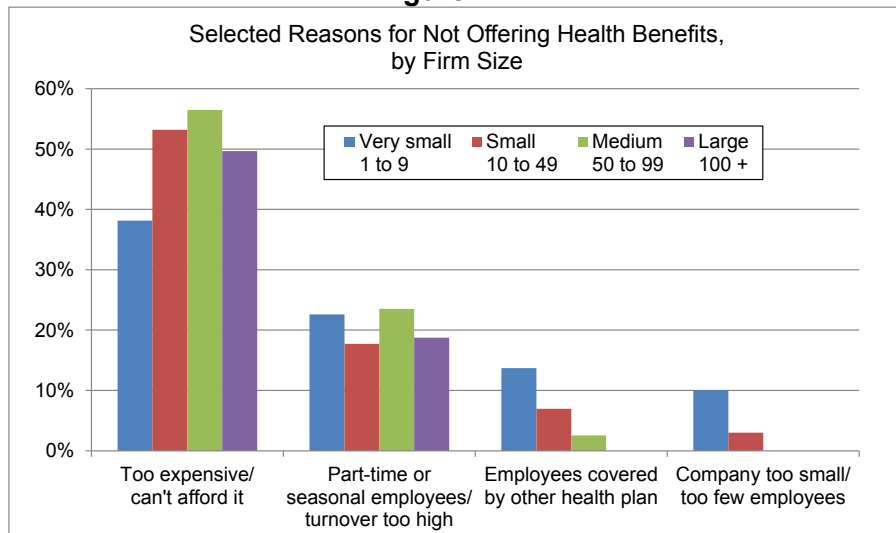
The second part of Question 6 asked firms not offering health benefits to say why not:

Please comment on why you do not offer health benefits or services.

Among firms not offering insurance, 23% did not cite any reason why (25% of very-small firms, 17% of small firms, 13% of medium firms, and 11% of large firms). Among those that did respond, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development grouped reasons into several categories. Figure IV-2 shows the four most common reasons given, by firm size, with percentages based just on those firms that answered the question.

The reason firms cite most often for not offering health insurance is high cost. The second is that employees are part-time or seasonal or turnover is too high. There was no clear correlation between reasons given for not offering health insurance and firm size—except that smaller firms are more likely to say that their employees are covered by other health plans.

Figure IV-2.



Note: The figure shows selected reasons for not offering health insurance, as coded by the Alaska Department of Labor, as a percentage of total reasons given (excluding firms that did not cite reasons).

Types of Health Benefits Offered

Question 7 of the survey asked in more detail about health insurance and other benefits offered to employees.

Which of the following benefits does your company offer your employees?

The question also asked employers to specify which employees were eligible for benefits (full-time, part-time, and temporary/seasonal), and whether the benefits were offered just to employees or to families of employees as well.

We found that among the firms providing health benefits, almost all offer benefits only to full-time employees; very few provide any health benefits to part-time or temporary workers. So in Tables IV-1 and IV-2 and Figure IV-3, we talk only about benefits offered to full-time employees. (Data on benefits provided to part-time and temporary workers are available from ISER on request.) Table IV-1 reports on benefits provided by all Alaska firms offering benefits; Table IV-2 provides more detail by size of firm.

Among all firms that provide any health benefits to their full-time employees, health insurance is by far the most common, followed by dental and vision insurance. About a third offer short- or long-term disability coverage, and about one-quarter provide health flexible spending or health reimbursement accounts. Of note is that the federal Affordable Care Act imposed a \$2,500 annual contribution limit on health flexible spending accounts, beginning December 2012. Before that, plan sponsors had the discretion to set limits on the amount of salary-reduction contributions employees could make.

Health reimbursement accounts (HRAs) are also an important mechanism for dealing with insurance coverage. In certain cases employers may not be large enough to qualify for the best rates for their employees' health insurance plans. Employees themselves may be able to locate plans suitable for their needs at a lower cost than the employer can, or employees may already have policies they want to keep. The Internal Revenue Service permits employers to reimburse employees for the cost of health expenses.¹ HRAs are considerably more likely to be coupled with high-deductible health plans. About 31% of firms offering only high-deductible plans use HRAs, while just 15% of firms offering only comprehensive plans provide that option.

Table IV-1. Estimated Percentage of Firms Offering Specific Health Benefits to Full-Time Employees, 2013
(Among Just Firms Offering Any Health Benefit)

Health Benefit	Percent Offering to Full-Time Workers	Percent Offering to Full-Time Workers and Their Families
Health insurance	83%	64%
Audio insurance	9%	9%
Dental insurance	68%	54%
Vision insurance	53%	45%
Employee assistance program (individual)	21%	19%
Short disability coverage	32%	16%
Long disability coverage	31%	17%
Long-term care insurance	6%	4%
Health Flexible Spending Account	27%	17%
Health Reimbursement Account	19%	13%
Salary bonus in lieu of health insurance	6%	1%
Contribution to a union health benefit	4%	4%
Directly purchase medical services	2%	1%
Directly provide medical Services	2%	1%

Table IV-2 shows, as we might expect, that larger firms are more likely to provide a number of health benefits, and to provide them to both employees and their families.

¹ <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/can-employer-reimburse-employee-health-insurance-20554.html>

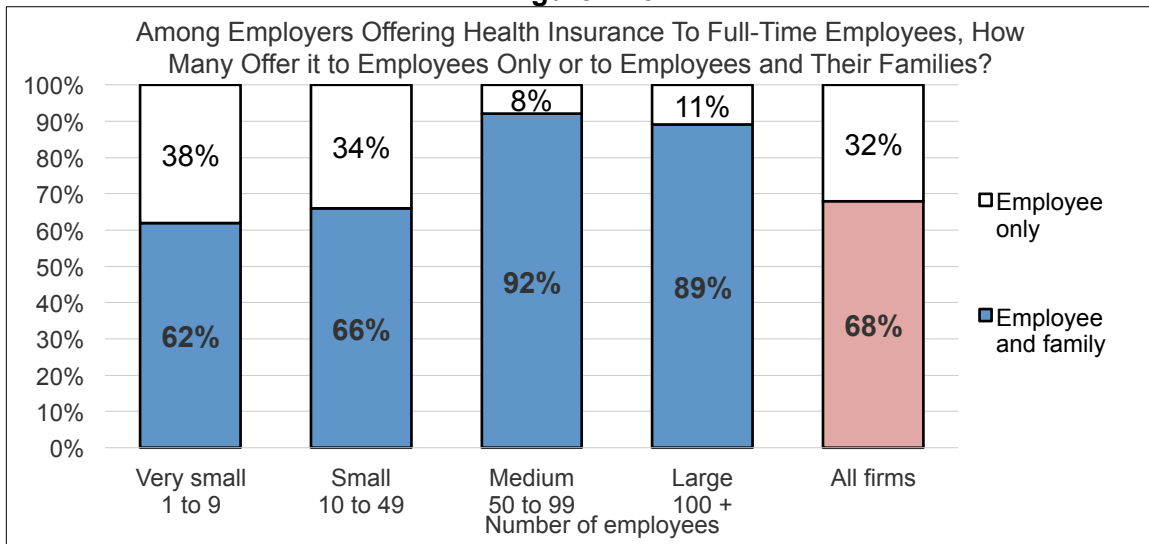
Table IV-2. Percent of Firms Offering Health Benefits to Full-Time Employees and Their Families, by Firm Size, 2013
(Among Just Firms Offering Any Health Benefit)

Type of Employee	Full-Time Employees				Full-Time Employees and Families			
	1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 99	100+	1 to 9	10 to 49	50 to 99	100+
Health Insurance	79%	87%	90%	90%	59%	63%	88%	89%
Audio	6%	10%	17%	18%	6%	9%	16%	18%
Dental	63%	69%	76%	86%	46%	55%	77%	85%
Vision	50%	51%	63%	76%	39%	44%	65%	77%
EAP	18%	17%	30%	46%	18%	15%	30%	42%
Short Term Disability	33%	27%	38%	47%	18%	11%	26%	21%
Long Term Disability	27%	31%	38%	57%	18%	14%	22%	26%
Long Term Care	7%	6%	5%	9%	4%	3%	3%	6%
Health Flexible Spending	28%	24%	26%	47%	15%	15%	23%	31%
Health Reimbursement	17%	20%	27%	24%	10%	13%	25%	165
Salary Bonus	5%	8%	3%	5%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Contribution to Union Health Trust	3%	4%	5%	8%	4%	4%	55	7%
Directly Purchase Services	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	2%
Directly Provide Services	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	1%	0%	2%

Looking just at health insurance, Figure IV-3 shows percentages of firms, by size, that offer insurance just to their full-time employees and to those employees and their families as well.

