

Written Public Comment

(received 8/22/24 - 8/27/24)

From: faith.myers@gci.net
To: [Smith, Miri K \(DOR\)](#)
Subject: testimony to Board
Date: Monday, August 26, 2024 9:09:47 AM
Attachments: [Inconvenient people.docx](#)
[Testimony to the Trust Board August 23 2024.docx](#)

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Miri,

Attached are two documents which are my testimony to the Trust Board.

Would you please pass them on to the Board members.

Thank you,

Faith Myers

Testimony to the Trust Board,

8/23/24

To the Chair, my name is Faith Myers.

Each board member has been given a copy of a 7-page document called: “Improving lives for Trust beneficiaries.” Please take a few moments to review it.

There are approximately 10,000 Trust beneficiaries that rotate in and out of locked psychiatric facilities or units each year for a forced evaluation or treatment. I have to estimate the number, because the state does not keep these important statistics.

State law AS47.30.660 gives the Trust the opportunity to add input into setting standards for psychiatric patient rights and quality of care.

In 2003, when I was released from the Alaska Psychiatric Institute, I underwent expensive trauma therapy, not because of my mental illness, but because of the mistreatment I endured while locked up.

The Legislature passes laws to protect psychiatric patients, but there is often no enforcement mechanism. In 1992, psychiatric patients were given the right to bring their grievance to an impartial body.(AS47.30.847) In 2008, there was not a single mention in any psychiatric facility of how to bring a grievance to an impartial body. A patient could file a complaint, but there were no impartial bodies. And that is true even today.

Psychiatric patients in 2008 were given a right by state law (AS18.20.095) to have gender choice of staff for intimate care as a way to cut down on patient’s trauma. In 2023, of the twelve facilities visited only one had written a policy to comply with the gender choice law.

Psychiatric hospitals do not write policies that require them to comply with patient protection laws they do not like. And there is no state enforcement mechanism.

Trust beneficiaries are being mistreated. Please use the statutory influence of the Trust to improve rights for Trust beneficiaries.

Thank you,

Faith Myers, 907-929-0532

Improving Lives 2024–25

For

Trust beneficiaries

By Faith J. Myers

Author of the book

“Going Crazy in Alaska:

A history of Alaska’s treatment

Of Psychiatric Patients.”

In the darkest times of a mental illness, people behind locked doors in a psychiatric facility face additional trauma because of mistreatment. Alaska has a history of not protecting psychiatric patients in locked facilities.

In 2023, I was given a tour of the 80-bed state-owned Alaska Psychiatric Institute. The profile of psychiatric patients in locked facilities has changed very little for 150 years: people with an intellectual or developmental disability along with a mental illness, people undergoing a psychotic break where they lose touch with reality, and people with behavioral issues without a mental illness. The one thing that all patients in locked facilities have in common: they are not able to protect themselves from mistreatment and they do not have an effective voice.

Inconvenient people

A History of patient mistreatment

The U.S. Department of the Interior in 1900 started sending what was described as “Society’s Undesirables” from Alaska to the Oregon State Insane Asylum. And that included people with a mental illness, Alzheimer’s, alcohol or drug addiction and people with an intellectual or developmental disability.

In 1903, the 400-bed Psychiatric Hospital, Morningside, in Portland, Oregon put in the lowest bid to provide care for Alaska residents deemed to have a disability. The low bid to provide care was about a dollar a day per patient.

Mr. Wayne W. Coe was the primary owner of Morningside Psychiatric Hospital. A majority of the inmates were from Alaska, many were Alaska natives. A lot has been written and said about the federally funded Indian boarding schools of 60 years ago and the mistreatment. Very little has been said or written about the horrendous mistreatment of people sent to locked psychiatric facilities in Oregon in the 1960’s.

In 1957, a 62-page report was completed, outlining the mistreatment of Alaska residents that were locked in Morningside. In 1958, the report would be presented to the U.S. Congress.

