





### Methodology

Child care costs are reported at the county-level for infant child care and child care for 4-year-olds where available across the state. To determine the affordability of child care costs by county, we compared the average cost of center-based child care to household median income by county. Affordability was calculated by dividing the average cost of care in that county by the county's median income as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. County-level data was collected in November 2017.

### Findings

Alaska is the tenth least affordable state for infant family child care, but four of the top five least affordable counties outpace the top ten states in percentage of median income. Families in Nome County can expect to pay much more of their median income towards family child care (+7.3%) than average, while families in Fairbanks exceed the average by 0.4 percentage points. Families in some of the most rural areas can expect to pay the greatest percentage of their household income for child care.

While Fairbanks County ranks 5th in least affordable counties in Alaska for both center and family care, it ranks anywhere from 2.0 to 6.9 percentage points below the four

highest counties for family child care. Home to Fairbanks city, Fairbanks county's population is more than five times that of the next-most populous county with the least affordable family care (Bethel County, pop. 17,968). Population in the top four counties make a small contribution to average state affordability.

Costs for center-based infant care did not differ from the average of 12.1% in any of the top 5 unaffordable counties except for Dillingham County, in the southern part of the state. Families in Dillingham County can pay almost 14 percent of their income towards center-based infant care.

**Table 1: Least Affordable Counties for Infant Child Care Costs by Type of Care**

Rank	County	Average annual cost of infant care*	Percent median income	Difference between county-level and statewide affordability**
<b>Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 12.1%</b>				
1	Dillingham	\$10,296	13.7%	-1.6%
2	Nome	\$8,760	13.0%	-0.9%
3	Sitka	\$13,452	12.5%	-0.4%
4	Juneau	\$12,708	11.9%	0.2%
5	Fairbanks	\$10,560	11.6%	0.5%
<b>Statewide Family Child Care Affordability: 10.5%</b>				
1	Nome	\$12,000	17.8%	-7.3%
2	Bethel	\$10,200	16.6%	-6.1%
3	Dillingham	\$9,900	13.2%	-2.7%
4	Hoonah-Angoon	\$10,800	12.9%	-2.4%
5	Fairbanks	\$9,900	10.9%	-0.4%

Note: NR = Not Reported (meaning that data is unavailable for a given county); NA = Not Applicable

\*Source: thread

\*\* Affordability, or Percentage Median Income, is a comparison of average cost against county median income

**Table 2: County-Level Costs by Age and Type**

County	Infant Care			4-Year-Old		
	Cost*	Percentage median income**	Difference to state average	Cost*	Percentage median income**	Difference to state average
	Statewide Center-Based Care Affordability: 12.1%					
Anchorage	\$11,340	10.9%	1.2%	\$9,600	9.2%	2.0%
Bethel	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Denali	\$8,940	NA	NA	\$7,620	NA	NA
Dillingham	\$10,296	13.7%	-1.6%	\$8,100	10.8%	0.4%
Fairbanks	\$10,560	11.6%	0.5%	\$9,000	9.9%	1.3%
Haines	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Hoonah-Angoon	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Juneau	\$12,708	11.9%	0.2%	\$10,200	9.6%	1.6%
Kenai Peninsula	\$9,900	10.5%	1.6%	\$7,800	8.3%	2.9%
Ketchikan	\$9,492	10.5%	1.6%	\$7,284	8.0%	3.2%
Kodiak Island	\$9,300	NA	NA	\$7,764	NA	NA
Matanuska-Susitna	\$8,556	9.0%	3.1%	\$7,260	7.6%	3.6%
Nome	\$8,760	13.0%	-0.9%	\$7,452	11.1%	0.1%
North Slope	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Petersburg	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Prince of Wales-Hyder	\$9,492	10.1%	2.0%	\$7,284	7.8%	3.4%
Sitka	\$13,452	12.5%	-0.4%	\$10,752	10.0%	1.2%
Skagway	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Southeast Fairbanks	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Valdez-Cordova	\$12,492	NA	NA	\$10,764	NA	NA
Wrangell	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
County	Statewide Family Child Care Affordability: 10.5%					
Anchorage	\$8,700	8.3%	2.2%	\$7,800	7.5%	2.5%
Bethel	\$10,200	16.6%	-6.1%	NR	NA	NA
Denali	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Dillingham	\$9,900	13.2%	-2.7%	\$8,100	10.8%	-0.8%
Fairbanks	\$9,900	10.9%	-0.4%	\$7,836	8.6%	1.4%
Haines	\$8,400	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Hoonah-Angoon	\$10,800	12.9%	-2.4%	\$8,760	10.5%	-0.5%
Juneau	\$9,912	9.3%	1.2%	\$8,370	7.9%	2.1%
Kenai Peninsula	\$9,558	10.1%	0.4%	\$7,242	7.7%	2.3%
Ketchikan	\$9,396	10.4%	0.1%	\$7,272	8.0%	2.0%
Kodiak Island	\$9,090	NA	NA	\$7,230	NA	NA
Matanuska-Susitna	\$7,896	8.3%	2.2%	\$7,200	7.6%	2.4%
Nome	\$12,000	17.8%	-7.3%	\$10,800	16.0%	-6.0%
North Slope	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Petersburg	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Prince of Wales-Hyder	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Sitka	\$7,764	7.2%	3.3%	\$7,908	7.4%	2.6%
Skagway	NR	NA	NA	NR	NA	NA
Southeast Fairbanks	\$9,030	NA	NA	\$7,050	NA	NA
Valdez-Cordova	\$9,492	NA	NA	\$7,284	NA	NA
Wrangell	\$8,328	NA	NA	\$6,600	NA	NA

Note: NR = Not Reported (meaning that data is unavailable for a given county); NA = Not Applicable

\*Source: thread\*\* Affordability, or Percentage Median Income, is a comparison of average cost against county median income