Overall, about one-third of firms that offer employee health insurance to full-time workers offer it to employees only and two-thirds offer it to their families as well. But just as the share of firms offering health benefits increases with firm size, so does the share of firms offering insurance to families of employees. Only 62% of the very small employers that offer insurance to full-time employees also offer it to families of their employees. By contrast, 92% of medium employers and 89% of large employers that offer insurance to their full-time employees also offer it to families of their employees.

Figure IV-3.



Types of Plans Offered

Figure IV-4 shows insurance plans offered by all the firms that provide employee health insurance. Nearly 80% offer only comprehensive plans. Another 13% offer only high-deductible plans, and 9% of firms offer both comprehensive and high-deductible plans. The remaining 5% includes all other types and combinations firms offer, including catastrophic coverage; see the note at the bottom of the figure.

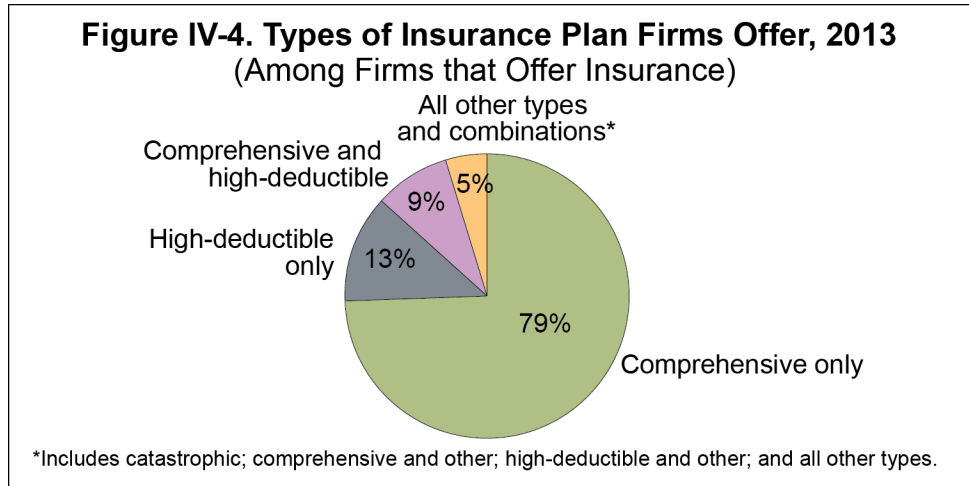


Table IV-3 shows more detail by size of firm. Most firms of all sizes—more than 70%—offer only comprehensive insurance plans. Smaller firms rely more on just high-deductible plans—around 15% among small and very small firms have only high-deductible plans, compared with 6% to 8% among medium and large firms. Very few firms of any size offer only catastrophic plans.

Table IV-3. Estimated Percentage of Firms Offering Various Insurance Plans, by Firm Size, 2013
(Among Firms Offering Health Insurance)

Size of Firm by Number of Employees	Comprehensive Only	High Deductible Only	Catastrophic Only	Other Only	Comprehensive and High Deductible	High Deductible and Other	Comprehensive and Other
1 to 9	72%	14%		2.3%	8.2%	1.1%	2.3%
10 to 49	74%	15%	.06%		8.4%		1.8%
50 to 99	76%	8%		1.3%	11%	1.3%	1.3%
100 +	76%	6%	.06%	.06%	6.1%	2.7%	2.7%

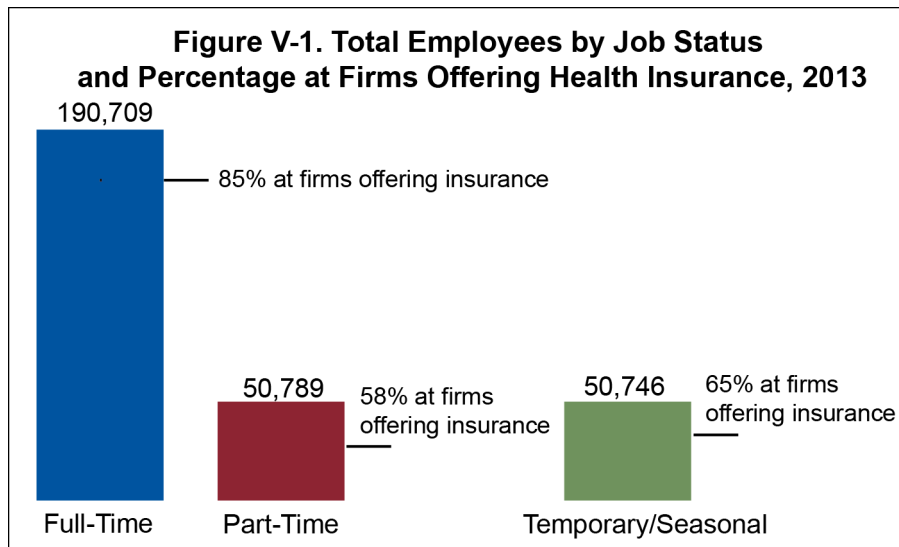
V. Employee Coverage, Eligibility, and Participation

In the previous chapter we talked about the percentage of employers providing health benefits to their employees, and how many provide specific benefits. In this chapter we look at health-insurance coverage from the standpoint of employees. The figures are based on some of the information we asked for in question 10 of the survey: the number of eligible employees, the number actually carrying the insurance, and the kinds of coverage they carried.

More than 292,000 employees work at firms covered in the survey; Figure V-1 shows their employment status and the percentages working at firms that offer insurance.

About 65% of all employees are full-time, and the other 35% are just about equally divided between part-time and temporary workers.

Overall, 76% of employees work at firms that offer health insurance. Among the 190,907 full-time employees, 161,728—85%—work at firms that offer health insurance, but just 58% of part-time workers and 65% percent of temporary/seasonal employees are at firms offering health insurance.



Employees at Firms Offering Health Insurance

Figure V-2 reports percentages of employees, by work status and firm size, who work for firms offering health insurance. Table V-1 provides the numbers behind the percentages.

The figure and table tell us that employees of very small firms—even if they work full-time—are far less likely to be offered health insurance than employees of larger firms. Only half the full-time workers at the smallest firms have employers offering health insurance, compared with more than 90% at medium and large firms.

Part-time and seasonal employees at firms of any size—except the largest—are less likely to have employers who offer health insurance. But again, the shares are smallest at very small firms—where only 20% of part-time workers and 15% of temporary workers have employers that offer health insurance. By contrast, most of the part-time and seasonal employees at large firms have employers that offer health insurance (but as we will discuss below, that doesn't necessarily mean they are eligible for that insurance).

