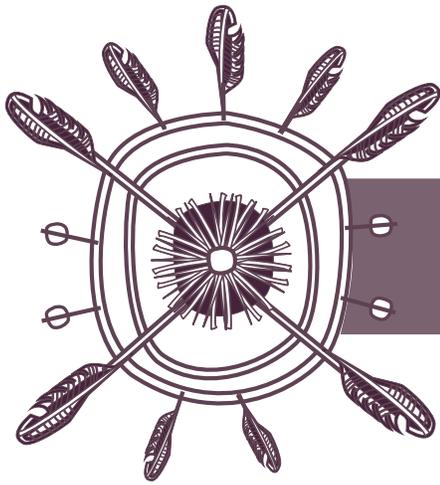




**ALASKA COMMISSION ON AGING  
FY2016 ANNUAL REPORT  
ALASKA'S ROADMAP TO SUCCESSFUL AGING**



# Alaska Commission on Aging



The mission of the Alaska Commission on Aging is to ensure the dignity and independence of all older Alaskans, and to assist them to lead useful and meaningful lives through planning, advocacy, education, and interagency cooperation.

## Alaska Commission on Aging FY2016 Annual Report

<http://www.alaskaaging.org/>

Bill Walker, Governor  
State of Alaska

Valerie Davidson, Commissioner  
Department of Health & Social Services

Denise Daniello, Executive Director  
The Alaska Commission on Aging



Alaska Commission on Aging  
PO Box 110693  
(240 Main Street, Suite 100  
Court Plaza Building)  
Juneau, AK 99811-0693  
Phone: (907) 465-3250

January 2017

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*Photos courtesy of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services,  
Alaska Commission on Aging, and Lesley Thompson, ACoA Planner.*

## FY2016 Annual Report

**Today Alaska is recognized as the state with the fastest-growing senior population per capita in the nation, although this was not always the case.**

Looking back to the 1970s and earlier, as many long-time sourdoughs will recall, Alaska had a very young age demographic. Times have changed. More than 40 years later, Alaska's current age wave is largely attributed to the massive influx of young people who migrated to the state during the economic boom of the 1970s for newly-created jobs in every sector. The senior population has expanded because of an increasing number of Alaskan boomers reaching senior age and more of them choosing to remain living in the state.

This demographic transition is transpiring at an accelerated rate. In 1980, there were 19,643 people age 60+ who comprised less than 5% of the state's total population. Only 619 Alaskans were age 85 and older. Fast forwarding to current times, the senior population has grown to an estimated 125,886 in 2016, a population increase of more than six-fold! Seniors now represent 17% of Alaska's total population, with 6,281 being age 85+. By 2030, when the growth of this age segment is expected to slow, almost one in four Alaskans is projected to be a senior. At that time, the oldest boomers will begin to reach age 85 and their need for services is likely to become more intensive.

Ideally, a longer life has its rewards. Gaining newfound wisdom from a lifetime of experience, more time to enjoy loved ones, and greater opportunities to contribute to the common social good are just a few benefits possible from a longer life. But there are also challenges that come from living longer including managing expenses on a fixed income, being at increased risk for chronic disease and Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and living a fulfilling life with purpose and meaning.

The projected growth of the Alaska senior population will continue to increase demand on our state's infrastructure for providing reliable access to health care services and long-term supports, a range of accessible and affordable senior housing options, transportation, elder safety, and a trained workforce. These needs - identified by Alaska seniors through the Senior Survey, the Senior Provider Survey, and statewide Elder-Senior community forums - are reflected in the goals of the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-FY2019. These



**David Blacketer**  
FY2017 ACoA Chair,  
Public Member,  
Kodiak

During these difficult budget times, what advice do you have for legislators to resolve the State's fiscal problems?

*"My suggestion to Alaska's state legislators is: Be bold, aggressive and positive going forward this year to complete a long term fiscal plan and workable budget. Do and complete it this 2017 legislative session. May God bless your efforts. Thank You."*



**Mary Shields**  
FY16 ACoA Chair,  
Public Member  
Anchorage



What would you say are the major values or principles that you live by?

*"Be honest:  
If you lie, you have to remember the lie and to whom you told it.  
As my father said, this is a waste of energy as the lie will reveal itself in time. Be kind:  
Cruelty damages both you and the person to whom you are cruel.  
Be patient with others, and, most particularly yourself. If you are willing to work for something, odds are you will achieve your goal, but remember to -  
Be flexible:  
Goals can (and often should) change over time."*

goals frame the collaborative work of the Commission and many organizations having an interest in senior programs.

We are pleased to present the Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) 2016 Annual Report, a resource for statistical data about the Alaska senior population that provides information about prevailing trends and describes activities of the Commission this year. One of our most important achievements this year was passage of SB 124, sponsored by Senator Bill Stoltze, which secured an eight-year extension for the ACoA to June 30, 2024. We sincerely thank the many agencies and individuals who provided letters of support and legislative committee testimony for this legislation, as well as Senator Stoltze as the bill sponsor and Representative Mike Hawker for sponsoring the companion bill, HB 226.

The Commission also advocated in support of other legislation affecting seniors. These bills include:

- ☼ **SB 74, a comprehensive Medicaid Health Care Reform bill** to improve the quality of health care, patient health outcomes, and program sustainability over time, sponsored by Senator Pete Kelly;
- ☼ **SB 72, Designated Caregivers for Patients**, a bill to improve health outcomes and reduce risk of injury for discharged hospital patients and their designated caregivers providing aftercare, sponsored by Senator Cathy Giessel;
- ☼ and **HB 8**, a bill to modernize Alaska's power of attorney law in order to secure greater protection against elder financial exploitation and strengthen the principal's control in the delegation of powers, sponsored by Representative Shelly Hughes and the late Representative Max Gruenberg.

ACoA's advocacy for budget recommendations last legislative session focused on preserving base funding for essential senior programs including senior community grant-funded services, Senior Benefits, personal care services, waiver services, heating assistance, the Medicaid Adult Dental Program, and the Pioneer Homes as we remain sensitive to the difficult economic times affecting our state. In collaboration with other partners, we were successful in securing \$3.5 million in the capital budget for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund for the construction and renovation of senior housing in addition to \$1 million for the Public and Community Transportation State Match funds to support federal grant requests

from community public transit services serving seniors and persons with disabilities.

This year also brought a change in leadership for the Commission. David Blacketer, resident of Kodiak, was elected as Chair at the May 2016 board meeting. David is dedicated to community service and has extensive experience serving in officer positions for the Kodiak Senior Services Inc., the Salvation Army Corps, as well as being the on-call chaplain for the Providence Kodiak Island Memorial Center. Following a successful tenure, Mary Shields, resident of Anchorage, stepped down as Chair while being considered for re-appointment by Governor Walker for a second term. Mary provided strong leadership to the Commission by taking an active role in every ACoA committee, presenting at public meetings representing the Commission, and earning the respect from policymakers statewide.

The Alaska Commission on Aging will continue to work towards a vision in which all older Alaskans have the opportunity to participate meaningfully in their communities, and be valued for their contributions. Older adults should also have access to services which maintain health, safety, and independence so that they may enjoy a high quality of life and live safely at home in their chosen community for as long as possible. Alaskan seniors have enormous power gained from a lifetime of experience, knowledge, and wisdom. They are part of the solution to make a positive impact for all Alaskans, regardless of age, and are vital to Alaska's future!

Sincerely,



David Blacketer  
FY17 ACoA Chair



Mary E. Shields  
FY16 ACoA Chair



Denise Daniello  
ACoA Executive Director



Marie Darlin  
FY17 Vice Chair,  
Public Member,  
Juneau

How can we better support family and other natural caregivers in their care for loved ones at home?

*"Listen to their needs and try to help."*



**FY2016 - FY2017  
Alaska Commission  
on Aging Members**  
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**David Blacketer**  
FY17 Chair,  
Public Member,  
Kodiak

**Mary Shields**  
FY16 Chair,  
Public Member,  
Anchorage

**Marie Darlin**  
FY17 Vice Chair,  
Public Member,  
Juneau

**Eleanor Dementi**  
FY16 Vice Chair,  
Public Member  
Cantwell

**Linda Combs**  
Public Member,  
Palmer

**Anna Frank**  
Public Member,  
Fairbanks

**Gordon Glaser**  
Public Member,  
Anchorage

**Banarsi Lal**  
Public Member,  
Fairbanks

**Rachel Greenberg**  
Senior Service Provider,  
Palmer

**Paula Pawlowski /  
Kathryn Abbott**  
Executive Director,  
Serve Alaska, Department  
of Commerce, Community  
and Economic  
Development  
Anchorage

**Duane Mayes**  
Director,  
Senior and Disabilities  
Services, Department of  
Health and Social Services,  
Anchorage

**Bob Sivertsen**  
Alaska Pioneer Home  
Advisory Board Chair,  
Ketchikan

**About the Alaska Commission on Aging**

The Alaska Commission on Aging (“ACoA” or the “Commission”) was established in 1981 for the purpose of assisting older Alaskans to maintain good health, independence, and dignity through planning, outreach, and advocacy by interagency collaboration. The Commission meets the federal requirement as described in the Older Americans Act 306(a)(6)(D) that each state establish an advisory council to advise the state on aging matters.

The Commission is authorized to:

- ☼ formulate the four-year Alaska State Plan for Senior Services subject to review by the Department of Health and Social Services, and with reference to the State Senior Plan prepare and submit an annual analysis of the services provided to Alaska seniors to the Legislature and Governor;
- ☼ make recommendations directly to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Administration regarding policies and budget items affecting Alaska seniors;
- ☼ and to serve as a statutory advisory board to the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority by providing budget and policy recommendations concerning Senior Trust Beneficiaries who are older persons living with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, serious mental illness, chronic alcohol and substance abuse, and brain injury.

The Commission is comprised of eleven members, seven of whom are public members (with six members being 60 years and older) appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. Two seats are filled by the Commissioners of the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. The remaining seats are reserved for the Chair of the Pioneer Home Advisory Board and a senior services provider, regardless of age. In FY2016, the Commission was supported by an office staff of four that included the executive director, two planners, and the administrative assistant. Due to legislative budget reductions, the office staff will be reduced to three members in FY2017 and then two members in FY2018 leaving the executive director and one planner intact.



## Highlights of Activities

The Alaska Commission on Aging carried out the following activities in FY2016 pursuant to our core services and with reference to the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-FY2019. The Commission collaborates with public and private partners to work toward the goal of healthy and successful aging for all Alaskan seniors.

### Planning

***Federal Approval of the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-FY2019.***

The Alaska State Senior Plan was officially approved by the U.S. Administration for Community Living on August 18, 2016. The Plan’s vision statement, goals, strategies, and performance measures were developed by an inter-agency State Plan Advisory Committee under the leadership of ACoA Commissioners David Blacketer and Marie Darlin.



**FY2016  
Alaska Commission  
on Aging Staff**  
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**Denise Daniello,**  
Executive Director

**Deirdre Shaw,**  
Planner II

**Lesley Thompson,**  
Planner I

**Contact Us**  
.....

**Alaska Commission  
on Aging**  
Department of Health &  
Social Services

**Physical address:**  
240 Main Street, Suite 100  
Court Plaza Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

**Mailing address:**  
P.O. Box 110693  
Juneau, AK 99811-0693

**Phone:**  
(907) 465-3250

**Fax:**  
(907) 465-1398

**Website:**  
[www.alaskaaging.org](http://www.alaskaaging.org)

**Email:**  
[hss.acoa@alaska.gov](mailto:hss.acoa@alaska.gov)



**Duane Mayes**  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Director of Senior &  
Disabilities Services,  
Anchorage



*"The value of long term support services in a home and community based setting (HCBS) is a shift nationally to financial pressures to get services to elders in their homes. Alaska's HCBS program does that at a cost that is fair and reasonable."*



### **Implementation of Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia.**

Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health concern as the senior population continues to increase and advanced age is the most serious risk factor. The annual Roadmap Stakeholder meeting was held on November 19, 2015 at the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority in Anchorage.