According to the report, patients at Morningside were required to work 12 hours a day as farm laborers, janitors, and kitchen help, 6 days a week. For pay patients were given twenty-five cents to a dollar a week. Patients also worked as house servants in the homes of the hospital staff.

As a sign of the times, here is what was left out of the 1957 report that would be presented to Congress: “How many patients at Morningside had to endure corporal punishment?” “How many patients were injured?” “How many patients were sexually assaulted?” and “How many patients filed a complaint?” The statistics concerning those 4 questions were left out of the report, in my opinion, because patients were treated as something less than human.

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On January 1st, 1957, the Territorial Government of Alaska was officially given the authority to write mental health care laws and regulations. I can find nothing in the records where governmental officials did anything at the time to help improve the rights and quality of care for the people locked in Morningside Psychiatric Hospital, many of the patients were Alaska natives. Even knowing that patients were being mistreated, in 1958, further contracts for patient care would be signed between the Alaska government and Morningside for about 9 more years.

The Alaska legislature commissioned a report on needed improvements in psychiatric patient rights and care. The report was delivered to the legislature on October 16th, 2023. The budget for the report was about a quarter of a million dollars. There is legitimate criticism that state agencies in charge of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute were the main authors. And that the report was slanted to protect providers of psychiatric services.

Here are some of what the report did not answer. “How many people in Alaska rotate in and out of psychiatric facilities or units each year for a forced evaluation or treatment?” “Number and type of patient injuries, complaints and traumatic events?” These are basic questions that should have been answered in the report.

Here are some of the questions that were answered in the report and the presentation to the legislature. Psychiatric patients interviewed could not remember having their rights explained to them when they were locked up. And sixteen years ago, the gender choice of staff for intimate care law was passed. (AS18.20.095) Only one of the twelve facilities visited has written a policy to comply with the law.

There is no state requirement or enforcement that psychiatric facilities, including API, write policies that comply with mental health laws. Psychiatric patients have a right by state law AS47.30.847 to bring their grievance to an impartial body. But according to Matt Davidson, Special Assistant to the Commissioner at the Department of Family and Community Services, no patient at API brought their grievance to an impartial body in 2022. No manager of a psychiatric facility should be put in charge of deciding when or if a patient can bring their grievance to an impartial body, because patients will not be treated fairly.

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For about the last 50 years, the legislature has been writing laws to improve the rights for psychiatric patients in locked facilities. But even in the report to the legislature there was no assessment if psychiatric patients are being provided with hospital policies that give them the rights that were given to them by the legislature: AS47.30.847; AS47.30.840; AS18.20.095. As an example, reasonable access to an impartial body to review patient complaints/ grievances. That requirement is in the law, but in practical terms, patients are denied that right.

A report card on the Alaska Psychiatric Institute, 2022: There were 643 patients, seventy-five patients were injured. Seven injuries were the result of patient-on-patient assaults. The police were called 117 times, either to arrest or remove patients. For the last 30 years, API has had a 10-bed forensic unit. A small forensic unit means violent patients are often mixed in with non-violent patients.

A look at the past

In 1872, (152 years ago) journalist Julius Chambers pretended to have a mental illness and had himself committed to the Bloomingdale Insane Asylum in New York City to report on the mistreatment of patients. After 14 days, Chambers made some suggestions that are still relevant today and the suggestions should be adopted by the state legislature.

One. “Do away with the element of secrecy—for insanity is not criminal.”

Two. “Secure a better classification of the patients, so that the harmless shall not be associated with the vicious. The insane need some standard by which to win their way back to sanity.”

Three. “Put the attendants under such supervision as to render the perpetration of cruelty impossible.”

The newspaper stories written by Julius Chambers were published as a book, “A Mad World and its Inhabitants.”

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“A 10-year History of the Alaska Psychiatric Institute 1962—1972”

In 1972, doctors and staff at API in a 9-page report put down what was working and what was not working in mental health care.