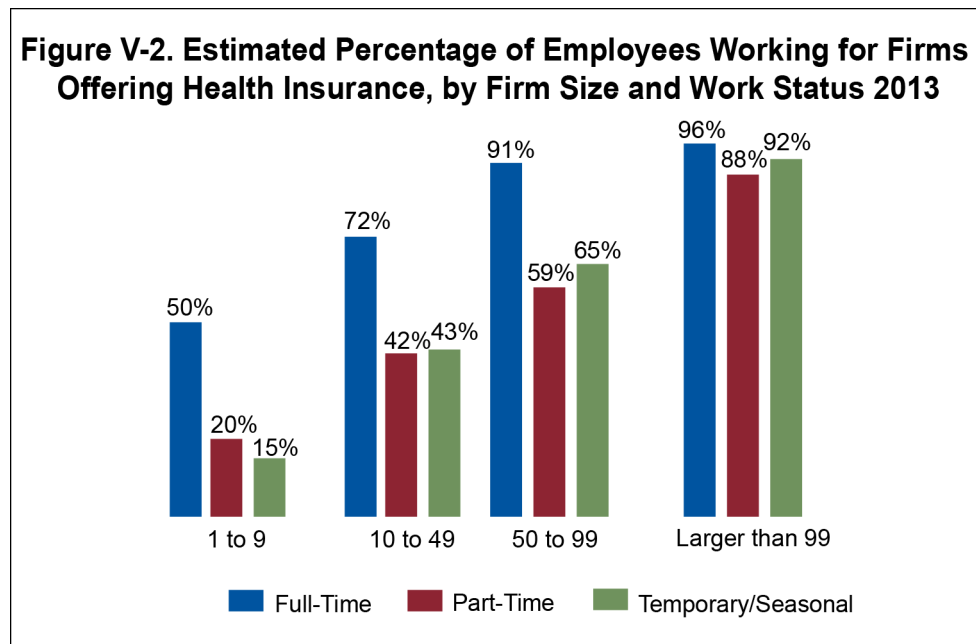


Table V-1. Total Employees and Employees at Firms Providing Health Insurance, By Firm Size and Work Status, 2013

Size of Firm by Number of Employees	Type of Employee			Type of Employee at Insurance Providing Firms		
	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary
1 to 9	22,065	9,681	6,618	10,929	1,891	1,002
10 to 49	44,244	14,485	14,267	32,000	6,112	6,143
50 to 99	21,062	5,578	6,124	19,255	3,271	3,972
100+	103,337	21,046	23,737	99,544	18,480	21,857
Total	190,709	50,790	50,746	161,728	29,754	32,974

Eligibility for and Enrollment in Employer-Sponsored Insurance

Figure V-3 shows the big picture of how the numbers shrink as we move from total employees at all firms to employees at firms offering insurance, to employees eligible for that insurance, to employees who actually carry that insurance.

As we discussed above, nearly 77% of all employees work for firms that offer insurance. But only about 56% are eligible for that insurance—and only 35% carry it.

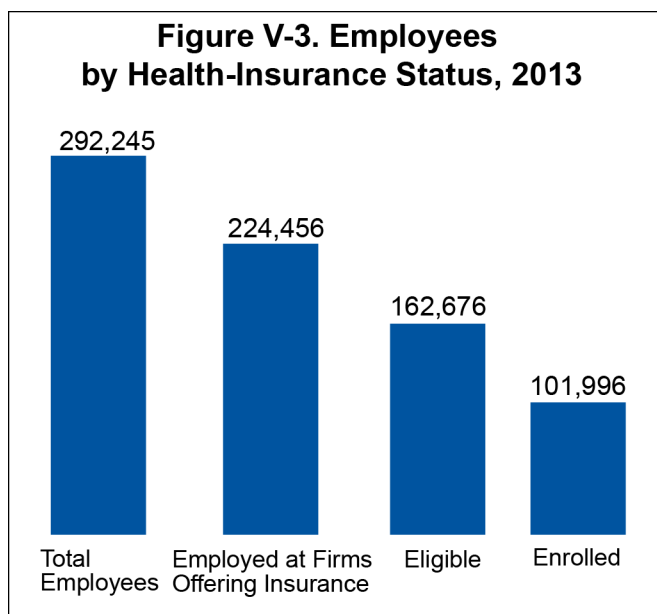
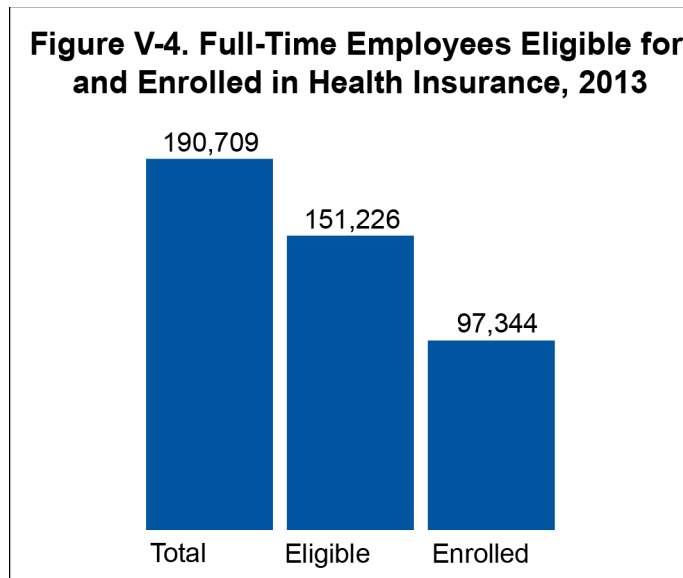


Table V-2 breaks out eligibility and enrollment by work status. Part-time and temporary/seasonal employees account for 101,536, or 35% of total employment, but only 11,448 of them were eligible for insurance—and of those 4,649 were actually enrolled. So in 2013, only 11% of seasonal or part-time employees had the opportunity to enroll in employer-based health insurance programs—and less than 5% carried that insurance.

Table V-2. Eligibility and Enrollment by Employment Status, 2013

	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary	Total
Overall Labor Force	190,709	50,790	50,746	292,245
Employed at Firms Offering Benefits	161,728	29,754	32,974	224,456
Eligible for Insurance	151,226	9,559	1,891	162,676
Enrolled	97,344	3,737	915	101,996

A comparison of the numbers in Table V-2 and Figure V-4 makes it clear that full-time workers make up overwhelming shares of both those eligible for and enrolled in employer-sponsored insurance programs: 93% of those eligible, and 95% of those enrolled.



Waiting Period for Insurance

How long employees have to work at a firm before becoming eligible for health insurance may partly explain why so few seasonal employees are eligible, even if they work full-time. The survey asked employers how long they required employees to work for them before becoming eligible for health insurance. Table V-3 shows no major differences by firm size in waiting periods for health insurance. In the range of 40% of firms of all sizes have waiting periods of just 30 days, but another third have waiting periods up to 90 days—and temporary or seasonal workers may not work that long.

Table V-3. Waiting Period For Full-Time Employee Eligibility for Health Insurance At Firms of Different Sizes, 2013
(Among Firms Offering Health Insurance)

Length of Waiting Period	0-30 days	31 to 60 days	61 to 90 days	91 to 180 days	181 to 365 days	366 or more days	Unknown
Size of firm							
1 or 9	45%	13%	32%	7%	3%	0%	1%
10 to 49	36%	11%	40%	10%	3%	1%	1%
50 to 99	40%	17%	33%	8%	0%	1%	1%
Larger than 99	48%	19%	23%	9%	1%	0%	1%
Total	41%	13%	34%	8%	3%	0%	1%

Types of Insurance Plans Employees Carry

Of the nearly 102,000 employees who carry employer-sponsored health insurance, what kinds of insurance do they carry? Figure V-5 shows that 79% carry comprehensive insurance, 18% high-deductible plans, less than 1% catastrophic plans, and 2% other plans.

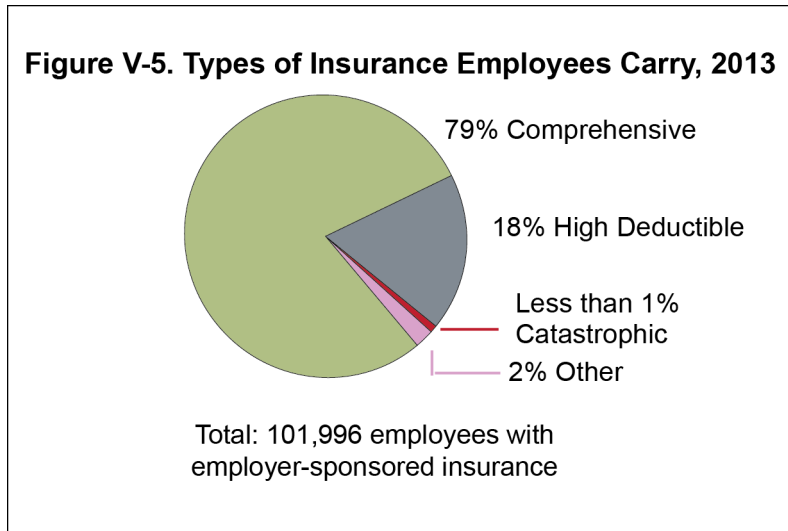


Table V-4 provides details about eligible and enrolled employees, by their work status, the type of coverage they carry, and size of firms they work for. Overall, among those employees eligible for insurance, nearly 64% of eligible full-time employees, 39% of eligible part-time employees, and 48% of eligible temporary employees are enrolled in their employers' plans.