Implementation Guide for

Alaska's Roadmap to Address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD)

Roadmap Completed: December 31, 2014  
Implementation Guide: Current as of December 31, 2015



Forty stakeholders attended the meeting representing state agencies, service providers, and the national Alzheimer's Association. A report of the Roadmap's implementation activities was developed and shared with the Governor's Office, the Legislature, the Administration, and public members.

### **Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), Cognitive Impairment Module.**

The Cognitive Impairment Module was approved for inclusion in the 2016 Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey conducted by telephone. This module measures self-reported increased confusion and memory loss and its associated effects on function and daily living. The 2016 Alaska BRFSS findings will be compared with those compiled in 2013 to establish baseline measures of cognitive impairment in Alaska that may be due to Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, brain injury, and related causes.



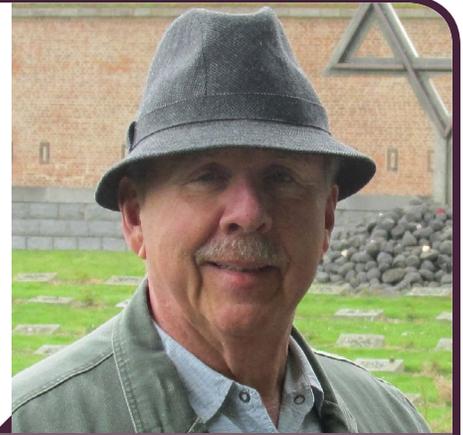
Comparing findings from Alaska's Cognitive Impairment Module with seventeen other states that conducted the same survey in 2013 revealed 25% of Alaskans age 75 and older reporting greater cognitive decline – subjectively defined as increased confusion

and memory loss – as compared to 14% of their peers living in the seventeen-state comparison. These same older Alaskans also reported fewer difficulties than their out-of-state peers in performing daily activities, such as household chores and participating in social activities. The Alaska 2013 BRFSS findings also showed that 82% of Alaskans age 60+ reporting memory problems had not talked to their doctors about memory loss.

### **Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-FY2019 Amended Funding Formula.**

The funding formula was officially amended by the U.S. Administration for Community Living on September 16, 2016. Responding to changing demographics of Alaska’s senior population and service delivery needs, the amended funding formula includes four specific changes as recommended by the Alaska State Plan Advisory Committee, Funding Formula Task Force:

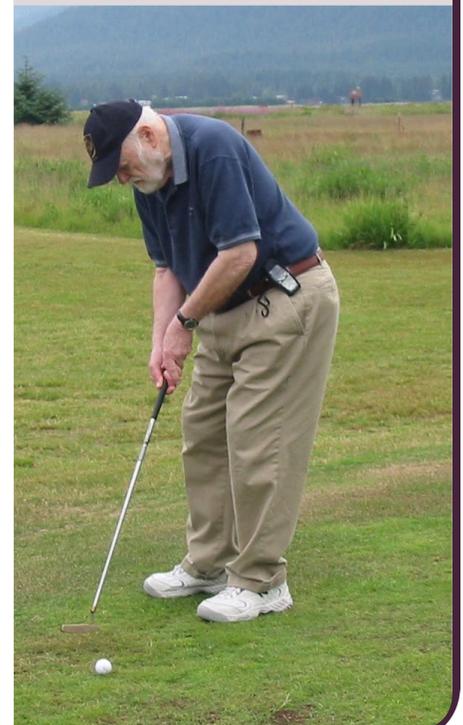
- (1) Implement a new “urban-rural-remote” factor to replace the rural-urban factor and eliminate the cost of living factor;
- (2) Remove the hold harmless provision and implement a base funding regional allocation using existing federal funds for FY2016;
- (3) Subdivide Region V into two subsets that consist of Mat-Su (Region Va) and Kenai/Cordova/Valdez (Region Vb); and
- (4) Modify weights for the factors used in the funding formula.



**Gordon Glaser**  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Public Member,  
Anchorage

What are some of the most important lessons you feel you have learned over the course of your life?

*“The third stage of life is a time of healing, understanding, freedom in fulfillment of our journey.”*





**Linda Combs**  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Public Member,  
Palmer



During these difficult budget times, what advice do you have for legislators to resolve the State's fiscal problems?

*"Alaska's aging population should be looked at as an asset that can be tapped for wisdom and experience in dealing with improvements and continued care and services to our Alaskan families and Alaskan Communities."*



## Advocacy

### Legislative Efforts:

During the FY2016 legislative session, the ACoA monitored a total of 46 bills and resolutions and actively supported five pieces of legislation with committee testimony and letters of support to bill sponsors and legislative committees.

During ACoA's 2016 legislative advocacy meeting in Juneau (February 8-11,2016), Commission members met with 27 legislators and their staff to provide recommendations regarding budget and policy items that impact Alaska seniors based on input received from seniors, providers, and other public members.

The Commission also advocated to Alaska's Congressional delegation in support of the following federal legislation and budget items:

- (1) Reauthorization of the Older American's Act, S.192;
- (2) Support for Passage of the Health Outcomes, Planning and Education (HOPE) for Alzheimer's Act to increase access to information and supports for persons newly diagnosed with Alzheimer's and their families (S. 8571/H.R. 1559);
- (3) Restored federal funding in the amount of \$3.4 million for HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships Program that provides funding for senior housing and other housing projects in Alaska;
- (4) Restored federal base funding for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (that funds the Alaska Medicare Information Office) and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (which funds the Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training program, "MASST");
- (5) Increased federal base funding for Alzheimer's research through the National Institutes of Health; and
- (6) Support for increased federal base funding for Older American Act services that include senior meals, rides, elder protection, and other core programs.

### **State Budget:**

The ACoA and partners advocated for preserving base funding in the operating budget for essential programs serving Alaska seniors including:

- ☼ Senior Benefits;
- ☼ home- and community based services provided by senior community grants, Alaskans Living Independently waiver, and Personal Care Services;
- ☼ General Relief;
- ☼ heating assistance;
- ☼ the Medicaid Adult Dental program;
- ☼ and the Pioneer Homes.

In the capital budget, ACoA and other senior advocates were successful in securing \$3.5 million for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund for the construction and renovation of senior housing projects, thanks to an investment by the Rasmuson Foundation in the amount of \$1.75 million, as well as \$1 million for the Public and Community Transportation State Match funds to support federal grant requests from community public transit services serving seniors and persons with disabilities.

### **State Legislation:**

The ACoA and other partners advocated successfully for passage of the following legislation that were signed into law by Governor Bill Walker:

- ☼ **Medicaid Health Care Reform, SB 74 sponsored by Senator Pete Kelly**, to improve the quality and sustainability of Medicaid health care services by building upon Medicaid reforms that were already underway and implementing sixteen new initiatives such as:

- ◆ Enhancing use of primary care case management and health homes to offer coordinated care to people with chronic health conditions, in addition



**Denise Daniello**  
ACoA Staff,  
Executive Director,  
Juneau

What would you say are the major values or principles that you live by?

*"Live life with purpose, meaning, and passion. This perspective will promote new opportunities to learn, explore, engage, and grow."*





**Rachel Greenberg**  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Senior Service Provider,  
Palmer



What would you say are the major values or principles that you live by?

*"Some of my core values include freedom of choice, independence, opportunity to learn and grow, and creating positive outcomes. I believe in living a life that encourages and supports individuals' choice and opportunity. Living a life of honesty and integrity is important to ensuring a happy, healthy life. When my grandmother turned 100, we asked her secret. Her secret was to face every day full of positivity, hope, and looking forward to what she was going to learn that day. I hope to make her proud."*

to persons with mental health and substance use disorders;

- ◆ expanding use of telemedicine to improve access to health care and save on transportation costs;
- ◆ reforming Personal Care Services under a new Medicaid State Plan option known as the 1915(k) to generate a 6% higher federal reimbursement that is projected to draw down an additional \$9 million federal dollars for Alaska;
- ◆ refinancing certain grant programs that serve people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, intellectual and developmental disabilities, brain injury, and other cognitive impairments using the 1915(i) Medicaid State Plan Option;
- ◆ measures to reduce the non-urgent use of emergency room services;
- ◆ and other health care reforms.

🌸 **Designated Caregivers for Patients, SB 72 sponsored by Senator Cathy Giessel**, to improve health outcomes for hospital discharged patients by asking patients to designate a caregiver who will:

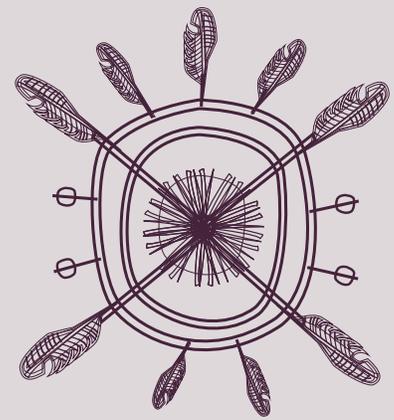
- (1) voluntarily provide aftercare and for hospitals to notify the designated caregiver of the patient's discharge date;
- (2) to engage the designated caregiver in the plan of aftercare; and
- (3) to provide aftercare training in order to reduce hospital readmissions, promote speedy patient recovery, and lessen the risk of possible injury to patients and their designated caregivers.

🌸 **Powers of Attorney, HB 8 sponsored by Representative Shelly Hughes and the late Representative Max Gruenberg** to update Alaska's power of attorney statute by providing greater protection against financial exploitation

and promoting better alignment across state lines to reduce problems that may occur when the Principal and Agent live in different states. In addition, HB 8 also proposed improvements to the power of attorney form in order to provide more control to the Principal in their delegation of powers to one or more agents.

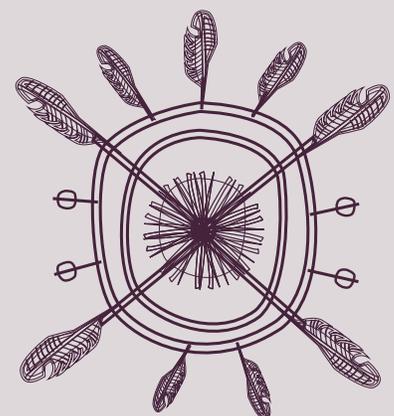
🌿 **Extension of the Alaska Commission on Aging, SB 124, Senator Bill Stoltze and HB 226, Representative Mike Hawker** companion legislation to reauthorize the Commission for an additional eight years with no other changes made to the Commission’s responsibilities. Bill sponsors received more than 20 letters of support and substantial public testimony in support during legislative committee hearings. The Commission sincerely thanks both legislators for championing these bills on ACoA’s behalf.

This legislation was filed following a successful legislative audit prepared by the Division of Legislative Audit for the years FY08 through FY15 in preparation of the Commission’s sunset that was scheduled for June 30, 2016. The report found no complaints filed against ACoA, the Commission was operating in the public’s interest, and recommended to the Legislature that they adopt legislation to extend the Commission’s sunset date eight years to June 30, 2024.



**HB 226**  
Representative  
Hawker

**Thank you for supporting the reauthorization of the Alaska Commission on Aging through June 30, 2024.**



**SB 124**  
Senator  
Stoltze



**Tribal Eldercare Services Summit:**

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association and the Eastern Aleutian Tribes hosted the 2016 Tribal Eldercare Services Summit in Anchorage to call attention to the need for eldercare services in rural Alaska so that elders may receive services in their home communities and not have to relocate to urban centers.