“The new concept (in patient care) was based on four premises: That the patient is a potentially responsible person, that he is capable of making constructive changes in attitude and behavior, that the chronic patient typically lacks skills in interpersonal relationships, and that the traditional hospital routine perpetuates the return to hospitalization.”

The staff at API in 1972 determined that keeping patients connected with family and community not only helped patients recover but also helped patients reintegrate back into society after release from the hospital. Today locked psychiatric facilities in Alaska are not keeping patients connected with community or family. There are two bills in the Legislature to improve the amount of time patients in locked facilities can talk to their families.

States with best practice have done research on how to reduce trauma to psychiatric patients during treatment in locked facilities—Alaska has not. In 2003, in a South Carolina study, Karen J. Cusack, Ph.D., and others produced a research paper on what causes trauma to psychiatric patients. One of their conclusions was that up to 47% of the psychiatric patients in South Carolina experience trauma that could cause or exacerbate Post traumatic stress disorder. Alaska should have been doing similar research on institutional trauma a decade ago.

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority is the largest advocacy organization in Alaska representing approximately 50,000 Trust beneficiaries. At its inception, the Trust was given approximately 1.1 billion in cash and assets. The Trust’s obligations go beyond passing out grant money and funding programs for people with disabilities. State law AS47.30.660 gives the obligation to the Trust to work with the state preparing plans for psychiatric patient care, including quality of care and patient rights.

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Conclusion

In many ways basic psychiatric patient rights in Alaska have not improved for 100 years for people in locked psychiatric facilities. One hundred years ago, the manager of Morningside Psychiatric Hospital was in charge of the psychiatric patient grievance and appeal process. Managers of psychiatric facilities in Alaska are still writing the grievance and appeal process. (AS47.30.847)

A hundred years ago, basic information about psychiatric patients in locked facilities was not available. Today in Alaska, the information is still not available. The state does not know how many people rotate in and out of locked psychiatric facilities or units in Alaska for a forced evaluation or treatment each year. And the state does not know the number and type of psychiatric patient complaints, injuries, and traumatic events in locked facilities each year in Alaska.

A hundred years ago, a psychiatric patient in a locked facility had to first take their complaints to hospital staff. It is no different today. (AS47.30.847)

There have been no improvements in basic psychiatric patient rights in Alaska. And there should be. Improvements would cut down on trauma to patients and increase patient recovery.

Recommendations

In law, establish a statewide, standardized psychiatric patient grievance and appeal process for patients in locked psychiatric facilities or units.

In law, state agencies to gather statistics on psychiatric patients in locked facilities or units: Number and type of patient complaints and injuries, including traumatic events. As an example, forced medication, forcibly restrained, placed in isolation. The number of patients that rotate in and out of locked psychiatric facilities or units in Alaska each year should also be included in the statistics. Twice a year, the statistics will be made available to the general public and the legislature. Without statistics, writing good laws is impossible.

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Recommendations

In law, establish a standardized way of informing patients of their rights in locked psychiatric facilities or units, including written and verbal ways.

In law, establish an independent state-funded office that would investigate psychiatric patient complaints and would advocate for psychiatric patient rights and quality of care. They have such an office in other states with best practice.

In law, the legislature must pass an enforcement mechanism requiring psychiatric facilities or units to write policies that comply with the mental health care laws passed by the legislature.

The state should look outside the box of standard psychiatric patient treatment in search of better ways to help patients recover. Attorney James Gottstein produced a White Paper outlining ways to improve psychiatric patient care and outcomes. That document should be considered.

Aron S. Wolf M.D. in the book, "Going Crazy in Alaska" has a chapter on needed advancements in psychiatric patient care.

My background: I have a degree in Early Childhood Education. For about 5 years from 1999 to 2003 I was in and out of locked psychiatric facilities and units. In total I spent over 7 months in locked psychiatric facilities, including a week in a Seattle facility and a week in a Nevada facility. It was the indifference of my treatment and mistreatment that led me to become a psychiatric patient rights activist.