There were no significant differences in enrollment among full-time employees eligible for comprehensive plans at firms of different sizes: more than 70% of those at firms of all sizes enrolled.

Full-time employees eligible for high-deductible plans in very small firms are more likely to enroll—77% at the smallest firms, compared with 43% in large firms. The same is true among those eligible for other types of plans at smaller firms; only 35% of those eligible for other plans at the largest firms are enrolled, compared with half in smaller firms. But keep in mind that the overall numbers eligible for catastrophic and other plans are small.

Table V-4. Employees Eligible for and Enrolled in Employer-Sponsored Insurance, by Type of Insurance, Work Status of Employee, and Firm Size, 2013

Type of Plan	Eligible			Enrolled			Of those Eligible, Percent Enrolled		
	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary	Full Time	Part Time	Temporary
Size of Firm									
Comprehensive									
1 to 9	4,516	94	57	3,533	57	19	78%	60%	33%
10 to 49	22,447	2,544	509	17,000	1,142	218	76%	45%	43%
50 to 99	14,065	1,590	428	10,504	135	420	75%	8%	98%
Larger >100	66,003	2,437	713	46,637	1,120	198	71%	46%	28%
High Deductible									
1 to 9	1,077	19	76	831	0	0	77%	0%	0%
10 to 49	6,250	2,180	31	3,935	1,090	0	63%	50%	0%
50 to 99	3,463	61	0	1,544	20	0	45%	33%	N.A
Larger >100	25,568	486	3	10,910	160	3	43%	33%	100%
Catastrophic									
1 to 9				57					
10 to 49	395			208			53%		
50 to 99									
Larger >100	5,820	112		300	10		5%	9%	
Other Plan									
1 to 9	151	0	76	76	0	57	50%		75%
10 to 49	779	0	0	426	0	0	55%		
50 to 99	693	36	0	380	0	0	55%	0%	
Larger >100	2,858	87	0	1,004	3	0	35%	3%	
Totals	151,226	9,558	1,890	97,344	3,737	915	63.71%	39.07%	48.39%

VI. Cost of Health Insurance and Funding

Here we first report on the average costs of employer-sponsored health insurance, and what shares employers and employees pay. This information comes from responses to question 10 of the survey, which asked for a broad range of information about employees eligible for coverage, kinds of plans available, and costs of that insurance. Then we look at how employers fund their health insurance plans: how many pay premiums to insurance companies, and how many are self-funded?

The Complexity of Health-Insurance Premiums

Before we talk about the average health-insurance premiums Alaska employers and employees pay, it's important to explain that these "average" premiums are based on a broad range of actual premiums individual employers reported paying in 2013—and those premiums depend on the different market conditions they face. In general:

- *Larger firms with more employees are better able to negotiate lower premiums and offer multiple types of insurance plans.* That's because having a bigger pool of insured employees spreads the financial risks: some employees may have high medical costs, but many others will have lower costs.
- *Smaller firms with few employees typically face higher premiums*—because the financial risks fall on much smaller pools of insured employees.
- *Individual firms may pay different premiums for essentially the same insurance coverage, depending not only on the number but also the characteristics of their employees.* In setting premiums, insurance companies assess their risks—and set their premiums—by taking into account things like the age of employees (older people typically have higher medical costs) and their medical histories (people with chronic medical conditions like diabetes or heart disease have higher medical costs).
- *"Comprehensive" and "high-deductible" insurance plans are not all the same.* A plan that's called comprehensive may cover more or fewer medical services at different firms. And a high deductible—which employees have to pay before insurance begins paying—also varies, with some much higher than others.

Average 2013 Premiums

Table VI-1 shows average premiums for the main types of health insurance Alaska firms offered their employees in 2013. Most employers who provide insurance (73%) offer only comprehensive plans, 13% offer only high-deductible plans, and 9% offer both comprehensive and high-deductible plans. The remaining 5% of firms (not shown in the table) offer a variety of other types of and combinations of plans.

- *The majority of firms providing employee insurance offer just comprehensive plans, and they include firms of different sizes.* In 2013, the monthly premiums at firms offering only comprehensive plans averaged \$852 for employee-only coverage and \$1,829 for family coverage. But keep in mind that "comprehensive" coverage can vary among firms.

- *Firms offering both comprehensive and high-deductible plans with lower premiums are mainly larger employers with bigger risk pools and more negotiating power.* The average premium for employee-only comprehensive coverage at firms offering both comprehensive and high-deductible plans was \$598 in 2013, and the premium for employee and family coverage was \$1,642. The average employee-only premium for high-deductible plans was \$489 and for employee and family coverage the premium averaged \$1,467.

- *Firms offering just high-deductible plans with higher premiums are most likely small employers.* Those premiums averaged \$1,421 for employees only and \$1,465 for employee and family coverage in 2013.

How is the Cost Shared?

Costs of health insurance are shared between Alaska employers and employees, but the employer share is higher.

- *For insurance covering just themselves, employees paid anywhere from about 13% to 20% of the total premium in 2013, depending on the kinds of plans they carried.*

- *For insurance covering both themselves and their families, employees paid roughly 28% to 50% of the premium, again depending on the kinds of plans they carried.*

Table VI-1. Average Premiums, by Selected Type of Plan and Employer and Employee Shares, 2013
(Among Firms Offering Insurance)

		Comprehensive Premium				High Deductible Premium			
Type of Plan	% of Firms	Individual		Family		Individual		Family	
		Overall	Emp. Share	Overall	Emp. Share	Overall	Emp. Share	Overall	Emp. Share
Comprehensive Only	73%	\$852	\$108	\$1829	\$513	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
High Deductible Only	13%	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	\$1,421	\$240	\$1,465	\$746
Comprehensive and High Deductible	9%	\$598	\$123	\$1,642	\$447	\$489	\$67	\$1,467	\$516

How Do Firms Pay for Health Insurance?

Firms that offer health insurance can either pay premiums to insurance companies, or they can fund the costs themselves. Table VI-2 shows the share of firms that carry coverage through insurance companies and the share that funds the costs themselves.

Table VI-2. Percentages of Firms Insured and Self-Funded, 2013

Size of Firm by Number of Employees	Percent Insured	Percent Self-Funded	No Response
1 to 9	79%	10%	10%
10 to 49	83%	9%	8%
50 to 99	76%	21%	1%
100+	60%	37%	3%
Total	79%	12%	8%

Overall, 79% of Alaska firms that offer health insurance pay insurance companies for that insurance, 12% self-fund; and the remaining 8% didn't respond to that survey question.

But the bigger the firm the more likely they are to self-fund: more than a third of the large Alaska firms self-fund, compared with just 10% of the very small firms. From an Alaska standpoint, it will be interesting to see if more firms elect to self-fund in the future, given that the Affordable Care Act exempts such plans from many of its reforms—creating an incentive for employers looking to avoid complying with the law's consumer-protection provisions.

VII. Wellness Programs and Consumer Information

Nationwide, many companies offering their employees health insurance are also trying to hold down insurance costs by providing “wellness” programs, and also by including in their insurance plans various measures—often called “consumer information”—to encourage employees to control their own spending for health care.

Worksite wellness programs are becoming increasingly popular nationwide. These programs offer employees various options intended to help them stay or get healthier—like providing health-risk assessments or health coaches, or offering them money to lose weight or quit smoking.

Consumer information—with employees being the consumers—can include offering employees comparative information about the quality and cost of medical services at different facilities; reimbursing employees for traveling to less-costly places; or having lower employee co-pays if they use primary-care facilities rather than emergency rooms. A 2014 survey by Towers Watson (a company offering businesses various consulting services) estimated that nearly half of large U.S. companies were including consumer-information provisions in their health-insurance plans.

The Alaska Health Care Commission was interested in learning how many Alaska firms offer their employees either wellness programs or consumer information.