Mary Shields, Chair for the Alaska Commission on Aging, presented at the Summit providing an overview of the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016-2019 and emphasized the role of elders in promoting community health and well-being (February 17-19, 2016).

**Alaska Housing Summit:**

Governor Walker hosted the Alaska Housing Summit with the purpose of bringing together housing experts to address the need for housing in the state. The Summit included 8 break-out sessions, with one devoted to senior housing. ACoA Commissioner Rachel Greenberg, along with Trust Program Officer Amanda Lofgren, co-facilitated the senior housing work session that was attended by more than 20 participants. Recognizing that Alaska is the state with the fastest growing senior population contributing approximately \$3 billion to the state’s economy, it still lacks appropriate, affordable, and accessible housing.



Recommendations offered by the work group included implementation of the housing strategies identified in the Alaska State Plan for Senior Services along with Alaska’s Roadmap to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias. Promoting awareness about renovation loans for home modification to age-in-place, a “roommate finder” for seniors, and advocacy in support of capital funding for AHFC’s Senior Citizen Housing Development Fund were solutions also recommended (January 6, 2016).



 Anna Frank  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Public Member,  
Fairbanks

What would you say are the major values or principles that you live by?

*“It is important to speak up for the underprivileged and be the voice for the people, especially the elders.”*





**Bob Sivertsen**  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Pioneer Home  
Advisory Board Chair,  
Ketchikan



What are some of the most important lessons you believe you have learned over the course of your life?

*"Remember your oath to office and when pondering a difficult solution, ask yourself "what would mom and dad think?" It kind of grounds your thoughts."*



### Alaska State Human Resource Conference, The Sandwich Generation: It's No Bologna:"

ACoA Chair Mary Shields and Executive Director Denise Daniello along with Ken Helander, AARP Alaska Advocacy Director, participated in a panel presentation to further understanding about aging dynamics, family caregiving, and associated impacts on the workplace. The session:

- provided examples of employer policies for working caregivers;
- described the needs of working sandwich caregivers as well as specific needs of caregivers caring for loved ones with dementia;
- and shared best practices to support caregivers in the workplace (September 24, 2015).



### Alaska Medicaid Redesign Initiative:

ACoA hosted several senior community forums to discuss the Medicaid Redesign Initiative and to gather public input about the reform efforts underway by the Department of Health and Social Services related to implementation of SB74. These forums were held at senior centers in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer, and Juneau. A report of the compiled public input was provided to the Department of Health and Social Services.



Seniors and other public members attending the forums:

- ⊗ requested improved access to information about Medicaid Expansion;
- ⊗ approved moving forward with a patient centered model of care that emphasizes case management in the primary care setting;
- ⊗ requested greater supports for family caregivers;
- ⊗ offered support for telemedicine;
- ⊗ and encouraged development of new options under the Medicaid State Plan (1915 i/k), as well as continuing existing optional services such as the Medicaid Adult Dental program (September 25-27, 2015).



Kathryn Abbott  
ACoA Commissioner,  
Commerce, Community &  
Economic Development,  
Anchorage

New ACoA Commissioner  
Appointed by Governor Walker

*We are pleased to announce that Kathryn Abbott, who is the Executive Director for Serve Alaska, now represents the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development as its designee on the ACoA board following the retirement of former ACoA Commissioner Paula Pawlowski.*

*Please join us in welcoming Kathryn Abbott to ACoA!*

## Medicaid Reform in Alaska Inclusive Community Choices

### 1915(i) and 1915(k)

### Aging Population Summit:

Hosted by Special Olympics, the purpose of this summit was to promote awareness about the needs of people living with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) who are aging. Lesley Thompson, ACoA Planner, participated in a partnership panel discussion and spoke to the changing family dynamics related to caregiving from the perspective of aging parents caring for their adult children with IDD and these adult children caring for their aging parents (September 2-3, 2015).



## Healthy Body Healthy Brain

MAKE CHOICES TODAY FOR A HEALTHIER TOMORROW!

By **STAYING ACTIVE** and **EATING A HEALTHY DIET**  
you may protect yourself against the  
risk of Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementias.

EAT SMART | STAY PHYSICALLY ACTIVE  
CHALLENGE YOURSELF MENTALLY  
HAVE FUN WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY



Trust  
Alaska Mental Health  
Trust Authority

ACoA  
ALASKA COMMISSION  
ON AGING

For more information, contact Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska  
[www.alzaska.org](http://www.alzaska.org) | Phone: 907.561.3313 | Statewide: 800.478.1080

### Senior Legislative Advocacy Teleconferences:

ACoA hosted nine statewide senior legislative advocacy teleconferences during session providing legislative updates on bills and budget items related to senior programs:

- ☼ invited legislators and their staff to talk specifically about legislation and budget items being considered;
- ☼ sought input from seniors about legislation of importance to them in order inform the Commission's advocacy positions;
- ☼ and helped to coordinate local grassroots advocacy efforts (January-April, 2016).

## Legislative Teleconference Schedule

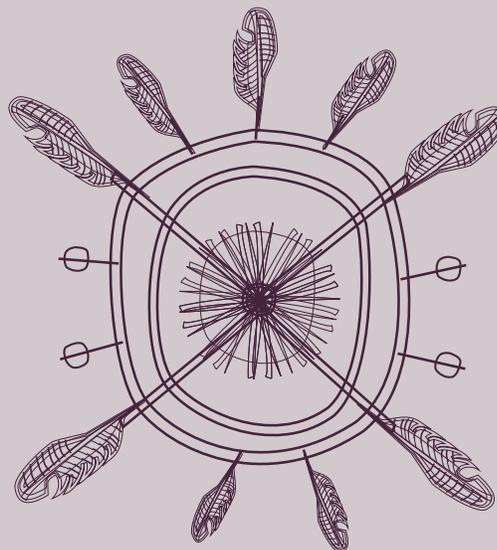
Join us for the 2017 legislative teleconferences to discuss bills of interest to seniors across the state of Alaska.

### 2017 Schedule

#### **ACoA Legislative Teleconferences 9:30–11:00 a.m.**

- ☼ January 26
- ☼ February 13
- ☼ February 23
- ☼ March 9
- ☼ March 23
- ☼ April 6
- ☼ April 13
- ☼ April 20

**Please call  
Lesley Thompson,  
ACoA Planner,  
at 907-465-4793  
for more information.**



## 2017 Senior Legislative Advocacy

### 2016 Host Sites

- ☼ Anchorage Pioneer Home
- ☼ Anchorage Senior Activity Center
- ☼ Homer Senior Center
- ☼ Juneau, ACoA
- ☼ Ketchikan Pioneer Home
- ☼ Nenana Tortella Council on Aging
- ☼ North Slope
- ☼ North Star Council on Aging
- ☼ Palmer Senior Citizens Center, Inc.
- ☼ Senior Citizens of Kodiak
- ☼ Soldotna Area Senior Citizens
- ☼ Wasilla Area Seniors
- ☼ Wrangell Senior Citizens

### Quarterly Meetings:

ACoA held four meetings in the following locations and met with older Alaskans, their caregivers, senior providers, and other public members. Public comment was held at each meeting:



#### **September 2015 in Kenai Peninsula.**

The ACoA's 2015 rural outreach meeting was held in Soldotna to learn about issues affecting seniors regarding health care services, long-term care, housing, and transportation from seniors, providers, and other public members of the Kenai Peninsula. The Commission visited with senior centers, assisted living homes, adult day providers, health care providers, Aging and Disabilities Resource Centers, and senior housing projects in Soldotna, Seward, Sterling, City of Kenai, Cooper Landing, and Nikiski. ACoA and the Anchorage Senior Advisory Commission held a joint public forum at the Girdwood Public Library that was well attended by community members.



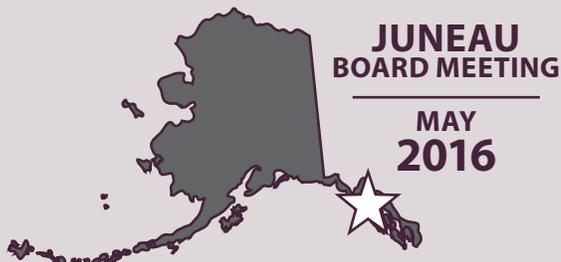
#### **December 2015.**

ACoA met by videoconference and teleconference in response to the Governor's request for state agencies to restrict travel funds. This meeting focused on preparing for legislative session that included extension of the Commission.



#### **February 2016 in Juneau.**

The ACoA coordinated with AgeNET, the statewide senior provider association, and the Pioneer Home Advisory Board for a joint meeting to discuss advocacy priorities with policymakers regarding senior needs. The Commission also met with legislators and their staff to discuss senior issues and to advocate for their concerns.



#### **May 2016 in Juneau.**

The Commission met by videoconference and teleconference to review the outcomes from legislative session, hear reports from speakers on a variety of senior issues, and held ACoA officer elections. David Blacketer and Marie Darlin were elected as ACoA's new Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.



## What you can do to prevent falls:



Begin a regular exercise program.



Have your health care provider review your medicines.



Have your vision and hearing checked.



Make your home safer.

Many falls can be prevented. By making some changes, you can lower your chances of falling.

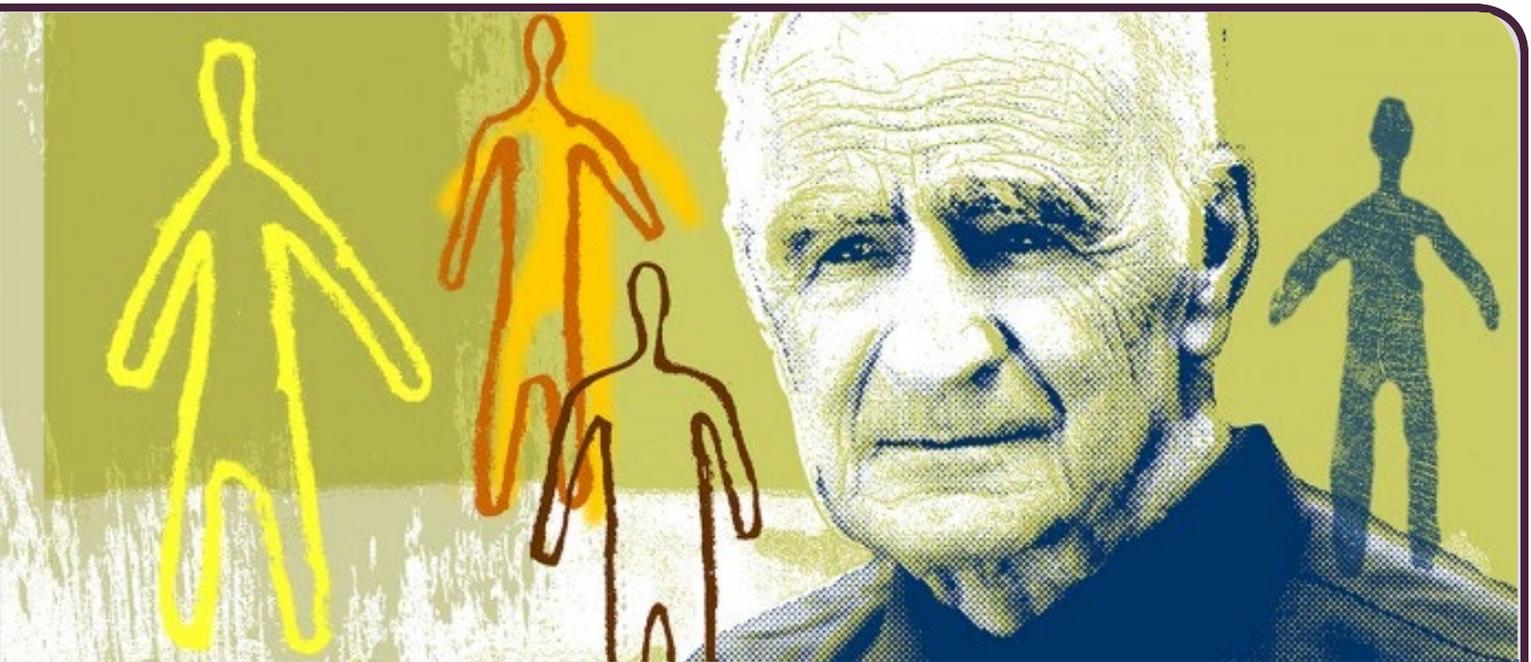
For more information, please call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 1-877-6AK-ADRC (1-877-625-2372) or visit our website at [www.alaskaaging.org](http://www.alaskaaging.org).