I estimate that 10,000 Trust beneficiaries rotate in and out of locked psychiatric facilities and units each year for a forced evaluation or treatment. The legislature is left to estimate because the state does not keep statistics.

Faith J. Myers, 3240 Penland Pkwy, Sp. 35, Anchorage, AK. 99508

From: [Carlson, Amanda M \(DOL\)](#)
To: public.comment@mhtrust.org
Subject: Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Letter of Support
Date: Thursday, August 22, 2024 12:08:15 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Support Letter from the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from amanda.carlson@alaska.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good morning,

Thank you for taking the time to review my letter of support for the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition, I hope you consider the positive impact the coalitions have on Alaska's communities and beneficiaries.

I hope to see this vital work continue with the much-needed support from the Alaska Mental Health Trust.

Thank you!

Amanda Carlson

Employment Services Manager 2

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Division of Employment and Training Services

907-352-2509

amanda.carlson@alaska.gov



[Alaska Economic Trends](#) is a monthly magazine that covers a broad range of economic issues. Click the link to view the current electronic magazine, search articles and archives, and sign up for a FREE electronic subscription.

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July 22, 2024

Barbara A. Mongar
Coordinator, Mat-Su Reentry Coalition
404 N. Yenlo Street
Wasilla, AK 99654

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition and its vital work in the community. In 2021, the Director of the State of Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development signed an MOU with Valley Charities to enhance collaboration and communication between Department of Labor staff and Valley Charities Staff. This partnership aims to provide excellent referral and wrap-around case management services to our customers.

As the Employment Services Manager 2 at the Mat-Su Job Center and a steering team member for the past four years, I have witnessed tremendous improvements in collaboration and communication among local partners and organizations. These efforts have significantly benefited transitioning citizens, helping them reintegrate into their communities and reduce recidivism in Alaska. Our work focuses on identifying and implementing strategies to reduce barriers to employment through Employment & Training services that promote family-sustaining wages and improve social and economic well-being.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough, the second-largest city in Alaska, houses the most state institutions, and with over 13,000 Alaskans incarcerated or under criminal justice supervision it is imperative to continue the great work being done through the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition.

Over the past four years, I have participated in regular community-wide meetings that bring the public and coalition members together. The Mat-Su reentry simulations have been invaluable in raising awareness of the challenges individuals face when transitioning from incarceration back into their communities. As one Mat-Su Job Center staff member stated, "I found the Mat-Su Reentry simulation to be very informative and illuminating. It helped me to understand the financial and physical barriers experienced by reentrants as they try to join the community."

Our partnership with Valley Charities/Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has resulted in 11 documented successes stories, dozens of referrals and most importantly strong collaboration amongst staff to coordinate and develop job placement assistance and services. These efforts include referrals, matching job seekers with job requirements, skills, and other attributes, leading to meaningful employment that reduces the likelihood of their return to prison through recidivism.

To share a couple of our successes:

A recently released reentrant was a Pile Driver apprentice with the Alaska Carpenters Training Trust before being incarcerated, upon release he began working with both Mat-Su Reentry program case manager Brian Galloway and the Mat-Su Job Center case manager Ashley Smith, assessment of the customer's needs determined he needed 1500 work hours to successfully complete his apprenticeship to become a Journeyman. He also needed the required tools and gear to be dispatched to work and be successful in this trade. In blending and braiding resources, The Alaska Reentry program provided this customer with required tools and the Mat-Su Job Center case manager assisted with required gear under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act Adult program. He was immediately dispatched to work with Cornerstone General Contractors Inc. making \$29.64 an hr. with a \$100/day per diem.

Valley Charities case manager referred a customer to the Mat-Su Job Center reentry staff Ashley Smith. In meeting his short term needs this customer was assisted one on one with resume building and job searching. He reported that he was hired on with McGuire Construction as a construction foreman. His starting wage at \$20.00 an hour with room to advance after his probation period.

In conclusion, the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition's work is crucial for our community, and I wholeheartedly support its continued efforts.