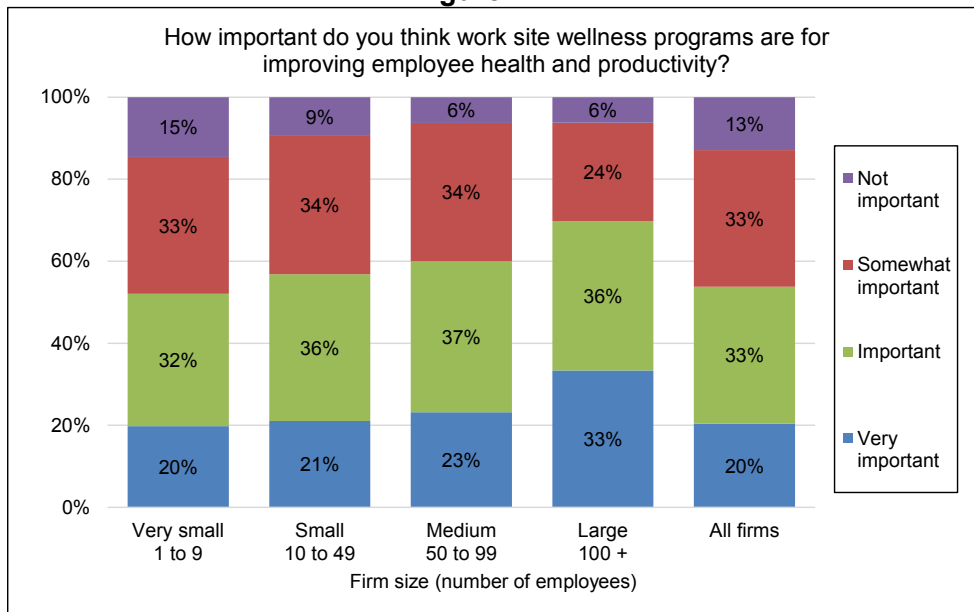
Wellness Programs

Question 4 of our survey asked:

How important do you think work site wellness programs are for improving employee health and productivity?

More than half of all Alaska firms say that wellness programs are either very important or important; only 13% rate wellness programs as “not important” (Figure VIII-1). Larger firms are more likely to rate wellness programs as “very important.”

Figure VII-1.



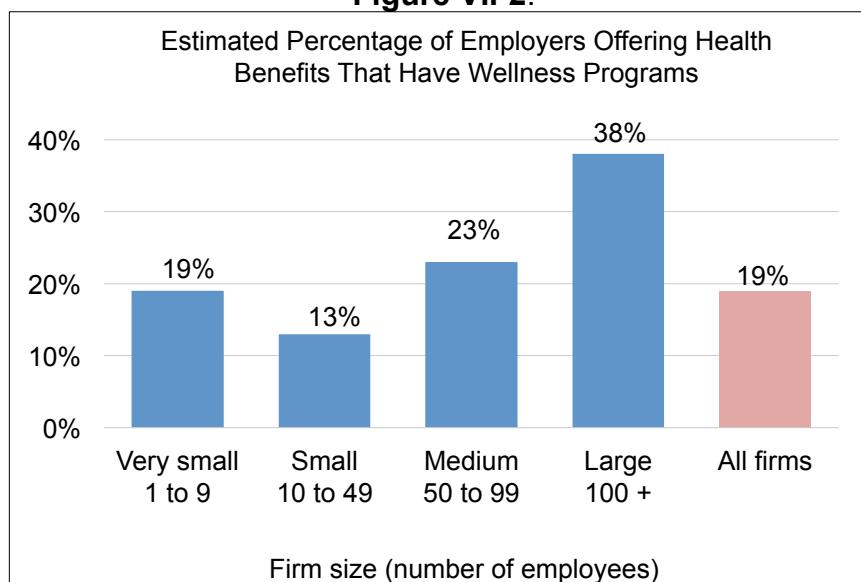
So clearly, most Alaska firms believe employee wellness programs are at least somewhat important. But when asked if they actually had any wellness programs, the percentage became much smaller. Question 5a of the survey asked:

Does your company have a work site wellness program?

The question was asked of all Alaska firms, regardless of whether they provide any health benefits, but we found that with very few exceptions, only firms that provide health insurance offer wellness programs—essentially, wellness programs are a form of health benefit among firms that provide health insurance. Figure VII-2 shows percentages of just those firms offering health insurance that also have wellness programs.

About 19% of the Alaska firms offering health benefits also have wellness programs, but that figure is considerably larger among the largest companies; 38% of the firms with more than 100 employees offer wellness programs. This finding is similar to what we found for firms providing health insurance: the largest employers are far more likely to provide insurance.

Figure VII-2.



How do those figures compare with national figures? The Kaiser Foundation’s 2013 Employer Health Survey found that overall, 77% of firms offering health insurance provide some wellness program. Again, as in Alaska, large firms nationwide (classified as those with 200 or more employees) are more likely to provide wellness programs—99%, compared with 76% among smaller firms.²

But it’s important to keep in mind, when making comparisons between Alaska and the U.S. as a whole, that while Alaska does have some “large” firms, it does not have the extremely large firms that exist in the Lower 48—and those very large firms nationwide, while limited in number, employ a bigger proportion of workers.

² <http://kff.org/report-section/ehbs-2013-section-12/>

Question 5a asked firms to rate the effectiveness of their wellness programs:

In general, how effective has your work site wellness program been in achieving its goals?

Among the Alaska firms that do offer wellness programs, three-quarters rate them as at least somewhat effective (Table VII-1).

Table VII-1. Percentage of Firms Rating Wellness Programs as Effective
(Among Firms Offering Wellness Programs in 2013)

Effective	Somewhat Effective	Ineffective	No Response	Unknown
25%	50%	8%	11%	5%

Question 5b asked firms for more specifics about the kinds of wellness programs they offer; Figure VII-3 shows the most common wellness programs, offered to full-time employees and their families, among firms offering any wellness programs. The share of firms providing any wellness programs to family members of employees is small, between 7% and 14%. Most commonly offered to employees is the personal health risk assessment, with 50% of the firms offering such assessments. Next are biometric screenings, offered employees by 38% of firms. About 29% offer employees personal health coaches, and 21% offer financial incentives to employees who take steps to improve their health.