### Governor's Executive Proclamations:

On behalf of Alaska seniors and their loved ones, the Commission asked the Governor's Office to issue the following Executive Proclamations:

- 🌱 **Family Caregivers Month (November 2015)** to recognize the generous contributions of family and other uncompensated caregivers in Alaska who provide the foundation of long-term care for seniors and vulnerable Alaskans as well as the organizations that provide caregiver support.
- 🌱 **Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month (November 2015)** to promote awareness about Alzheimer's, its impact on older Alaskans, as well as to increase recognition of the resources available that provide assistance to these vulnerable Alaskans and their family caregivers.
- 🌱 **Older Americans Month - OAM (May 2016)** encourages Alaskans to celebrate older adults as power and vital individuals who greatly contribute to our state and nation. The national theme for this year's event was *Blaze a Trail*. This Proclamation also highlights the growing number of Alaskan Centenarians as they provide a testament to the benefits of a healthy and socially active lifestyle.
- 🌱 **Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Day (September 22, 2015)** encourages Alaskans of all ages to practice fall prevention and to offer their support to seniors to reduce the risk of senior falls.





**Aging can bring isolation as we lose those dear to us, and face greater challenges in getting out and about and staying connected.**

Also, as our bodies age and change, they process alcohol and medications differently (alcohol has a stronger effect). We can become vulnerable to substance abuse and depression without realizing it.

If you're an older Alaskan and are facing challenges, please reach out.

If you're a family member, friend or neighbor and are concerned about someone, please reach out. Careline is here.

 **Alaska's Aging and Disabilities Resource Centers**  
[www.dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/adrc/](http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/adrc/)

 **Alaska 211**  
[www.alaska211.org](http://www.alaska211.org)

 **Alaska Medication Education Alaska Medication Education**  
[www.dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/MedEd/](http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/MedEd/)



**CARELINE**

Worried about yourself or someone else?  
Call anytime, toll free:

 **Need Help? Call Now.**

**877-266-4357 (HELP)**

 Text     For Help     Resources     More

## Looking forward

The projected percentage increase in Alaska seniors is the greatest in the nation. Alaska's booming older population is attributed to the aging of the large baby boomer population, longer life expectancy due to medical advances and healthier lifestyles, as well as shifting migration patterns. In recent years, an increasing number of Alaskans have reached their senior years, and a greater number of them are choosing to remain living in Alaska.

Overall, seniors have a dramatic impact on the State's economy.

- ☼ Annually, senior income contributes approximately \$3 billion to the State's economy from their retirement savings, health care spending, and wages that compares favorably with other industries in the state.
- ☼ More Alaska seniors are in the labor force than older Americans, with an estimated 22% still working compared to 16% of seniors nationwide.
- ☼ Alaska seniors also enhance the economy through volunteer activities and caring for family members and friends that has an estimated annual value of \$90 million.

Although the vast majority of seniors do not use services paid with public funds, the age wave combined with the state's current budget deficit is putting pressure on the viability of Alaska's infrastructure to provide long-term supports to a growing number of older people and other vulnerable Alaskans. New approaches are being developed to improve health outcomes and contain costs by emphasizing healthy behaviors, whole-person care, innovations in telemedicine and tele-health care, and paying for high value care through Medicaid reform efforts.

As more seniors live to an advanced age, access to appropriate health care and long-term support services becomes of greater importance that will increase demand on resources to pay for them. Many seniors living in the Railbelt communities still experience challenges in finding primary care providers that accept Medicare reimbursement. Others struggle with depression and addictions, particularly boomers who are at higher risks for substance and alcohol abuse than older seniors, increasing the number of older adults with these conditions as boomers age. Barriers to behavioral health treatment for seniors exist such as under-diagnosis and social stigma that discourages some from seeking help. Integrating behavioral health diagnosis and treatment in the primary care setting using a person-centered and case management approach is an effective model of care that has demonstrated positive outcomes for older patients.

Many seniors depend on the continuum of long-term care services, from community based support services to nursing home care. As the senior population continues to grow at an annual rate of 6%, and more people live to an older age, the need for these services will increase proportionately for the next 20 years or longer as a large share of the senior population may experience disabilities, dementia, and/or periods of frailty in their later years.

Appropriate funding for long-term care supports is critical as these services support senior health and safety and prevent the need for higher cost care. Implementing new Medicaid home- and community based service options may provide an opportunity to increase federal reimbursement for services currently funded with state general funds and to fill service gaps for certain populations such as persons with early to mid-stage Alzheimer’s disease who may not meet required nursing home levels of care.

Current initiatives to reform health care show promise in transforming our current system from one that has been traditionally oriented toward acute problems to a system better able to support:

- ⊗ chronic care management,
- ⊗ preventative care,
- ⊗ and integrating physical health care with other specialty care to address the whole health care needs of the person.

An emerging challenge is the growing number of Alaskans with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ARD) and the public health impact this condition will pose on thousands of older Alaskans and their families. Due largely to the aging of the state’s population, there are an estimated 6,800 Alaskans age 65+ who may have Alzheimer’s – a count that is projected to nearly triple by 2030. These projections do not include persons living with related dementias such as Parkinson’s disease, vascular dementia resulting from stroke, Lewy body dementia, persons with early onset Alzheimer’s, and other dementia disorders.

The vision of Alaska’s Roadmap to Address Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias, Alaska’s first and only state plan to address dementia is to identify ARD as a public health priority and build partnerships to confront the challenges of these conditions. Enhancing public awareness, promoting prevention and early detection, improving access to appropriate housing and supports, and increasing caregiver supports are the driving goals of the Roadmap. Efforts to implement these goals are underway in order to increase the ability of individuals with dementia to reside safely in their homes and communities with a high quality of life for as long as possible.

The availability of appropriate and affordable senior housing is a continuing challenge for Alaska seniors. During these times of budget constraints, how will Alaska provide independent housing for seniors, housing with supportive services to assist seniors to maintain their quality of life within their community, and for seniors making the transition from independent housing to long-term care housing and then back to the community? According to findings from the Commission’s 2014-2015 senior survey, 72% of seniors surveyed indicated their preference to remain in their current home. Providing the tools to modify one’s home to improve accessibility and affording access to supportive services will become even more important as seniors age.

In the last century, average life expectancy increased by nearly 30 years in the U.S. Many people can now expect to live eight or nine decades, with some living longer. While this is a great achievement, this new stage of life creates unique challenges. As we move forward into the future, the importance of attitudes toward aging should not be underestimated. A positive outlook can drastically affect health, resilience, and even extend the length of life. As Alaska’s population continues to age, we all need to actively prepare early for retirement – financially, socially, and by living a healthy lifestyle – so that we can enjoy life fully and have the means to meaningfully contribute to the well-being of our families and communities.

## Aging & Disability Resource Centers



**Statewide:**

Aging & Disability Resource Centers  
[dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/adrc/](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/adrc/)  
 Statewide toll-free number: 1-877-625-2372

**Anchorage:**

Municipality of Anchorage | [www.muni.org/adrc](http://www.muni.org/adrc)

**Mat-Su (Wasilla):**

LINKS Mat-Su ADRC | [www.linksprc.org](http://www.linksprc.org)

**Dillingham:**

Bristol Bay Native Association | [resources.caregiver.com/listing/bristol-bay-native-association-adrc.html](http://resources.caregiver.com/listing/bristol-bay-native-association-adrc.html)

**Kenai Peninsula (Homer, Kenai, Seward):**

Independent Living Center, Inc. | [www.peninsulailc.org](http://www.peninsulailc.org)

**Southeast (Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka):**

Southeast Alaska Independent Living Center | [www.sailinc.org](http://www.sailinc.org)



# MEDICAID IN ALASKA

December 28, 2016

## 27,415

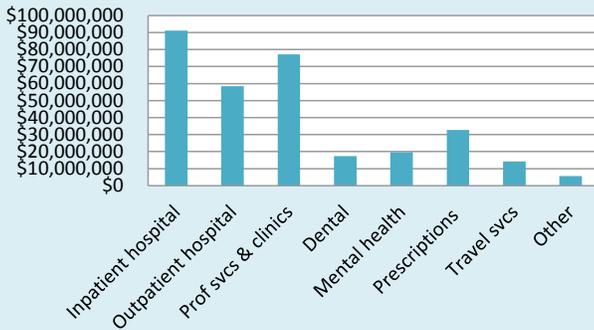
Lives covered by Medicaid expansion

### Demographics of Medicaid expansion enrollees

	19-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Enrollee count	10,522	4,378	6,206	6,309
Male	15,560		Female 11,855	

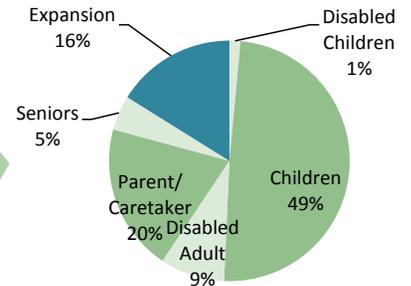
Medicaid expansion began on Sept. 1, 2015 in Alaska.

### Medicaid expansion claims paid to date



100% federally funded through CY16 and will transition to 90% in 2020 and beyond.

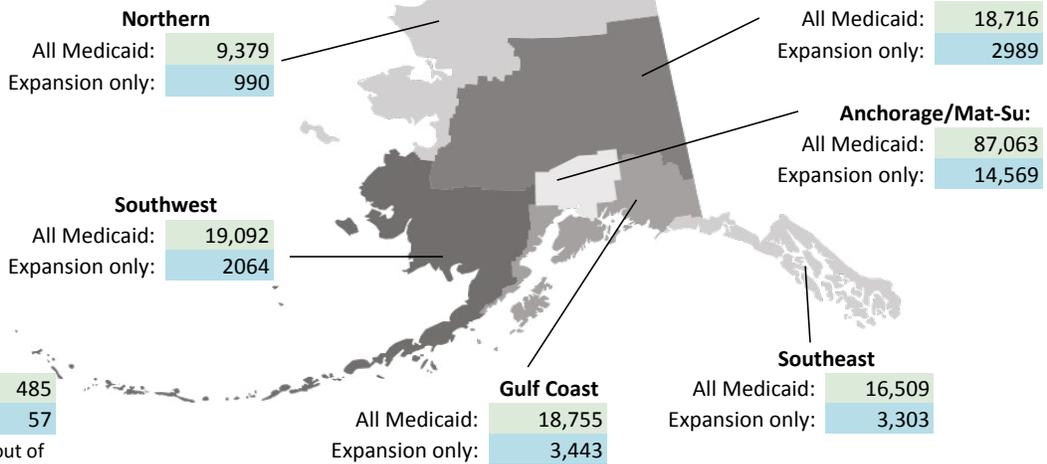
### All Medicaid enrollees by category



Medicaid provides health benefits to many Alaskans.

Alaskans across the state benefit from Medicaid.

### Medicaid enrollees by region



\*Temporarily absent or in an out of state medical institution.

