



Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE)

Policies & Procedures

Updated September 2024

Purpose

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) is a community stakeholder group whose mission is to advise the Alaska Department of Health (DOH) HIV/STD Program on issues related to HIV prevention and care and co-occurring sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The Alaska HIV Advisory Group assists in the development of the Alaska Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan (IPCP), in partnership with the HIV/STD Program, and provides ongoing guidance on ways to achieve Alaska's Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan goals of increasing testing, expanding prevention services, ensuring high-quality, accessible treatment, and eliminating health disparities.

Code of Conduct

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) goal is to ensure all conversations constructively advance the work of the group, are welcoming of diverse perspectives, and are free from harassment. Members, partners, and guests are expected to:

- Conduct business in ways that are honest, respectful of diversity, compassionate, and non-judgmental.
- Take responsibility for their actions.
- Refrain from using language that is threatening, offensive, biased, insensitive, abusive, or intended to be hurtful.
- Refrain from acts of threat or violence directed at other participants.
- Abide by the group's ground rules.
 - Listen to understand. Remain open minded. Ask questions. If you disagree, please do so openly while maintain respect for each other.
 - Share group time fairly. Allow one person to speak at a time.
 - Remain focused on the topic at hand. Avoid out-of-order comments and side conversations.
 - Speak from experience and from reliable data sources. Misinformation is unacceptable.

Membership Overview

Members are those who have completed an application for Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) and have been approved and appointed by decision of a majority of ARISE. The number of voting members on the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) is limited to 35. Co-chairs count toward the membership total. Members will be representative of the priority agencies, organizations, populations, and technical advisors. If the Group membership falls below 10 members at any time, the group shall convene a Special Membership Meeting to identify and nominate potential new members who meet the needs identified by the group, with particular emphasis placed on ensuring there is equal representation from both HIV prevention and HIV care. Vacancies will not prevent the group from carrying out business.

Membership Goals

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) aims to have a broad cross-section of Alaskans participating in and providing input on Alaska's HIV prevention and care efforts. Members are the lifeblood of the group. Shared experiences from people living with HIV, viral hepatitis, and STIs are key contributors to this work. Membership goals will be determined based on epidemiological data indicative of populations living with and vulnerable to HIV and co-infections. Membership goals will be reassessed annually. Data will be collected via 1) the member application and 2) membership discussions during meetings.

Membership Types

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) meetings are generally held two to four times per year, either 1) remotely with opportunities to participate via video conferencing or 2) in-person with opportunities to participate via video conferencing for people who have barriers to traveling. Membership terms do not end, with few exceptions. The co-chairs reserve the right to terminate a membership and/or curtail participation of members/guests/technical advisors who:

- Commit verbal or physical harassment against members, guests, or technical advisors.
- Continuously are disruptive, combative, counterproductive, and/or actively promoting misinformation during meetings or via other communications with members; and/or
- Have continuous absences from the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) activities and/or are nonresponsive to communications or during meetings.

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) will engage a variety of potential members, including those representing HIV prevention, HIV care, state residents living with HIV/AIDS or accessing HIV prevention services, and other public health and social wellness professional. Group participation can be achieved through one of the following engagements:

Co-Chair: The co-chairs share responsibility for guiding the ARISE in accomplishing its purpose and goals. Two co-chairs will serve at all times: one representing the DOH and the other representing Members. The DOH co-chair will be appointed by the State of Alaska HIV/STD Program; the Community Co-Chair will be a member not employed by DOH who volunteers and is appointed by a majority vote of Members for a 2-year term. Each co-chair will have a vote in those situations where a vote is necessary.

Co-chairs are tasked with equally representing the interests of HIV Prevention, HIV Care, and Hepatitis Prevention. The responsibilities of the co-chairs include but may not be limited to:

- Lead ARISE meetings, including observing meeting rules of order as outlined in the Charter. If neither co-chair is available, leadership may be delegated to another Member.
- Coordinate with DOH to contact members about meetings, subcommittees, and other events associated with the group.
- To the best of their ability, engage in training and other educational opportunities for the purpose of sharing knowledge, skills, and practices with the group.
- Identify and recruit new members to the group, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that the Membership is equally representative of Alaska's HIV Prevention and Care service needs.
- Available to provide signature authority for group documents, including any required Federal submissions.

Member: Appointed by a majority vote after the completion of an application process. Members have full voting rights, are subject to membership terms, and attendance requirements. Membership records shall be kept in a secure folder by the DOH co-chair and will not be publicly available.

Guest: Guests may be invited to attend group meetings, teleconferences, or subcommittees at the request of any co-chair or member. Guests must be approved by both co-chairs and do not count towards the group membership numbers and have no voting rights.

Technical Advisor: Technical Advisors may be invited to attend group meetings, teleconferences, or subcommittees at the request of any co-chair or member to provide topic-specific information, education, or advice related to group activities.

General Operations

A quorum of the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) consists of one-half of its members. If less than a quorum is present at any meeting, the co-chairs may defer matters until the next scheduled meeting.

Scheduled Meetings

The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) shall meet at least two times per calendar year. Special meetings may be scheduled in the case of urgent voting matters, so long as quorum is able to be established.