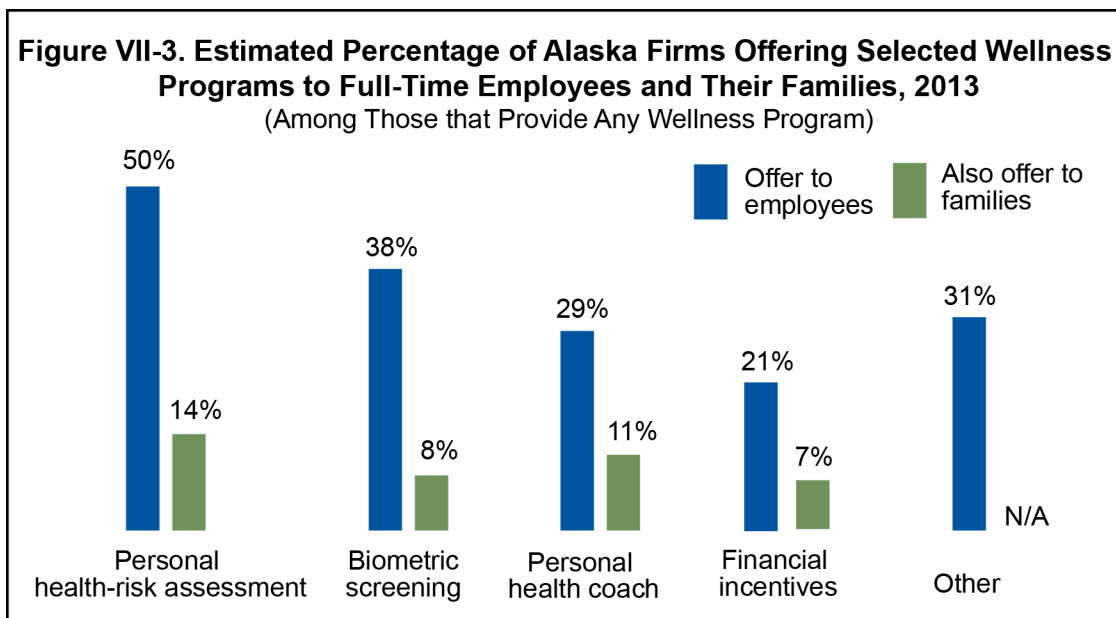
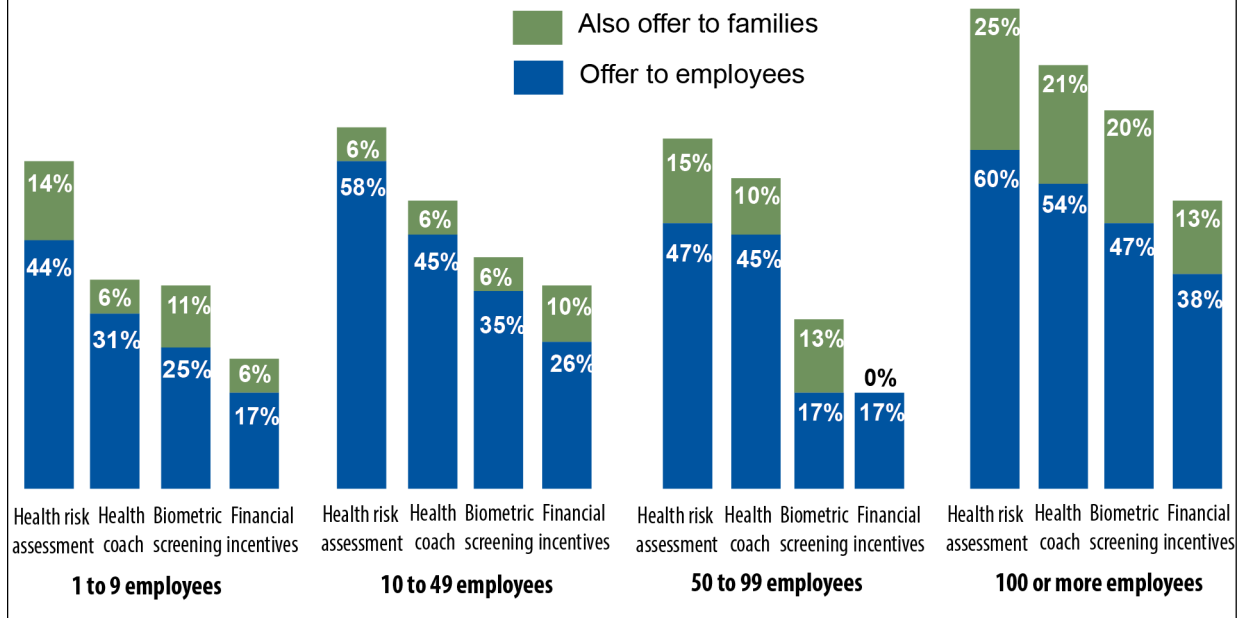


Figure VII-4 provides more detail about how many firms of different sizes offer specific wellness programs to full-time employees and their families. Once again, as we found with employee health insurance, larger firms are more likely to offer wellness programs, and to offer them to employees and their families. But in firms of all size, family members are considerably less likely to have access to employer-sponsored wellness programs.

Figure VII-4. Estimated Percentage of Firms, by Size, Offering Selected Wellness Programs to Full-Time Employees and Their Families, 2013
(Among Firms that Provide Any Wellness Programs)



Consumer Information

Markets operate best when both buyers and sellers have the information necessary to make good decisions. Unfortunately, that has not generally been true of U.S. health-care markets, where average Americans (buyers) have not been able to easily get information about the comparative cost and quality of health-care services at different hospitals and other facilities.

A number of states have tried to remedy that situation by enacting provisions for public reporting of price and quality of health care. Alaska is not so far one of those states. But in question 11 of our survey, we asked employers not only about whether they offered employees comparative price and quality information, but also about incentives to employees to hold down their health-care spending. Table VII-2 shows how many of all firms that provide any health benefit also provide full-time employees with consumer information.

Table VII-2. Estimated Percentage of Firms Offering Full-Time Employees Consumer Information, 2013
(Among Firms Offering any Health Benefit)

Type of Consumer Information	Yes	No	No Response
Primary Co-pay Differential	28%	60%	12%
Medical Travel Reimbursement	15%	72%	12%
Centers for Medical Excellence	12%	75%	13%
Price Transparency	15%	71%	13%
Quality Transparency	12%	75%	13%
Patient Decision Support	15%	71%	14%

We found that 15% of Alaska firms offering health benefits give employees information about prices at different facilities, and 12% offer information about comparative quality of services. The most commonly used incentive to employees to hold down their spending is a lower co-pay for employees who use primary-care providers rather than the more expensive specialty-care providers or emergency rooms—28% of firms report using differential co-pays.

About 15% of firms say they reimburse travel expenses of employees who travel outside their community to receive health care, and 15% also offer access to patient-decision support—information or advice about the effectiveness of specific tests and procedures. About 12% offer special financial arrangements for employees who use Centers for Medical Excellence, which are hospitals or medical centers that have been identified as providing high-quality, cost-efficient care for specific procedures.

Table VII-3 provides more detail, by firm size, on how many offer firms their full-time employees specific kinds of consumer information or incentives. In general, the larger employers are more likely to offer all kinds of information and incentives. The exception is that the largest employers are no more likely than the smallest to offer employees comparative information about the quality of services.

The most commonly offered incentive among employers of all sizes is the differential co-pay, but the share offering that incentive varies from 28% among the smallest firms to 41% among the largest. The large firms are by far more likely to reimburse employees for traveling outside their community for medical care, or for getting care at Centers for Medical Excellence.

We should note that while employers hope offering their employees various kinds of consumer information will help hold down health-care costs, these efforts are relatively new—and so far there is insufficient evidence about whether they actually do help hold down costs.

Table VII-3. Estimated Percentage of Firms, by Size, Offering Full-Time Employees Consumer Information, 2013
(Among Firms Offering any Health Benefit)

Number of Employees	1 to 9			10 to 49			50 to 99			Larger than 99		
Type of Consumer Information	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response	Yes	No	No Response
Primary co-pay Differential	28%	58%	12%	23%	64%	11%	32%	60%	7%	41%	49%	9%
Medical Travel Reimbursement	11%	74%	14%	13%	75%	11%	30%	61%	8%	40%	5%	9%
Centers for Medical Excellence	9%	75%	14%	12%	76%	12%	13%	77%	9%	29%	60%	10%
Price Transparency	16%	69%	15%	10%	75%	13%	16%	75%	9%	26%	62%	11%
Quality Transparency	16%	69%	15%	6%	80%	13%	8%	82%	10%	15%	74%	10%
Patient Decision Support	17%	68%	15%	09%	78%	13%	19%	70%	10%	27%	60%	12%

VIII. Comparing the 2006 and 2013 Surveys

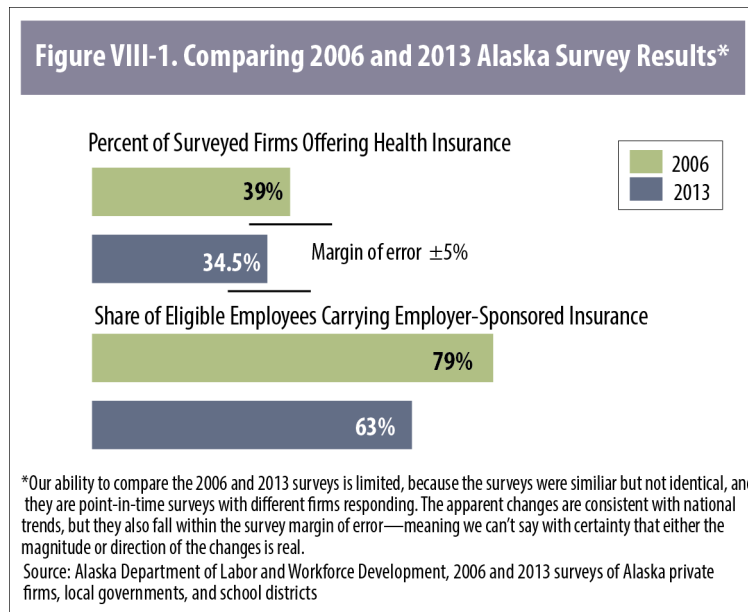
In 2006, the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development conducted a similar but not identical survey as it did in 2013. Both surveys capture points in time, with different firms responding and likely a different composition of firms; they asked slightly different questions; and they used different periods of employment. That last difference can influence the results because the number and make-up of the Alaska work force varies considerably during the year.