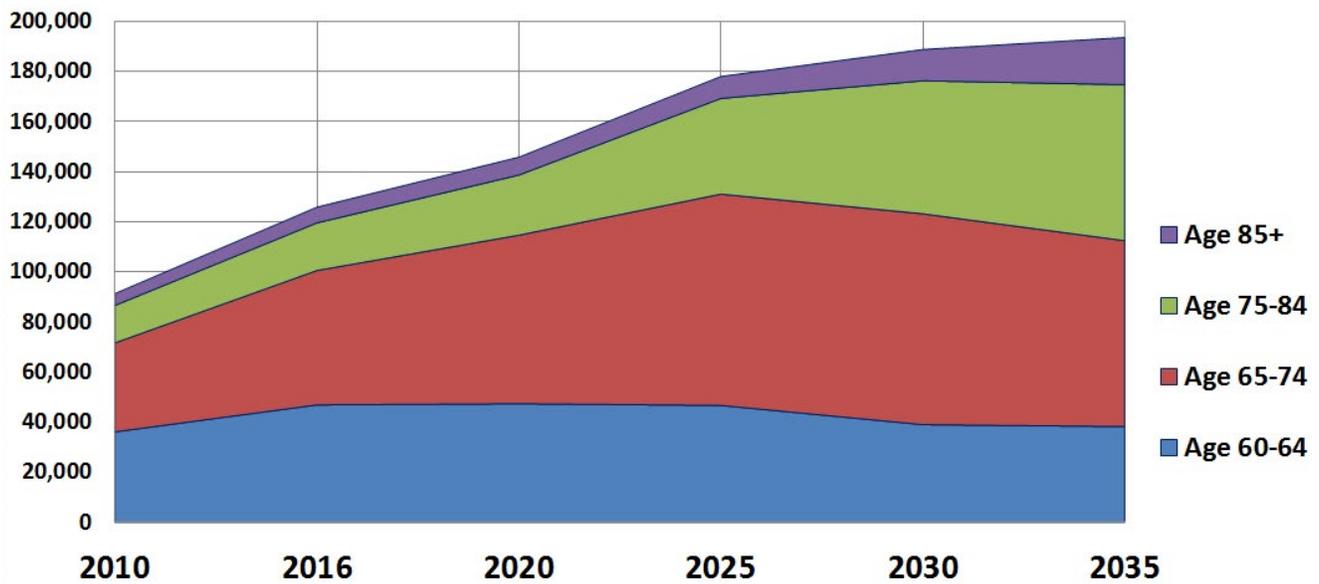
## 169,999

Lives covered by all Medicaid

### Demographics of all Medicaid enrollees

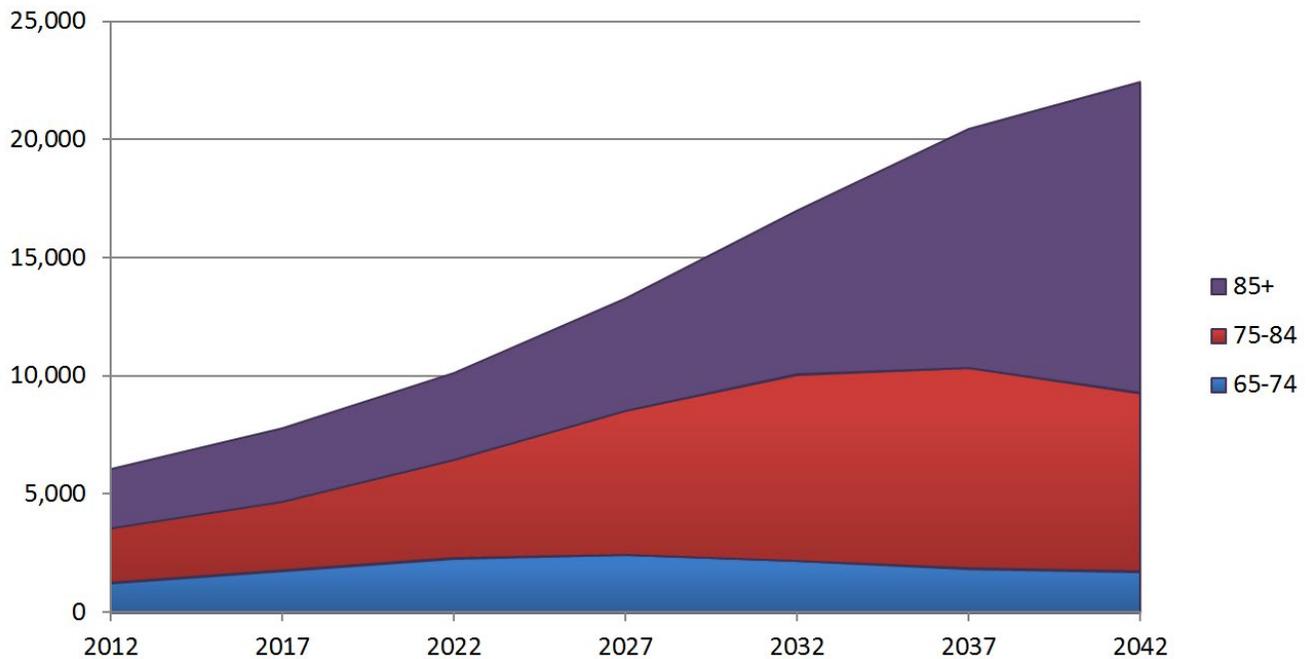
	18 or less	19-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Enrollee count	81,340	36,001	15,789	13,969	13,152	9,748
Male	82,006		Female 87,993			

## Projected Alaska Senior Population by Age Group, 2010-2035



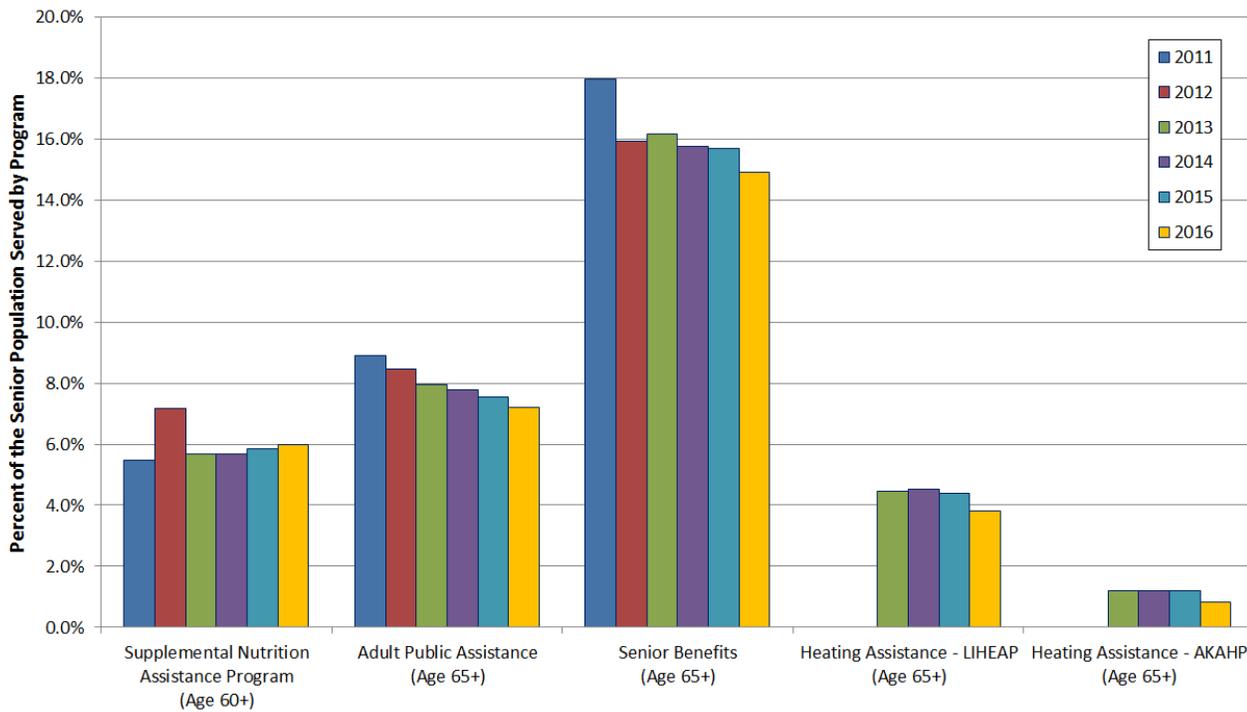
Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Workforce and Development, Research and Analysis, 2016 Population Projections

## Projected Number of Alaskans with Alzheimer's, Age 65+



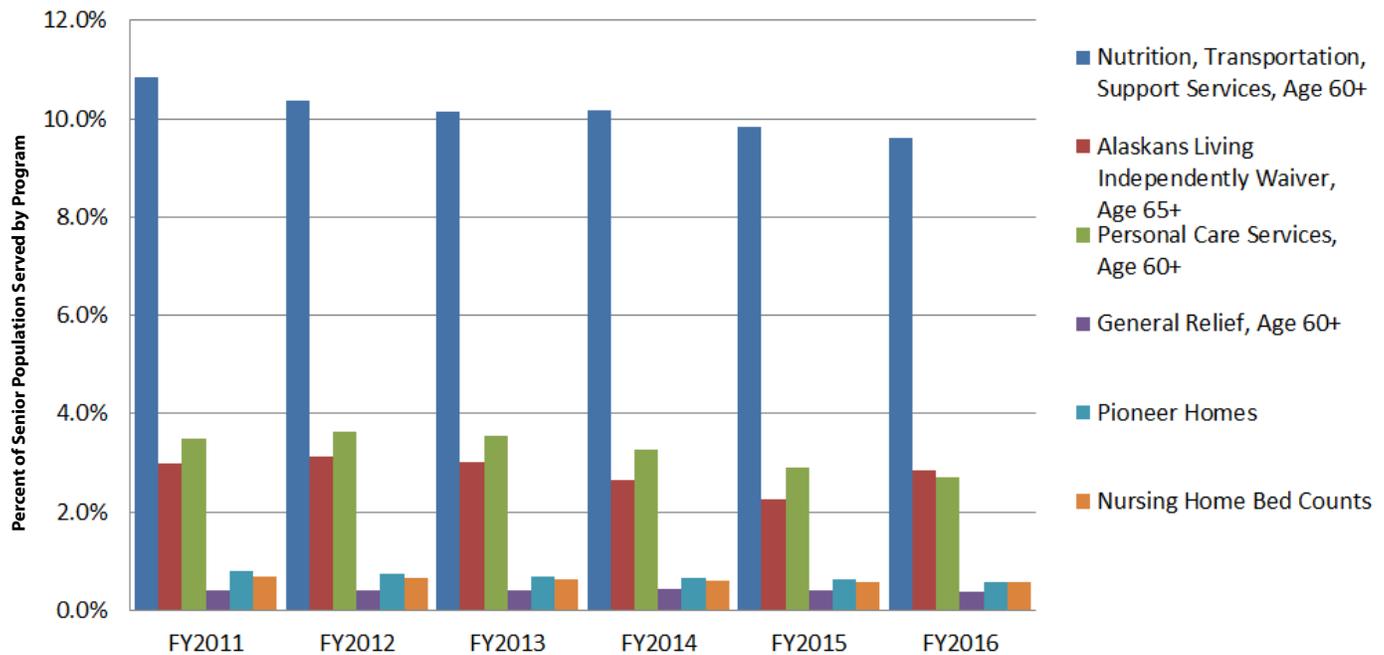
Source: National Alzheimer's Association Estimates for Alaska