Sincerely,



Amanda Carlson
Mat-Su Job Center Manager
Department of Labor & Workforce Development

From: [Barbara Mongar](#)
To: public.comment@mhtrust.org
Subject: Mat-Su Reentry Collation Information
Date: Thursday, August 22, 2024 12:06:28 PM
Attachments: [How Your Investment has Impacted the Mat-Su Community.pdf](#)

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Dear Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority,

As the Coordinator for the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition, I would like to thank you for the support you have given us to create and maintain our coalition.

I have attached a report I compiled with data that outlines the impact our Reentry Coalition has had on the Mat-Su Community over the last 5 years.

Please pass the attached report onto the trustees.

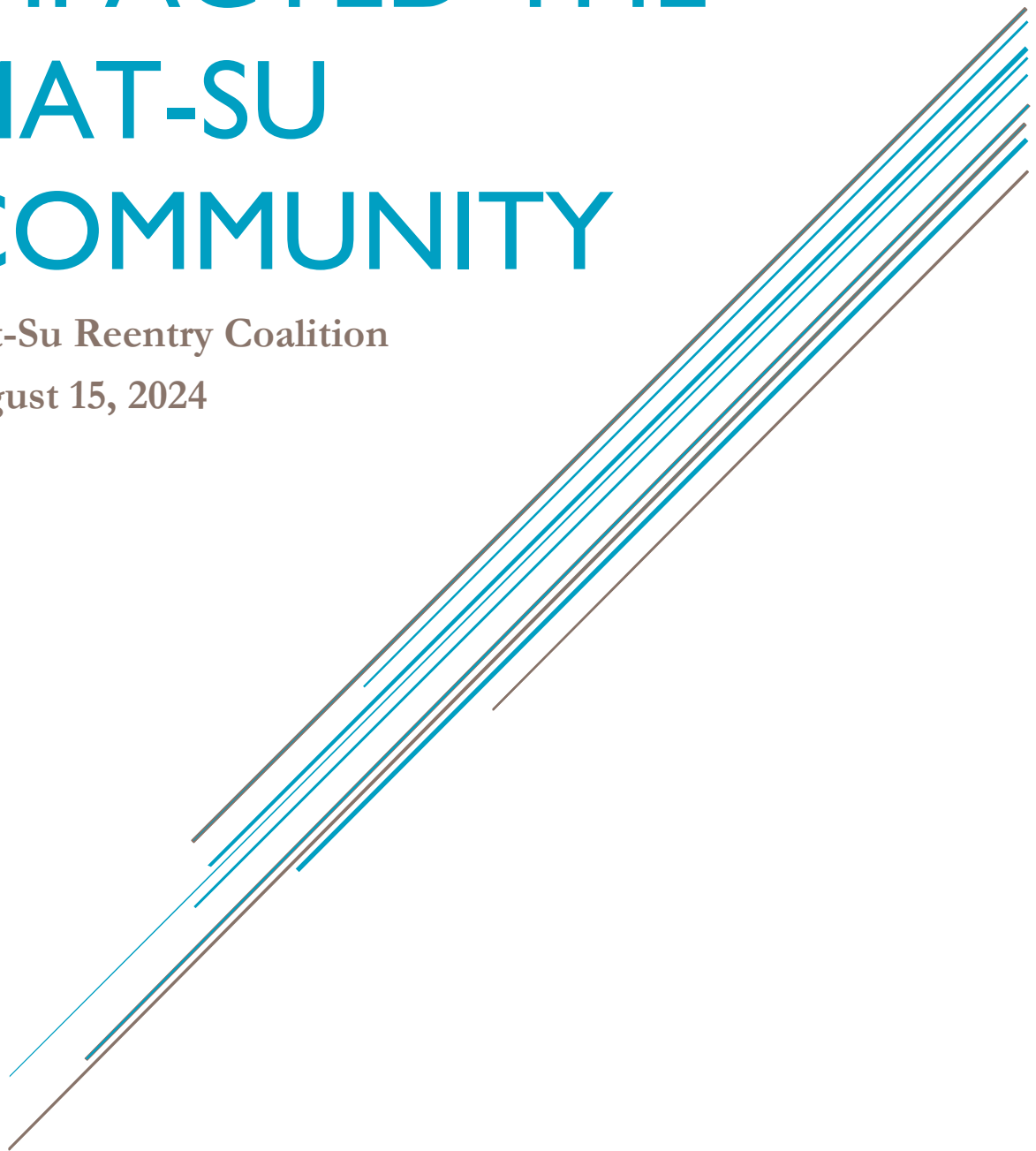
Thank you for your time and consideration,
Barbara A. Mongar
Coordinator, Mat-Su Reentry Coalition
404 N. Yenlo Street
Wasilla, AK 99654