So we have to take care in making comparisons—but it's useful to look at a couple of important findings, to see if they can tell us anything about whether Alaska is following the national trends of fewer employers offering health insurance and fewer employees carrying it.

Figure VIII-1 compares the percentage of firms offering health insurance, and the percentage of eligible employees carrying that insurance, in 2006 and 2013. It looks as if the share of firms offering health insurance may have fallen, but we can't say that with certainty—because the results fall within the margin of error for the surveys.

Both surveys have a margin or error of $\pm 5\%$ —meaning that if the department could have gotten responses from all Alaska firms (which would be almost impossible), rather than just a sample of firms, the results would likely have been within 5% (higher or lower).

The estimated percentages of firms offering health insurance fall within that margin of error—so in fact there may be very little difference in the true figures for 2006 and 2013. It does look as if the share of eligible employees carrying insurance through their employers is down—but a future survey could help confirm whether that trend is real.



IX. Conclusions

Keep in mind that the structure of the Alaska economy has a big influence on health-insurance coverage. A number of big industries (including the seafood industry) are seasonal; there are many small businesses and very few large ones; and a big share of the state's workers are in service industries, which are less likely to offer insurance. These things won't change any time soon.

This report provides a snapshot of employer-sponsored health insurance and other health benefits among more than 15,000 businesses, local governments, and school districts in Alaska as of 2013. That snapshot is based on a representative sample of all those employers—but because it is based on a sample, it is subject to error. So all the figures presented are estimates. We believe that if the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development been able to get responses from all 15,000 employers—an almost impossible job—the results would have been within 5% (higher or lower) than our estimates.

It looks as if Alaska may be following the national trends toward fewer employers offering health insurance and fewer employers carrying it, but the margin of error on our results means that only future surveys can confirm if those trends are real. It will be important to monitor future changes, because employer-sponsored insurance remains by far the largest single source of coverage for Alaskans and other Americans. This survey can also serve as a benchmark for understanding if and how employer-based insurance in Alaska changes, as more provisions of the Affordable Care Act go into effect in the coming years. The major findings of our survey include:

- Two-thirds of Alaska firms don't offer their employees health insurance, and the reason they most commonly cite comes as no surprise: it's too expensive. The Kaiser Foundation reports that as of 2012 Alaska had the highest health-insurance premiums in the country. And even after an adjustment for inflation, insurance premiums in Alaska were up 60% between 2001 and 2012, according to data from the federal Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS).
- Among the one-third of Alaska firms that do offer health insurance, they offer it mostly to full-time employees. Very few of Alaska's part-time and seasonal workers are eligible for insurance through their own employers, even though together part-time and seasonal workers make up about 35% of all employees covered by this survey.
- Almost all of Alaska's largest firms—more than 90%—do offer health insurance. But the majority of Alaska firms are very small; only about 24% of those firms offer insurance; and only about 15% of their employees are eligible for that insurance.
- Many of the employees who are eligible for insurance through their employers don't carry it. There are likely many reasons why—including the cost of their share of the premiums, or coverage through a spouse or other family member. But this was a survey of employers, not employees: we weren't able to ask employees themselves their reasons for not carrying the insurance.
- Most Alaska employers believe wellness programs could help improve the health and productivity of their employees—but among those offering health insurance, only about 19% offer any wellness programs. The largest employers that offer health insurance are more likely to have wellness programs, with 38% offering some type of wellness program.
- Some Alaska firms are attempting to hold down costs by giving their employees comparative information about the cost and quality of services at different medical facilities, or offering employees incentives—like lower insurance co-pays—for using primary-care facilities whenever possible rather than the more expensive specialty or emergency facilities. But so far there is insufficient evidence about whether these efforts are helping contain costs.

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Appendix A. Survey Questionnaire:
Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
2013 Health Care Benefit Survey for Alaska Employers

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
2013 Health Care Benefit Survey for Alaska Employers

1 Company ID and contact information of the person completing this survey:

Company ID:	Name:	Phone number:
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2 Is your company/ organization a non profit?

Yes No

3 How many employees worked for your company during the pay period that included July 12, 2013?

Full-time 30+ hours per week year-round	Part-time Less than 30 hours per week year-round	Temporary/Seasonal

4 How important do you think work site wellness programs are for improving employee health and productivity?
(choose one)

Very important
 Important
 Somewhat important
 Not important

5 Does your company have a work site wellness program(s)? *(check one)*

Yes →
 No: *Continue to Question 6*

5a In general, how effective has your work site wellness program been in achieving its goals?
(check one)
 Effective
 Somewhat effective
 Ineffective
 Unknown

5b Please check if you offer any of the following as part of your work site wellness program.
(check all that apply)

	Individual	Family
Personal health risk assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biometric screening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Services of a personal health coach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial incentives for achievement of a personal health target <i>Example: Reaching a weight or cholesterol target or quitting tobacco</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please describe)		

Glossary available online at laborstats.alaska.gov/healthsurvey/healthdefin.htm

6 Does your company offer health insurance or health-related benefits/services for any of your employees?

Yes: *Continue to Question 7*
 No → Please comment on why you do not offer health benefits or services.

7 Which of the following benefits does your company offer your employees? (check all that apply)

Glossary available online at laborstats.alaska.gov/healthsurvey/healthdefin.htm

	Full-time 30+ hours per week year-round		Part-time Less than 30 hours per week year-round		Temporary/ Seasonal	
	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family
Health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Audio insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dental insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vision insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Short-term disability coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long-term disability coverage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long-term care insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health flexible spending account	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health reimbursement account	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salary bonus to support individual health insurance plan purchase in lieu of company-provided health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contribution to a union health benefits trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Directly purchase medical services for your employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Directly provide medical services to your employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you **DO NOT** provide health insurance coverage, you have completed the survey. Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Please return by mail or fax to (907) 523-9654.

If you provide health insurance for your employees, please continue to question 8.

8 Are your employee health insurance plan(s) fully insured or self-funded by your company? (check one)

Insured: Where the employer purchases or provides insurance coverage from a licensed insurance company and the insurance company is liable for employee insurance claims

Self-funded: Where employers underwrite their own risk and are liable for employee insurance claims even though they may contract with an insurer or other third party to process claims

9 How long must an employee work at your company before he or she is eligible for health insurance benefit plan enrollment?

	Full-time 30+ hours per week year-round	Part-time Less than 30 hours per week year-round	Temporary/Seasonal
Length of wait			

Additional comments

10

Please provide the following information for the health plans you offer. If the total premium or share paid by the employee varies, please use the comment section to provide more information.

Glossary available online at laborstats.alaska.gov/healthsurvey/healthdefin.htm

				Comprehensive health plan		High deductible plan with health savings account		Catastrophic health plan		Other	
Full-time 30+ hours per week year-round	Number of Employees	Eligible									
		Enrolled									
			Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	
	Total premium										
	Share paid by the employee										
Part-time Less than 30 hours per week year-round	Number of Employees	Eligible									
		Enrolled									
			Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	
	Total premium										
	Share paid by the employee										
Temporary/ Seasonal	Number of Employees	Eligible									
		Enrolled									
			Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	Individual	Family	
	Total premium										
	Share paid by the employee										

Additional Comments:

11

Do you provide any of the following services or health plan features or include them in the design of any of your health plans?

	Yes	No
Primary Care Co-Payment Differential to encourage the use of primary care over specialty services and/or emergency room usage: For example, lower co-pay required for primary care visit compared to co-pay required for specialty or ER care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Travel Reimbursement: Reimbursement for employees to travel at the health plan's expense to receive services outside the plan member's community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Centers of Excellence: Special financial arrangements for particular procedures with hospitals or medical centers identified as providing high quality, cost-efficient care for those procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Price Transparency: Employees receive information on the price of medical services available from different health care providers. For example, an Internet-based tool that lists the prices of services offered by hospitals and/or doctors, including information on the plan member's associated out-of-pocket cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality Transparency: Employees receive information on the quality of medical services available from different health care providers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patient Decision Support: Access to information/or advice on the effectiveness of tests and procedures for which high-quality evidence is available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B. Open-Ended Survey Responses (Verbatim)

Responses to Question 6: Please comment on why you do not offer health benefits or services.