## Financial Programs Serving Alaska's Seniors, FY2011-FY2016



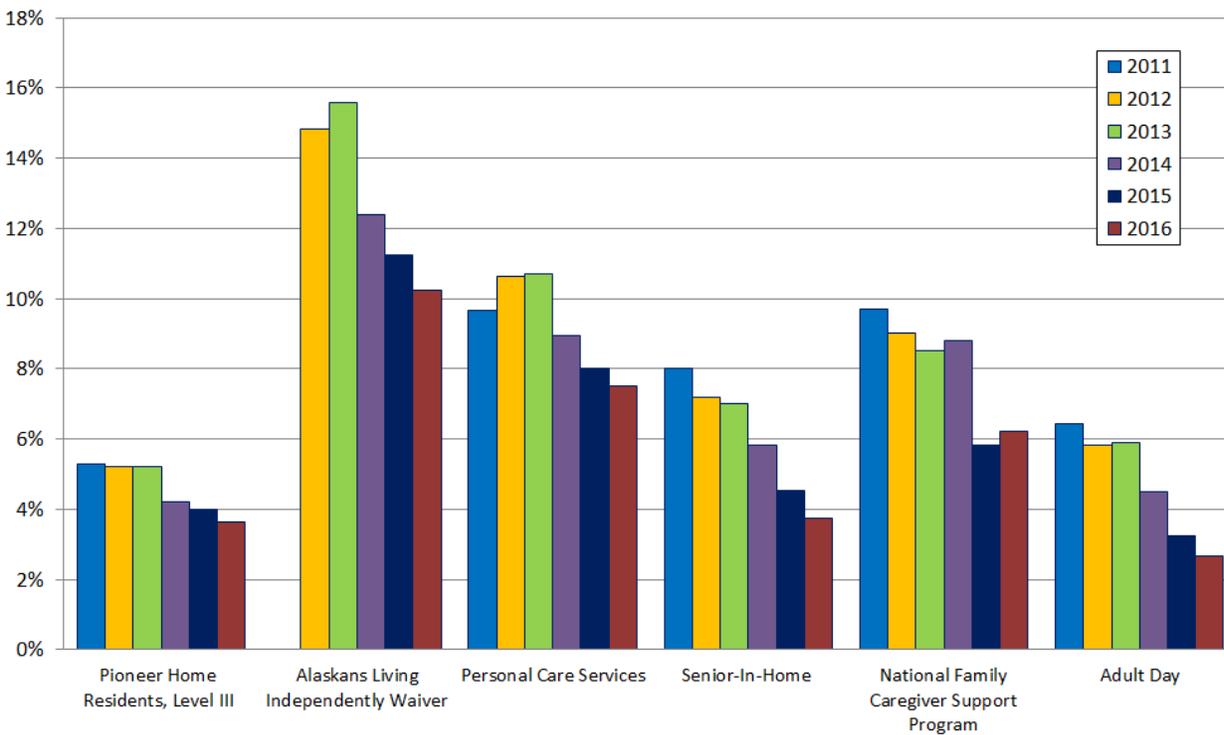
Source: Alaska Division of Public Assistance

## Long-Term Supports Serving Alaska Seniors, FY2011-FY2016



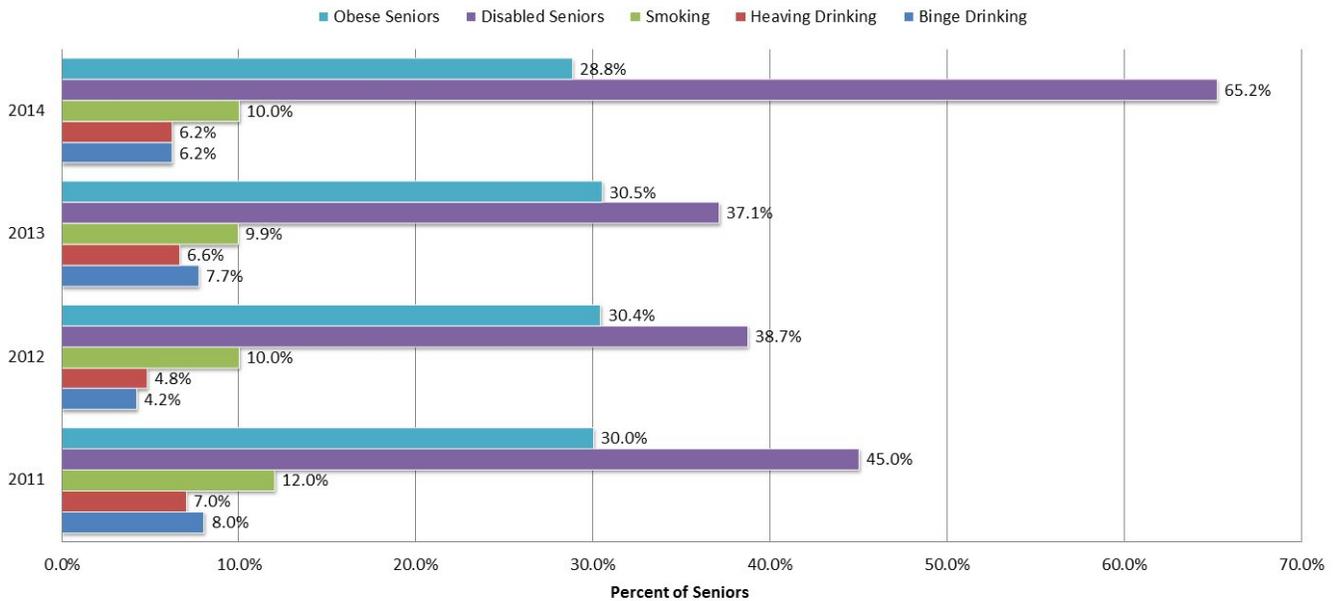
Source: Alaska Division of Senior and Disabilities Services, Alaska Pioneer Homes, and Alaska Division of Health Care Services

## Percentage of Seniors Receiving Select Services who have Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias, FY2011-FY2016



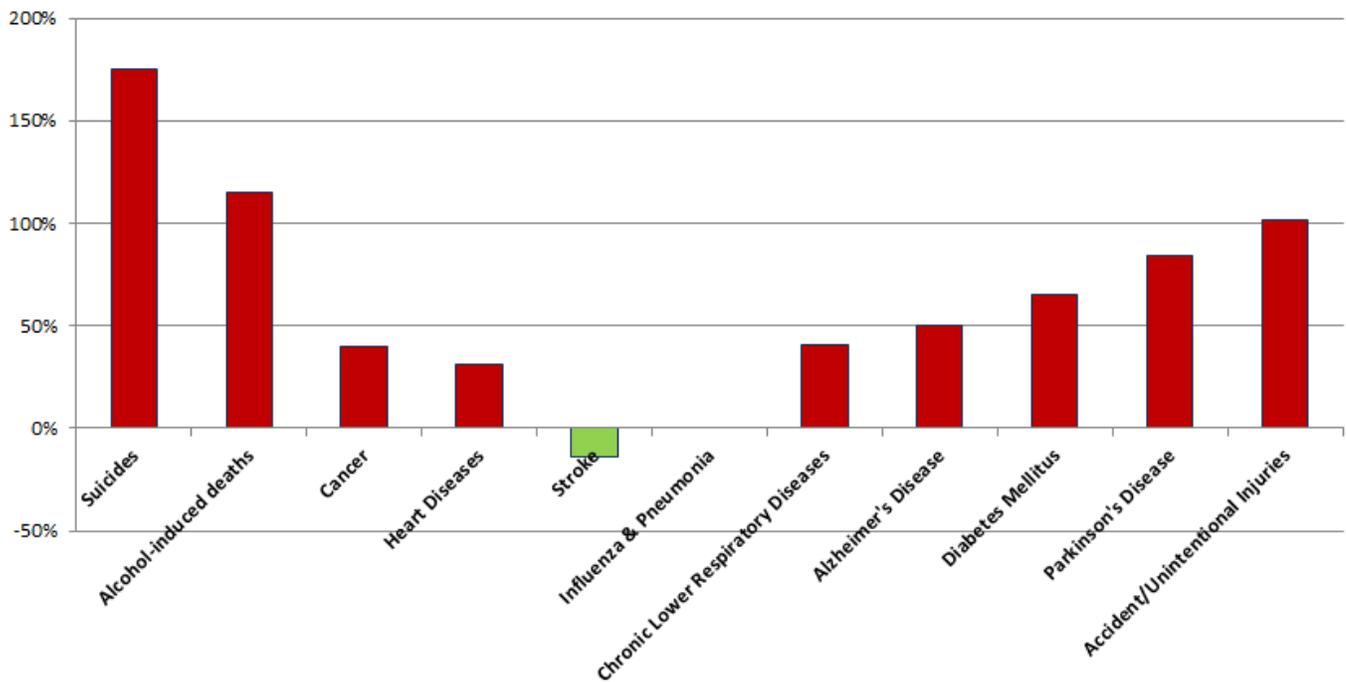
Source: Division of Senior and Disabilities Services and Alaska Pioneer Homes

## Senior Behavioral Health



Source: Alaska Division of Public Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

## Percentage Change in Selected Causes of Death for Alaskans, Age 65+, 2000-2015



Source: Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics Health Analytics & Vital Records, December 2016





## Alaska Commission on Aging (ACoA) Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/16

Annually, the ACoA gathers data to provide a sketch of the health and well-being of Alaskan residents, age 60 years and older. Below are highlights from the 2015/2016 Senior Snapshot:

- 🌸 Alaska continues to be the fastest growing senior population per capita for the seventh year in a row. From 2004 to 2014, the 65+ population increased in Alaska by 61.5%, followed by Nevada (52%) and Colorado (50%), the only states to experience an increase by 50% or more. **Note 2**
- 🌸 The number of Alaskan seniors age 60+ continues to increase. From the 2010 census to the 2016 projected population data, the Alaska senior population increased by 38.5% statewide. The highest regional growth rate over this period was in Southcentral (46.4%) followed by the Aleutians (44.2%) and the Interior (41.4%). Southeast Alaska continues to have the highest concentration of seniors at 25.7% where one in four residents in the region is an adult age 60 years and older. **Note 1**
- 🌸 The number of Alaskans age 60 to 64 has grown to 46,906 in 2016 from 35,938 in 2010, a 30.5% increase. **Note 1**
- 🌸 The 85-and-older Alaskan cohort is increasing at a rapid pace. These seniors are generally frail, at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), and are the most likely to depend on home- and community-based and long-term support services. The 85-and-older cohort grew from 4,711 in 2010 to 6,281 in 2016, for an increase of 33.3% over the past six years. **Note 1**
- 🌸 Retired seniors as a whole contribute at least \$2.4 billion annually to Alaska's economy from their retirement income, health care spending and revenue from other sources. The retirement industry, one of the State's top economic sectors, creates approximately 13,000 jobs in health care, long-term support services, housing, and other employment sectors. Employed seniors (23.8% of the 65+ population) contribute an additional \$633 million. More than half of employed seniors work in health care, education, public administration, and retail. The cumulative senior economic impact of \$3 billion compares favorably to other industries including fishing (\$2.2 billion), construction (\$2.1 billion) and retail trade (\$2.1 billion). In addition, Alaskan seniors volunteer and provide unpaid caregiving to family members and friends (UA Institute of Social and Economic Research, Power of Aging in Alaska Symposium, 2014). **Note 3**

- ☼ In 2015, 4.8% of Alaskans age 65 and older lived below poverty level, 1.6% lived below 50 percent of poverty level, and 9.1% lived at 125 percent of poverty level. **Note 7**
- ☼ The number of seniors (age 65+) receiving monthly cash supplemental payments from the Adult Public Assistance has increased by 56 recipients, the average benefit has decreased by \$2.31. **Note 7**
- ☼ The percent of seniors receiving assistance from the Alaska Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also referred to as the “Food Stamp” program, from 2015 to 2016 has remained steady. The amount of SNAP assistance provided to each senior is based on the need and income of the entire household. **Note 8**
- ☼ The number of Alaskans age 65 and older receiving monthly cash supplemental payments from the Senior Benefits Program increased by 244 recipients. To qualify for this program, seniors must be 65 or older and have incomes below 175% of the federal poverty level for Alaska. **Note 9**
- ☼ The number of households with a senior member (age 60+ years) that received heating assistance decreased by 177 households between FY2015 and FY2016. **Note 10**
- ☼ There were 368 applicants on the Pioneer Home active waitlist in 2016. To be eligible for the Pioneer Homes, one must be 65 years or older, be a resident for at least one year, and complete an application. To qualify for the active wait list, the senior must be willing and ready to move into a Pioneer Home within 30 days of an offer. **Note 21**
- ☼ Alaska continues to have the highest nursing home costs in the country at \$816 per day or \$297,840 per year in 2016. The average annual cost in the United States is \$92,378. **Note 22**
- ☼ Alaska has the second highest median cost for assisted living facility care at \$69,000 per year as compared to the national average of \$43,539 per year. Washington D.C. has the highest cost for assisted living in the nation at \$80,400 annually. **Note 22**
- ☼ The 2016 median daily rate for Adult Day Services in Alaska is \$100 per day; the national median daily rate is \$68. **Note 22**
- ☼ In SFY2016, Adult Protective Services received 703 reports of harm of which involved older adults, age 60+. **Note 29**

The Senior Snapshot incorporates the latest data available however not all items are updated on an annual basis.