907-414-4077
Barbara.mongar@valleycharities.org

HOW YOUR INVESTMENT HAS IMPACTED THE MAT-SU COMMUNITY

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

August 15, 2024



How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

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How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

Thank You!

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for creating and funding the Mat-Su Reentry Coordinator position. My job, Reentry Coordinator, has impacted the Mat-Su Valley by increasing the awareness of a program that helps to make our community safe. Our goal is to raise community awareness about the need for reentry services through education and advocacy. The following pages are the summary of years of reporting data to support the reason you funded the Reentry Coordinator position.

Lost Time

Since its inception, the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has messaged the importance of the reentry program through annual reentry summits, reentry simulations, reentry presentation at civic organizations and creating community partnerships. Nevertheless, we are not finished. Because of the COVID period, we lost time to reach more community members on why having reentry programs creates a safer community. We have completed a lot of successful outreaches, however our achievement are still not to up to the standards we want them at, with the majority of our community members understanding and supporting reentry programs.

Importance of your Support

Your funding has established a strong baseline to continue the focus of the original program goals. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority should be proud to have developed a program to help make our community safer and Trust Beneficiary reentrants more successful. Your funding, whether in part or whole is still needed beyond 2026.

In the following pages you can pat yourself on the back for investing in a successful program. Thank you for your support of my position as the Reentry Coordinator.

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Background

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition: Educating the Community about Reentry and Supporting Reentry Efforts

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition (MSRC) is a collaboration of individuals, community stakeholders, public and not-for-profit agencies, faith-based and business partners who are united and committed to reducing recidivism among reentrants to the Mat-Su community.

The MSRC Steering Team, the governing body of the full coalition, consists of 10 members representing state, public and private organizations within the Mat-Su Borough.

Our current Steering Team consists of members from the following organizations: Goose Creek Correctional Center, Palmer Probation Office, True North Recovery, Mat-Su Job Center, Access Alaska, Mat-Su Housing & Homelessness Coalition, Veterans Affairs, Set-Free Alaska, Knik Tribe and Mat-Su Health Services.

How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Mission

The MSRC Mission is to promote public safety by identifying and implementing strategies that increase former prisoners' well-being within the community and reduce the likelihood of their return to prison through recidivating. The Coalition accomplishes this by:

- Improving communication and collaboration between Alaska Department of Corrections and the community.
- Building community partnerships to strengthen local services, gather information on current, available resources.
- Identifying barriers for those being released from incarceration and taking an active role in addressing those concerns.
- Promoting community educational and training opportunities for community service providers that serve reentrants
- Providing up-to-date information on community resources to individuals being released from correctional institutions

Impact on Justice Involved Trust Beneficiaries

Direct Impact on Justice Involved Trust Beneficiaries:

In 2020, I had the opportunity to apply for a \$50,000 grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust to fund our Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Housing Project, which I developed and implemented on July 1, 2020 and because of its success, I was able to get an increase of funding (\$80,000) in the following years to continue this project. Since the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Housing Project started on July 1, 2020, **we have assisted over 202 reentrants with their housing needs.**

Allocations and Eligibility of Mat- Su Reentry Coalition Housing Project funds:

- Eligibility Requirements:
 - Participant must be an Alaska Mental Health Trust Beneficiary
 - Participant must have been incarcerated/released within the last 3 years (from time of application), for at least a 24-hour period, not same day bail out.
 - Participant must reside in the Mat-Su Valley
- Allocation of Funds:
 - We can fund up to 3 months of housing assistance while in Transitional/Sober Living and/or one time assistance with permanent housing placement. (Maximum assistance capped at \$2000.00 total)
 - For permanent housing assistance, documentation of sustainability moving forward (ie: we must show that their rent/income is sustainable after the first month)
 - Funds must be utilized within Mat-Su (we cannot assist individuals housed/moving out of Mat-Su)

How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

The recidivating amount and rate for program participants, broken down by Fiscal Year below:

- For FY2024: We served 61 beneficiaries and out of those 5 recidivated (a 8.2% recidivism rate)
- For FY2023 through April 2023: We served 47 beneficiaries and out of those 9 clients recidivated 19.15% recidivism rate)
- For FY2022: We served 41 beneficiaries and out of those 3 clients recidivated (a 7% recidivism rate)
- For FY2021: We served 53 beneficiaries and out of those 8 clients recidivated (a 15% recidivism rate)

Indirect Impact on Justice Involved Trust Beneficiaries:

Since 2019, The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has held 5 annual Mat-Su Reentry Summits, which are two day trainings with experts in the field sharing their knowledge, that we offer free to Mat-Su community members.

The goal of our Reentry Summit's is to help enhance the knowledge of service providers and Department of Correction personnel both in the Mat-Su and throughout Alaska. This training helps to ensure that Mat-Su community providers and other service providers across the state of Alaska are kept up-to-date on the best practices for building effective partnership and programs for their clients with a criminal justice-involved history.

- Survey results from past Reentry Summits indicate that approximately 94% of attendees surveyed stated that the knowledge/skills and information gathered during the Reentry Summit would help them make improvements to their programs/services.
- Here is a link to local news coverage of the 2023 Mat-Su Reentry Summit: [Professionals working to reduce recidivism gather at this year's reentry summit in the Mat-Su \(alaskanewssource.com\)](https://www.alaskanewssource.com/professionals-working-to-reduce-recidivism-gather-at-this-year-s-reentry-summit-in-the-mat-su/)

Impact on Mat-Su Community

In my position as the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Coordinator, I have raised community awareness about the need for reentry services in the Mat-Su over the last 5 years by holding quarterly community-wide meetings, developing and sending out monthly reentry newsletters, holding annual reentry summits, and community reentry simulations.

Since 2019, the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has held 6 Reentry Simulations, 4 of them were open to all community members and 2 of them were specifically conducted for Youth Court students to participate in.

These Reentry Simulations helped to educate Mat-Su community members about the barriers that reentrant face and the need for community services to assist them.

- The Reentry Simulation survey results indicated that 90% of participants felt that the reentry simulation was very impactful in teaching about the challenges of reentry.
- Comments for community members that participate in our Reentry Simulations:
 - “It made me realize how difficult it is for reentrants to complete all the tasks they need to do with limited resources.”
 - “It was amazing how a lack of money and time affected my ability to be successful. It made me realize how those things can affect a person's success when they are released from incarceration.”

How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

- “I found it to be very informative and illuminating. It helped me understand the financial and physical barriers experienced by reentrants as they try to join the community.”
- Below are links to local news coverage of our Mat-Su Reentry Simulation:
 - [Simulation shines spotlight on struggles associated with reentering society after incarceration \(alaskanewssource.com\)](https://alaskanewssource.com)
 - [“It’s pretty eye-opening.” Mat-Su Reentry Coalition hosts simulation, spotlights struggles, frustrations of prior inmates reentering society | Local News | frontiersman.com](https://frontiersman.com)

The outreach I have done in the community has increased our annual Community Readiness Assessment score significantly. **It has gone from a 4.1 in 2019 to a 6.8 in 2024 on a scale from 0 to 9.9.** That means we have raised our community awareness from the Preplanning Stage to the Initiating Stage.¹

Community Readiness Assessment Scores and Stages

- Overall Community Readiness Score is 6.8; increasing our Readiness Level from 2019 score 4.1

Dimension	2019 Readiness Level	2024 Readiness Level	2024 Readiness Stage
Leadership	4.7	6.7 ↑	Initiation
Resources	3.3	4.6 ↑	Preplanning
Knowledge of Efforts	5.3	6.2 ↑	Initiation
Community Climate	4.2	6.8 ↑	Initiation
Knowledge of the Issue	3.2	5 ↑	Preparation

Impact on Community Partners

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has grown significantly over the last 5 years. In 2019, the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition consisted of approximately 16 community organization. In 2024, the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has grown to 28 community organizations working together.

Representatives from community partner organizations regularly attend our monthly Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Steering Team and community-wide meetings, sharing updates about their organizations and bringing back the information to help to educate their organizations and the community at large about the importance of reentry services.

¹ <https://preventiontrainingservices.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/Stages-of-Community-Readiness.pdf>

How Your Investment Has Impacted the Mat-Su Community

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

Conclusion

Each year the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has grown stronger, adding more community partners and increasing the education of community members on the importance of providing services to individuals being released from correctional institutions.

It is important to have community engagement as part of the reentry process because the more the community understands some of the struggles that reentrants go through the more likely they are to support reentry services being put in place to assist these individuals. Having reentry services available to assist these individuals to be successful and become contributing members of society is essential for public safety.

Along with increasing community engagement, building strong partnerships is also a vital part of our Reentry Coalition work. Reentrants face a number of obstacles when they are released from incarceration and having access to community resources plays an important role in their success. This is why the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition focuses on building and maintaining strong community partnerships with different service providers within the Mat-Su. These partnerships address not only a wide range of social services, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment; they also address job training, employment, housing, and other issues. Maintaining strong partnerships with agencies and service providers in the Mat-Su helps to expand our reentry programs ability to provide reentrants with the resources they need for a successful transition back into the community.

- Below is a link to an article about the work the Mat-Su Reentry Program and the Mat-Su Reentry Case Management Programs: [March 2024 Article in the Frontiersman - Mat-Su-Reentry-Program-Provides-a-Path-to-Success](#)
- For more information on the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition, plus links to our monthly reentry newsletter go to our website at <https://www.valleycharities.org/mat-su-valley-reentry-program/>

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition is led by a strong and active Steering Team, along with a growing number of partner organizations that are an integral part of our coalition. As the Coalition Coordinator, I work closely with the Steering Team Chairs, serve as a liaison between the Coalition and the State of Alaska Department of Corrections, and organize the different events to educate the Mat-Su community on the importance of having reentry services available.

Maintaining the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition is vital to the reentry support and services in the Mat-Su Valley.

If you have any question or would like more details about any of the items in this report please contact me by phone at (907) 414-4077 or by e-mail at Barbara.mongar@valleycharities.org

Sincerely,



Barbara Mongar
Coordinator, Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

From: [Dave Rose](#)
To: public.comment@mhtrust.org
Cc: [Barb Mongar](#); [John Rozzi](#)
Subject: Reentry Coalition Support
Date: Thursday, August 22, 2024 8:29:13 AM

You don't often get email from matsuhousing@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the State of Alaska mail system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear AMHTA,

First of all, thank you so much for your part in establishing and encouraging Reentry Coalitions across Alaska and specifically here in the Mat-Su Borough. It has made a huge difference in our Borough. Our team has assisted over 200 individuals re-enter society since 2020.

This has been especially helpful for the families involved and for re-establishing the individual back into society in a way that decreases the chances of recidivism.

As you look forward to the upcoming years' mission and vision; please keep Reentry as a priority!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Dave Rose

--

Dave Rose
Coordinator
Mat-Su Coalition on Housing and Homelessness
232-4450