Insurance Through Another Source

We have asked all our employees and they declined due to having insurance through their spouses or other.

We looked into it in the past and employees opted not to utilize them mostly due to having coverage through other means

Employees take care of their own health ins

Self owned corporation and we pay for our health insurance personally rather than the corp

Most employees have health insurance through unions. The non-union employees are offered insurance through parent company.

I am covered under HIS

Union Shop. We pay the Union and the Union provides the health insurance benefits.

Must have their own

We offer a monthly contribution to assist employees in purchasing their own health coverage.

We are covered under some other plan

Company reimburses individuals for their private insurance

My employees are all young and would rather have higher wages than insurance benefits. Some of them purchase their own health insurance.

Looking Into It

We are looking into it

Not yet, working on it

We have not applied for health benefits yet for our employees. Hopefully soon

Researching to see what kind of affordable insurance we can find our employees. Do you have any ideas where we can go.

Costs

It costs money we don't have

It does not pay my employees to get insurance at \$200 per month and have a \$5000 deductible and only 60% is covered.

We are a contract government facility and the US government is not willing to compensate for medical

Non profit, do not have the funding

As a non profit we do not have the funds to offer health ins.

No funding available because of limited monies received to run tribal office

Not enough budget for such benefit

Unable to fund group insurance

Our business operates on a 4 % margin if they are lucky...one more expense would force most of our industry to operate in the red

Medicaid does not pay the agency enough to pay for health ins.

We are a federally recognized tribe that receives grants for funding.

We operate under grant funding

Non profit with limited budget

Don't have the money to do it

Unable to fit into our budget

We do not make enough. Profit margins are narrow. Employees want money and major medical

Our company has a very small profit margin due to providing Medicaid services with fixed rates.

With the cost of workman's compensation insurance for our industry plus other payroll burdens it is not affordable for us to provide insurance.

Caregiving services bill at a very low rate compared to employee expense. Very low margins in this industry. Without an increase in the billable rates or a significant decrease in wages the expense of providing health insurance is unattainable.

This is a remote village where economy is depressed, revenues limited, annual losses, other income not stable but keep company going.
To full time employees health reimbursement cost
New company that is still not profitable to have additional costs

Not Enough Employees or Length of Operation

Unavailable to group of 1.
Only one full time employee
One employee
We have 1 employee
No employees in Alaska in 2013
No long term employees
Small self-employed [company] with seasonal employees as needed
AK employees are intermittent. Intra-company transferees from Japan.
Seasonal business in operation less than 90 days per year
Not enough employees or hours worked
We have 5 employees. We are awarded contracts as lowest bid. When you have to have the lowest bid NO benefits
Under 50 full time employees
Seasonal employer

No Interest, No Need, Not Required

Not required
No demand
Most employees are high school students 17-18 yrs old and leave after graduation
No need to
Most employees live at home with parents
Employees were not interested
Does not need to offer
Cannot waste time or money

Type of Company/Firm or Timing in the Firm's Development

WE ARE A HOMEOWNERS ASSOC
"Startup company, looking forward to picking up coverage in the future
Retirement, Dr. retired 1/20/13

Other

No comment, I am sick and tired of the d*&^ surveys
Household staff only
Never have
It is not a benefit to company to provide to employees
It's the boss's choice
In the past employees chose retirement over health insurance
In lieu of a company provided insurance plan, we do pay a "Health & Welfare" benefit to full time employees, and currently that is \$4.45 for each hour worked, including hours for Paid Time Off, such as vacation and sick days
Independent real estate agent
We did offer insurance but no one signed up. We only work seasonal
Per owner
We are not covered because were under gaming
We are setting up with AFLAC
Don't know, it has always been like that
We just don't
Reimburse base only
Competitive benefit
Increased costs associated with Obamacare

Responses to Question 5b: Other Wellness Activities Not Listed

Fitness Center/Workout Space

Discounted fitness center fees

Fitness club membership

Will pay for gym membership

Offer discounted rate at local gym. Only one person participates.

Full time permanent employees can join the Alaska Club; we pay for individual or family memberships.

Exercise gym provided at our business for employee voluntary use. We pay employees \$15 on each paycheck if they exercise at least 20min, 3x's/wk of the 2 weeks of their pay period.

Gym membership discount

Maintain workout room in the office

Free use of city pool which includes racquetball and work-out equipment

Individual and family discount at gym, financial bonus per quarter for visits. \$15 premium discount for participation

Health fair, gym

Admin staff gym incentive

Coaching

We promote quality of life program that is recommended to our employees. The organization is built around this premise

Have a verbal mutual coaching support network in place and in use

Weight loss, tobacco cessation, and stress management programs/activity challenges.

We have created a deliberate healthy eating environment.

Financial Incentive/Discount

Discount or medical premiums if certain activities are completed.

Our health insurance offers discounted rates if employees participate in personal health risk assessment. They also provided a gift card to participate in annual biometric screening and risk assessment

Yearly incentive for employee and spouse for getting wellness physical from Dr.

Reimbursement of \$100 for health related expenses.

Discounts for health clubs and other healthy living or work/life balance programs. Newsletters.

Online wellness portal (information, tracking...).

We held a one day clinic to help reduce monthly premiums. (Personal note: Only 5 employees earned a \$150 gift card for completing both risk assessment and biometric screening. Majority of employees felt it was a privacy invasion).

Discount events, use of wellness tools, activity tools

Tobacco free pay \$75 less per month. Wellness: Emp only \$25 per month, emp & spouses \$50 per month

Each employee receives \$700 annually to use towards wellness activities

\$150 gift card for completion of physical exam, \$50 gift card for dental or vision checkup. Can get one per year

Financial incentive to complete personal health risk assessment

Education/Competitions

On line health campaigns and free flu shots

We offer monthly health and safety newsletters to all employees.

We have fun competitions within the company like we all have pedometers and check our progress once a week as a team to promote health

Safety and wellness topics OJT/weekly meetings

We try to make our wellness program interesting by changing the offerings every year. We have held annual wellness fairs, different exercise and wellness challenges, free pedometers and Fitbits, etc.

Online: personal health records, health improvement tools, preventative care guidelines, library of health and wellness articles, disease management, pregnancy support, health advocate

Online courses, smoke free, incentive for clarity courses, discretionary bonus such as safety, tobacco use
Free Wellness Health Fair on site
Employees and families receive counseling in areas such as health, weight loss, assistance to quit smoking, finance etc.
Annual safety wellness fair. Monthly newsletter with health related topics. On-site training for jobs requiring lifting or higher risk client needs.
We have contest and prizes for things like increase water consumption, exercise, lose weight or improve BMI [Body Mass Index], stop smoking
Biggest loser competition
Meetings on health topics presented by experts, workplace ergonomic assessment, massage to reduce stress
Monthly letter from medical insurance company
Entered into a weekly company drawing held by our insurance carrier
Prenatal program, tobacco cessation, preventative care (flu shots), employee assistant program (substance Abuse, counselor services, resources).

Provide Services Directly

Preventive immunizations (e.g. flu shots); wellness challenges (e.g. step challenges) with prizes.
Healthy snacks at meetings/trainings; exercise class offered on-site; still developing other strategies.
Extended lunch so employees can go to the gym.
Has nurse specialists available through their program. Now everyone goes to the internet to check out illnesses.
We supply full physicals for employees based on age
Offer a free near site clinic to all employees and dependents

Other

Participated in a 3 year wellness program with the University of WA in Seattle, WA. Staff have annual wellness benefit and no fee classes weight loss, healthy snacks, tobacco cessation, sunscreen and ice cleats
Smoking cessation program; sports team sponsorship; discounts for fitness centers.
On site wellness center.
This is only offered to our employees on our health insurance plan.
Fitness team