## Population by Region and Age Group

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Population Age 60+ By Region	Percentage of Regions 2016 Pop.	Seniors in CY2016	Seniors in CY2015	Seniors in CY2014	Seniors in CY2010	Change in Population 2010-2016	Comments
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>125,886</b>	<b>120,444</b>	<b>115,280</b>	<b>90,876</b>	<b>38.5%</b>	Over a 7-year period. <b>Note 1</b>
I. Bethel Area	10.8%	2,841	2,754	2,635	2,306	23.2%	Bethel, Kusilvak Census Area
II. Interior	16.4%	18,565	17,757	16,853	13,134	41.4%	Fairbanks NSB, Yukon-Koyukuk, Denali, SE Fairbanks
III. North Slope	11.1%	1,086	1,057	1,001	856	26.9%	North Slope Borough
IV. Anchorage	15.9%	47,532	45,492	43,727	35,079	35.4%	Municipality of Anchorage
V. Southcentral	19.6%	33,328	31,651	30,179	22,760	46.4%	Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su, Valdez- Cordova
VI. Northwest	11.7%	2,109	2,036	1,996	1,681	25.5%	Nome, Northwest Arctic
VII. Southwest	15.8%	3,312	2,928	2,919	2,440	37.5%	Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Kodiak, Lake & Peninsula
VIII. Aleutians	14.4%	1,221	1,201	1,166	847	44.2%	Aleutians East, Aleutians West
IX. Southeast	25.7%	15,890	15,282	14,675	11,764	35.1%	Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon, Wrangell-Petersburg, Yakutat
Population Age 60+ By Age Group	Percentage of senior population	Seniors in CY2016	Seniors in CY2015	Seniors in CY2014	Seniors in CY2010	% Seniors Change 2010-2016	
Age 60-64	37.3%	46,906	45,491	44,200	35,938	30.5%	
Age 65-74	42.6%	53,668	50,592	47,605	33,139	61.9%	
Age 75-84	15.1%	19,031	18,177	17,615	14,877	27.9%	
Age 85+	5.0%	6,281	6,084	5,860	4,711	33.3%	

## Senior Population Growth

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Population Growth	2016 & 2015 US Ranking	AK Growth, 2004-2014	US Average Growth, 2004-2014	Comments
Alaska's Senior Population, Age 65+	#1	61.7%	24.7%	<b>Note 2</b>

## Economic Factors

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Economic Contribution	CY2014	CY2013	CY2012	CY2010	Comments
Seniors' economic contribution to Alaska	\$2.5 billion**	\$2.4 billion**	\$2.1 billion**	\$1.7 billion	<b>Note 3</b>
Economic Status Indicators	2016	2015	2014	2013	Comments
Average monthly Social Security payment for Alaska seniors age 65+	\$1,306 (December)	\$1,328 (December)	\$1,341 (December)	\$1,180 (December)	<b>Note 4</b>
Average monthly PERS payments for Alaska seniors	\$1,759 (September)	\$1,729 (September)	\$1,676 (September)	\$1,605 (September)	Average payment per person for retirement PERS payments. <b>Note 5</b>
Number of Alaska seniors receiving PERS payments	16,318 (September)	15,421 (September)	14,377 (September)	13,568 (September)	
Average monthly Teachers Retirement System (TRS) Payment	\$2,861 (October)	\$2,855 (October)	\$2,831 (October)	\$2,756 (October)	Teachers Retirement System: Information includes average payment per person. <b>Note 6</b>
Number of Alaska seniors receiving TRS payments	5,715 (October)	5,517 (October)	5,217 (October)	5,046 (October)	

\*\* Rates based on fewer than 6 occurrences are not reported.

## Senior Benefits by Region

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Region	October 2016	October 2015	October 2014	October 2012	Comments
Statewide	11,784	11,540	11,298	11,123	Number of seniors 65+ on Senior Benefits. <b>Note 9</b>
I. Bethel Area	804	808	775	778	Bethel, Kusilvak Census Area
II. Interior	1,406	1,354	1,306	1,311	Fairbanks NSB, Yukon-Koyukuk, Denali, SE Fairbanks
III. North Slope	35	38	36	40	North Slope Borough
IV. Anchorage	4,340	4,231	4,154	4,053	Municipality of Anchorage
V. Southcentral	2,948	2,850	2,795	2,687	Kenai Peninsula, Mat-Su, Valdez-Cordova
VI. Northwest	422	441	425	395	Nome, Northwest Arctic
VII. Southwest	413	407	415	449	Bristol Bay, Dillingham, Kodiak, Lake & Peninsula
VIII. Aleutians	60	65	60	61	Aleutians East, Aleutians West
IX. Southeast	1,356	1,346	1,332	1,341	Haines, Juneau, Ketchikan, Prince of Wales, Sitka, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon, Wrangell-Petersburg, Yakutat
Unknown Region	0	0	0	8	

## Food Stamps and Other Senior Assistance Programs

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Other assistance	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	Comments
Seniors in Alaska (age 60+) receiving SNAP	3,229 (60-64) 4,334 (65+) Total 7,563 (November)	2,995 (60-64) 4,047 (65+) Total 7,042 (November)	2,802 (60-64) 3,746 (65+) Total 6,548 (November)	SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps). <b>Note 8</b>
Average dollar monthly benefit for Alaskan seniors on SNAP	\$309 (60-64) \$206 (65+)	\$261 (60-64) \$186 (65+)	\$168 (60-64) \$91 (65+)	SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as Food Stamps). <b>Note 8</b>
Seniors receiving Adult Public Assistance age 65+	\$232 (65+)	\$235 (65+)	\$239 (65+)	<b>Note 9</b>
Households with a senior member (age 65+) receiving heating assistance	3,669 total: 3,020 LIHEAP 649 AKAHP	3,846 total: LIHEAP: 3,031 AKAHP: 815	4,055 total: 3,213 LIHEAP 842 AKAHP	LIHEAP: Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. AKAHP: Alaska Affordable Heating Program. <b>Note 10</b>

## AHFC and Senior Housing

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Housing	2016	2015	2014	Comments
AHFC total units of senior/disabled housing (statewide)	610 units (December)	610 units (December)	610 units (December)	AHFC: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. <b>Note 11</b>
AHFC wait list for senior/disabled housing (statewide)	873 (November)	663 (November)	567 (November)	AHFC: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. <b>Note 12</b>
AHFC wait list for housing vouchers	2,952 families (November)	2,782 families (November)	2,448 families (November)	AHFC: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. <b>Note 13</b>
Housing Development	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	Comments
AHFC senior housing units funded for development	47 units	95 units	40 units	AHFC: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation. From FY01 thru FY16, 1,008 senior housing units in total were developed with AHFC and other funding sources.

## Senior Health

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Leading Causes of Death 65+	Alaska 2015 Deaths	Alaska 2015 Rate (per 100,000)	Alaska 2014 Deaths	Alaska 2014 Rate (per 100,000)	U.S. 2014 Deaths	U.S. 2014 Rate (per 100,000)	Comments
Suicides	11	14.6*	8	11.2*	7,693	16.6	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Fatal falls (accidental)	36	48.0	17	23.8*	27,044	58.4	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Other accidental deaths	55	73.4	49	68.7	21,251	45.9	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Alcohol-induced deaths	19	25.3*	19	26.6*	6,437	13.9	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Drug-induced deaths	7	9.3*	4	**	2,920	6.3	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Cancer	581	776.1	590	828.1	413,885	895.0	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Heart Diseases	549	733.4	492	690.6	489,722	1,059.0	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Stroke	133	176.4	120	168.4	113,308	245.0	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Influenza & Pneumonia	32	42.7	53	74.3	44,836	96.9	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	28	37.4	153	214.7	124,693	269.6	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Alzheimer's Disease	66	94.0	67	94.0	92,604	200.2	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Diabetes Mellitus	89	94.0	67	94.0	54,161	117.1	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	156	208.4	153	214.7	N/A	N/A	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Parkinson's Disease	35	46.7	22	30.8	25,482	55.1	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>
Accident/ Unintentional Injuries	91	121.5	66	92.6	48,295	104.4	Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics. <b>Note 15</b>

\* Rates based on fewer than 20 occurrences are statistically unreliable and should be used with caution.

\*\* Rates based on fewer than 6 occurrences are not reported.

## Senior Health (continued)

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

ADRD Estimates	2016, Alaska	2015, Alaska	2010, Alaska	2000, Alaska	2016, US	Comments
Number with Alzheimer's Disease & Related Dementia (ADRD)	6,800	6,400	5,000	3,400	5.4 million	Alaska's ADRD estimates are based on national prevalence rates by age group. An estimated 9% of Alaska seniors age 65+ have Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease rates increase with age and directly affect almost half of Alaskans over 85. <b>Note 14</b>

## Senior Behavioral Health

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Behavioral Health, Seniors Age 65+	2015, Alaska	2014, Alaska	2015, U.S.	Comments
Binge drinkers	6.9%	6.2%	4.3%	<b>Note 16</b>
Heavy drinkers	6.1%	6.2%	3.9%	<b>Note 17</b>
Smokers	9.3%	10.0%	8.8%	<b>Note 18</b>
Disabled seniors	31.6%	29.5%	32.6%	<b>Note 19</b>
Obese seniors	30.5%	28.8%	28.5%	<b>Note 20</b>

## Long Term Care

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Long Term Care	2016, Alaska	2015, Alaska	2014, Alaska	2013, Alaska	Alaska Baseline	Comments
Percent of Pioneer Home residents at Level III	54.3% (December)	56.11% (November)	55.9% (October)	56% (October)	46.1% (December 2004)	Level III is the most advanced level of care. Division of Pioneer Homes. <b>Note 21</b>
Pioneer Home Applicants on Active Wait List	361	332	276	369	374 (2008)	Total number of beds available is 542. <b>Note 21</b>
Average age of Pioneer Home resident	86.2 years (November)	86.4 years (November)	86.2 years (October)	86.2 years (October)	76 years (1998)	Applicants must be 65 years or older, a resident for at least one year, and submit an application. Active wait list is defined by the number of seniors who are willing and ready to move into a Pioneer Home within 30 days of an offer. <b>Note 21</b>

## Long Term Care (continued)

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Long Term Care	2016, Alaska	2015, Alaska	2016, U.S.	Comments
Nursing home costs – private room, median daily rate	\$816/day	\$771/day	\$253/day	Amount is based on a private room. Alaska has the highest cost of skilled nursing facility care in the country, and costs over 3 times as much as the national average. <b>Note 22</b>
Nursing home costs – private room, median yearly rate	\$297,840/year	\$281,415/year	\$92,378/year	Amount is based on a private room. <b>Note 22</b>
Assisted Living Home costs – average median daily rate	\$189/day	\$187/day	\$119/day	<b>Note 22</b>
Assisted Living Home costs – average annual median rate	\$69,000/year	\$68,430/year	\$43,539/year	Alaska is in the top 10 highest median cost per year, Washington, DC has this highest cost at \$80,400. <b>Note 22</b>
Home Health Care Costs: Home Health Aide – median daily rate	\$169/day	\$163/day	\$127/day	<b>Note 22</b>
Home Health Care Costs: Home Health Aide – annual median rate	\$61,776/year	\$59,488/year	\$46,332/year	Alaska has the highest cost per year. Average cost of care based on 44 hours per week by 52 weeks. <b>Note 22</b>
Adult Day Services Costs – median daily rate	\$100/day	\$122/day	\$68/day	Alaska has the highest cost for adult day services. This amount is based on 5 days per week for 52 weeks. <b>Note 23</b>
Adult Day Services Costs – annual median rate	\$36,582/year	\$31,829/year	\$17,680/year	

Waivers	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	FY2013	FY2012	FY2011	Comments
Alaskans Living Independently Waiver, Seniors Recipients, Age 65+	1,428	1,678	1,884	2,044	1,992	1,758	To qualify for services under the Alaskans Living Independently Waiver, individuals must be age 21 years or older, income-eligible, and must meet nursing home level-of-care requirements. <b>Note 23</b>

## Long Term Care (continued)

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

	FY2016	FY2015	FY2014	
Senior grant services through Division of Senior & Disabilities Services	26,885 Total cost: \$13,714,273 Per Client: \$510	25,671 Total cost: \$14,367,957 Per Client: \$560	31,679 Total cost: \$14,894,610 Per Client: \$470	Excludes TABI management & mini-grant services. FY2016 financial total was funded the following way: Federal 37%, State 62% and MHTAAR 1%. The recipient count includes the total number of seniors receiving registered and non-registered services targeting persons age 60+ only. <b>Note 24</b>
Alaskans on Medicare	80,836 (CY 2015)	73,434 (CY 2013)	68,417 (CY 2011)	The number of Alaskans on Medicare continues to increase as the senior population grows. Approximately 20 percent of Medicare recipients are under the age of 65. <b>Note 25</b>
Aging and Disability Resource Center	3,979	N/A	3,608	Counts for FY14 and FY16 are unduplicated. <b>Note 26</b>
Personal Care Services, Age 60+	3,261	3,496	3,776	<b>Note 27</b>

## Senior Safety

### Senior Snapshot: Older Alaskans in 2015/2016

Senior Safety	2016	2015	Comments
Long-Term Care Ombudsman: Number of unannounced visits to senior assisted living homes	740	434	In 2016 the Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman began reporting the number of facility visits and number of volunteers in order to adequately reflect any changes/progress in the program. <b>Note 28</b>
Long-Term Care Ombudsman: Number of active volunteer ombudsman	33	16	<b>Note 28</b>
	<b>FY2016</b>	<b>FY2015</b>	
Adult Protective Services: Reports of harm	70	835	Senior and Disabilities Services reports that the number of reports may be dropping due to budget reductions constraints. APS continues to respond to reports of harm within 10 days, as mandated by the federal government. <b>Note 29</b>

## Senior Snapshot Notes and Resources

- (1) Data from Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development's 2015 population estimates. Regions are those used by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. "The Alaska State Plan for Senior Services, FY2016 – FY2019 Revised Funding Formula" prescribes funding by region for senior grant programs which include federal Older Americans Act money.
- (2) Data from "A Profile of Older Americans: 2015," Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- (3) The University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) estimated the 2004 cash contribution of Alaska retirees age 60 and older at \$1.461 billion. The estimate is contained in the 2007 ACoA-commissioned "Report on the Economic Well-Being of Alaska Seniors" available on the Commission's website at: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/acoa/Documents/documents/seniorWellbeingReport.pdf>. This estimate was updated by the UA Institute of Social and Economic Research for the Power of in Alaska Symposium, 2014.
- (4) Information from the Social Security Administration, Social Security Fact Sheet, accessed 12/14/2016 at: <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/colafacts2016.html>. The Alaska average monthly payment may be lower because of the high percentage of Alaska retirees who are subject to the "Windfall Elimination Provision," which limits Social Security retirement benefits for many individuals receiving public employee pensions.
- (5) Figures on PERS (Public Employee Retirement System) benefits include PERS retirees age 60 and older who currently reside in Alaska. Information from the Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits (via e-mail 11/21/2015).
- (6) Figures on TRS (Teachers Retirement System) benefits include TRS retirees age 60 and older who currently reside in Alaska. AK Dept. of Administration, Div. of Retirement & Benefits (via e-mail 11/21/2015).
- (7) "Poverty Status in the Last 12 Months" Information from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, accessed 12/20/2016. Information may be found at <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.
- (8) The Alaska Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also referred to as the Food Stamp Program, provides food benefits to low-income households. Eligible applicants must pass income and assets tests. The gross monthly income test is based on 130% of the current Alaska poverty standard. Information from the Alaska Division of Public Assistance, via email 11/23/2016.

- (9) Adult Public Assistance is a supplement to SSI, so recipients must be either certified as disabled by the Social Security Administration (with severe long-term disabilities that impose mental or physical limitations on their day-to-day functioning) or be age 65 and older. There are income limits for the program, which is intended to assist aged or disabled individuals in attaining self-support or self-care.
- (10) Information from the Alaska Division of Public Assistance. The Alaska Affordable Heating Program (AKAHP) provides heating assistance to households between 151% to 221% federal poverty level (FPL). The federally-funded Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides heating assistance to households below 151% FPL.
- (11) Information from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Includes only HUD properties managed by AHFC. The total number of units has not changed for many years.
- (12) Information from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Includes individuals age 62+ as well as individuals of any age with a disability.
- (13) information from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). All families, regardless of age, are in this wait list count.
- (14) Data from Alaska's Roadmap to Address ADRD, 2014 and the 2016 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report.
- (15) Alaska Bureau of Health Analytics & Vital Records via email 12/19/2016. Crude rates are per 100,000 U.S. population, Age 65+. \*Rates based on fewer than 20 occurrences are statistically unreliable and should be used with caution. \*\* Rates based on fewer than 6 occurrences are not reported.
- (16) The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013-14 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – current data is not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Binge drinking is defined as males having five or more drinks on one occasion and females having four or more drinks on one occasion.
- (17) The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013-14 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – current data is not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Heavy drinking is defined as adult men having more than two drinks per day and adult women having more than one drink per day.

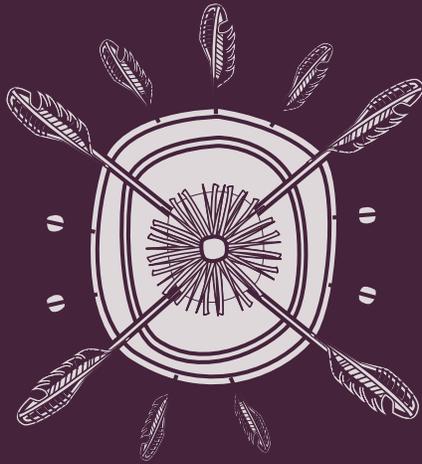
- (18) The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013-14 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. Smokers are defined as current smokers.
- (19) The definition of disabled has changed. Before 2013, disabled was defined as either an activity limitation and/or use of special equipment. Starting in 2013, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) starting using the Affordable Care Act definition using 5 of the 6 conditions of vision, cognition, mobility, self-care, and independent living. The measure of hearing was not felt appropriate to ask on a telephone survey. See <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6429a2.htm> for a further explanation.
- (20) The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is an ongoing multi-state phone survey conducted in Alaska by the Division of Public Health. The 2013-14 data include cell phone data and use a new weighting methodology that allows adjustment for more demographic variables. Because of this – they are not directly comparable to past years that did not use these methods. “Obese” individuals are defined as those with a body mass index (BMI) of 30.0 or greater.
- (21) Information from the Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes, via email 12/15/2016.
- (22) Information from the Genworth Long Term Care Cost Survey Across the United States, 2016. Available at <https://www.genworth.com/about-us/industry-expertise/cost-of-care.html>.
- (23) According to the Division of Senior and Disabilities Services, the decrease in the number of Alaskans Living Independently (ALI) waiver recipients (regardless of age) may be due to one or more of the following reasons: (1) A lawsuit that required SDS to actively provide services to individuals who were denied level of care until the division implemented the “Material Improvement Process” and “third level external review process,” both of which have been accomplished by SDS; (2) employing tools and practices that better align with program eligibility criteria in the distribution of limited program funds; and (3) re-directing individuals with minimal support needs to alternative programs such as Personal Care Assistance, senior grant-funded services, and natural supports.
- (24) Information from Senior & Disabilities Services via email 10/20/2016. Senior grant programs include Nutrition, Transportation and Support Services (NTS), Senior In-Home Services, Adult Day Services, Family Caregiver, and ADRD Education and Support. The senior grant programs are available to individuals age 60 and older. Seniors (age 60+) need not be Medicaid-eligible in order to receive grant services. Over the past four years, this number has also included seniors served by ADRCs.

- (25) Information from the Medicare Information Office, via phone interview 12/15/2016.
- (26) Information from Senior & Disabilities Services, Senior Grants Unit, via email, 10/20/2016.
- (27) Personal Care Services (also known as Personal Care Assistance) provides support for Alaskan seniors and individuals with disabilities. PCS services provide support related to an individual's activities of daily living (i.e. bathing, dressing eating) as well as instrumental activities of daily living (i.e. shopping, laundry, light housework). PCA is provided statewide in Alaska through private agencies. The administration of the PCA program is overseen by the PCA Unit of Senior and Disabilities Services, Department of Health and Social Services.
- (28) There are 18 nursing facilities with 692 residents, 654 assisted living homes with 3,880 residents (273 are licensed to serve seniors with 2492 residents) in long term care facilities in 34 communities across the state. As the number of seniors continues to grow, the ability to respond to complaints will become increasingly difficult with the current staffing levels. The OLTCO plans to work with experienced volunteer ombudsmen, (who operate under the direct supervision of staff ombudsmen, especially in rural communities, to be able to respond to complaints. Adult protective Services continues to respond to reports of harm within 10 days as mandated by the federal government.
- (29) Information from Adult Protective Services, State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

### **For questions:**

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**Please call the Alaska Commission on Aging, 907-465-3250.**



# FY2016

Alaska Commission  
on Aging  
240 Main Street,  
Suite 100  
Court Plaza Building  
PO Box 110693  
Juneau, AK 99811-0693  
Phone: (907) 465-3250  
Fax: (907) 465-1398

[www.alaskaaging.org](http://www.alaskaaging.org)  
[hss.acoa@alaska.gov](mailto:hss.acoa@alaska.gov)

## **Alaska State Plan for Senior Services Guiding Principles:**

***Highlight Seniors' Community Contributions.***

***Keep Seniors Strong and Healthy.***

***Promote Independence, Empowerment and Choice.***

***Focus on Partnerships.***

***Build Community-Centered Agencies.***

***Provide Home-and Community-Based Care.***

***Offer a Full Continuum of Care.***

***Individualize the Response.***

***Include Younger Generations.***

***Target Services to the Most Vulnerable Seniors.***

***Support High-Quality Staff.***

***Respect Rights.***

***Aim for Excellence.***

***Give Fair Reimbursement.***