Attendance

Attendance at meetings of the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE), its subcommittee meetings, and other activities of the group will be documented by roll call (either verbal or written). If a member cannot attend a meeting of the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) they should notify the co-chairs at least 24 hours before the meeting. In the case of illness or emergency, the notification should take place as soon as possible, but will be accepted after the meeting.

HIV/STD Program staff will monitor member attendance. Membership data will be tracked and shared as follows:

- DOH HIV/STD Program staff will track member attendance at meetings and share data with the group's co-chairs after each ARISE meeting.
- ARISE co-chairs will track and report to the group at the end of each calendar year:
 - The demographic characteristics (e.g., agency, profession, location) of members who attended at least one meeting in the past 12 months. This information will not be shared publicly.
 - Members who have not attended any meetings in the past 12 months. These individuals will then be contacted and asked if they are interested in continuing to serve on the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) and receive group communications. These individuals will also be categorized as ARISE partners (rather than members with voting rights) until they attend an ARISE meeting.

Subcommittees

Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) subcommittees will be established and convene, as needed. Need will be determined by group members and co-chairs. Subcommittees will be created as determined by the group. Each such committee will have at least two members. The chair of each subcommittee will be appointed by the co-chairs.

Voting

While the primary role of members is to advise the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE), members may be asked to vote on occasion. In these instances, decisions will be made based on the votes of the majority of members who are present or responsive within a reasonable timeframe. Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) are also required to vote on concurrence with any new Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan.

Conflict Resolution

- Formal disputes, complaints, or concerns about individuals, processes, the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE)-specific issues should initially be logged with the co-chairs.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved at that level, the co-chairs shall formally convene an Operations Subcommittee for resolution.
 - If the conflict is taken to an Operations Subcommittee, a decision from the committee will be provided directly to the individual who submitted the original complaint. The decision will be final.

Conflicts of Interest

It shall be assumed that there is no conflict of interest in members when attending and/or addressing the needs of the group. This includes work done to develop the Integrated HIV Prevention and Care Plan.

Records

The HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) will keep minutes of all meetings and other records necessary to fulfill its purpose. All group records (e.g., agendas, minutes, slide decks) must be submitted to the DOH co-chair for retention. Group records shall be retained for up to ten (10) years. Public group records will be available on the group shared drive (<https://anthc2.app.box.com/s/086whtzlg5szxubenxfn0ty2ze0lka0d>). All records, excluding member applications, are public information unless otherwise protected by State or Federal law. Any disclosures to the group, or its subcommittees, that contain information that could identify an individual such as, but not limited to, HIV status, mental health diagnoses, or history of substance use, will be held in group confidence and will not be reflected in public meeting minutes. Personal information may be redacted from publicly requested documents at the discretion of the co-chairs.

Prospective Members & Member Application

Prospective members may contact the DOH co-chair, Taylor Holsinger (she/her) (taylor.holsinger@alaska.gov) regarding any questions and may be invited to attend a meeting to learn more about the group before applying.

Change: Help create a future where there are no new HIV/STD/HCV infections and everyone living with HIV is healthy.

Connect: Meet people around the state who share the same vision.

Contribute: Advise on statewide plans to address HIV and co-infections. Diverse perspectives related to the group's goals of increasing testing, expanding prevention services, ensuring treatment, and eliminating health and social disparities are welcome. The Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE) meets two to four times per year. Community members who are unaffiliated with an agency (i.e., participate on unpaid time) may be eligible for a stipend as a way to thank you for your time.

Membership applications are solicited and accepted on a continuous basis throughout the year as long as there are openings. Applications are reviewed as received by the co-chairs. Individuals interested in becoming a member must complete an application. Applications are available below and at: <https://health.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/hivstd/Pages/Care-Plan.aspx>.

When a new membership application is received, the co-chairs will review it for the following considerations:

- Whether the applicant is representative of group needs.
- How the applicant contributes to the current balance of membership (e.g., balanced voting member representation from HIV prevention and care, current number of representatives from their agency or agency type, current number of representatives from specific consumer populations, or current number of representatives with specific skills or expertise).
- The likelihood that the applicant will meet the attendance requirements for full voting members and actively participant in group meetings.



Member Application

Confidentiality: All information shared by applicants will be kept confidential. Submitted applications are reviewed by the co-chairs only (no other members will have access to applications). Applications are stored on a secure folder and will never be shared with the public. Return completed applications to the DOH co-chair, Taylor Holsinger (taylor.holsinger@alaska.gov).

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the Alaska HIV Advisory Group (ARISE)?

Applicant Information

Name:

Home City:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Employer Information (for health or human-services agency-represented members only)

Current Employer/Agency:

Job Title and Description:

Agency City:

Agency Zip Code:

Professional & Lived Experience (check all that apply)

HIV Prevention

STD Prevention

Linkage to Care

HIV Care

Prevention With Persons Living with HIV

Private Clinical Practice

Harm Reduction (including SSPs)

Statistical Analysis

- Program Monitoring & Evaluation
- Epidemiology
- Community Needs Assessments
- Grant Writing
- Substance Use Prevention
- Substance Use Treatment

- Working with Unstably House Persons
- LGBTQ+ Community
- Non-Gay Identified Men who have sex with other men
- Sex Work
- Other: