

Kermit E. Wilson Executive Director

2024 Alaska Suicide Statistics Update



ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

ADVISORY BOARD ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG ABUSE

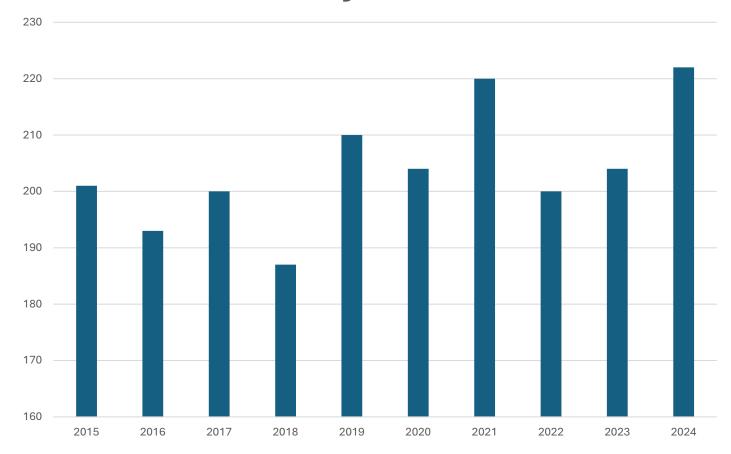


2024
Suicide
Statistics
Update

The 2024 figures are provided by the Alaska Health Analytics and Vital Records (HAVRs) and have been validated.

Alaska Resident Suicide Mortality 2015-2024

Year	Deaths
2015	201
2016	193
2017	200
2018	187
2019	210
2020	204
2021	220
2022	200
2023	204
2024	222



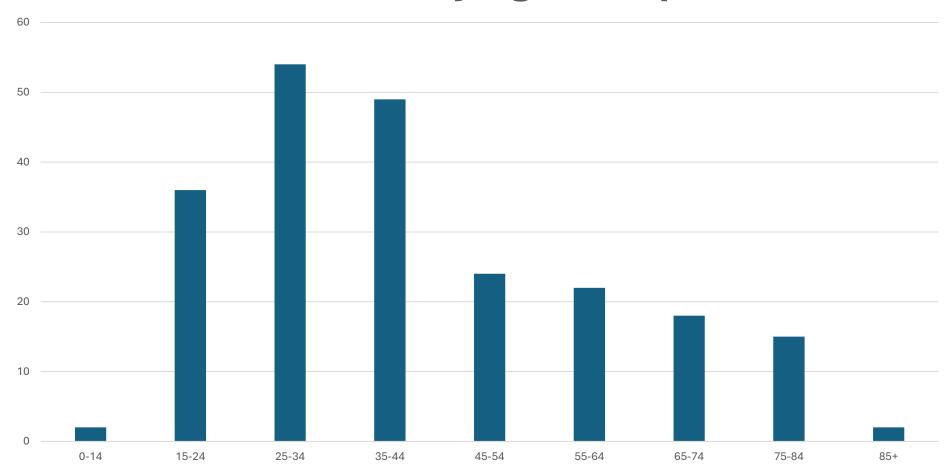
Year	Rate
2015	27.2
2016	26.2
2017	27.4
2018	25.3
2019	28.3
2020	27.5
2021	30.7
2022	27.8
2023	27.7
2024	29.9

2015-2024 Total: 2,041

The Alaska suicide rate 29.7 -over double the U.S. rate of 14.7

2015-2024 Alaska Rate: 28.8

Total Deaths by Age Group 2024



Age	Deaths
0-14	2
15-24	36
25-34	54
35-44	49
45-54	24
55-64	22
65-74	18
75-84	15
85+	2

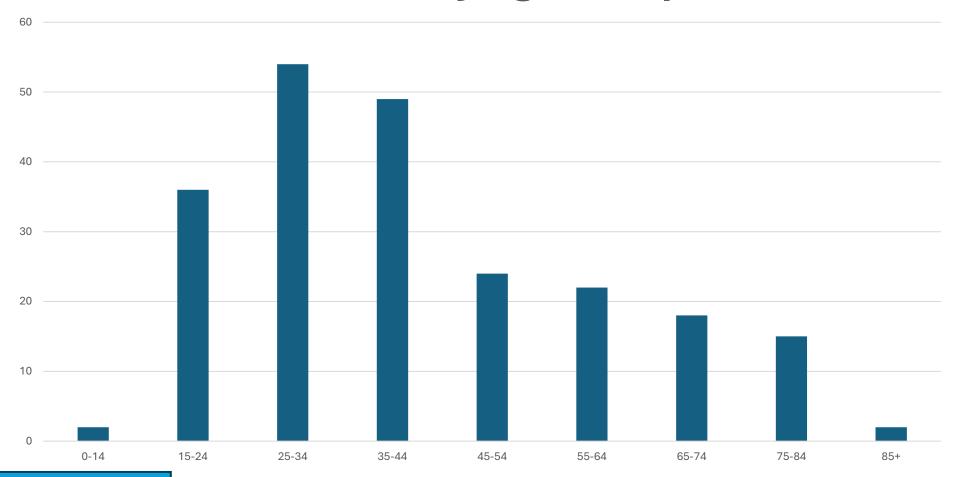
2024 Total Statewide

Deaths: 222

Rate: 29.9
Per 100K

SENIOR AGE GROUPS 65-85 = 35 Deaths AND 55-85 = 57

Total Deaths by Age Group 2024



Age	Deaths
0-14	2
15-24	36
25-34	54
35-44	49
45-54	24
55-64	22
65-74	18
75-84	15
85+	2

2014 - 2024 Total

Deaths: 2041

Rate: 29.9

Per 100K

SENIOR AGE GROUPS 65-85 = 35 Deaths AND 55-85 = 57 by far the larges numbers 2024 Total

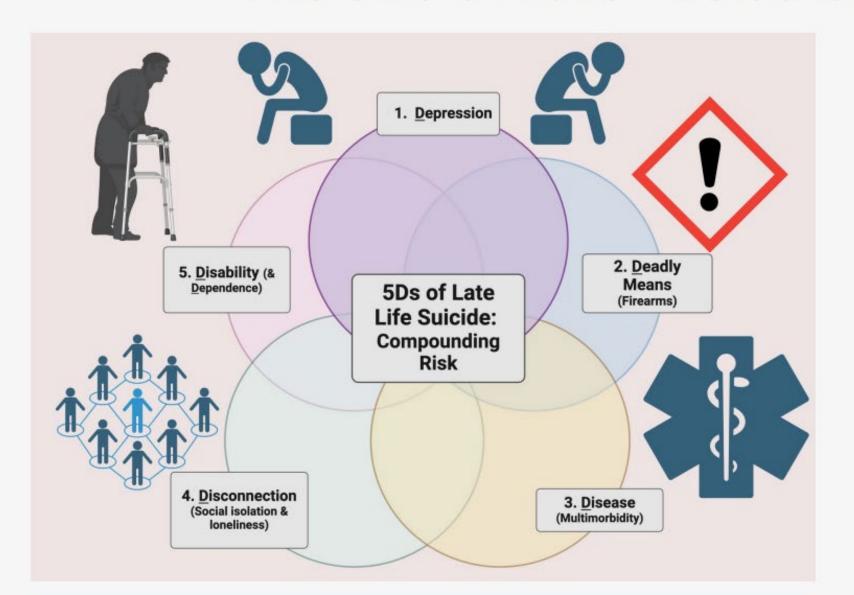
Statewide

Deaths: 222

Rate: 28.8

Per 100K

The 5Ds of Late Life Suicide



Characteristics of older people who die by suicide

Compounding risk

Intervention targets



ALASKA SAMSHA TEAM

Collaboration
Discussions around how to address suicide risk in the older Alaskans population.

ABADA

TEPTON . COLLABORATION



Alaska

Commission

On Aging

Alaska Suicide Rate 2024

What is being done?

What is working?



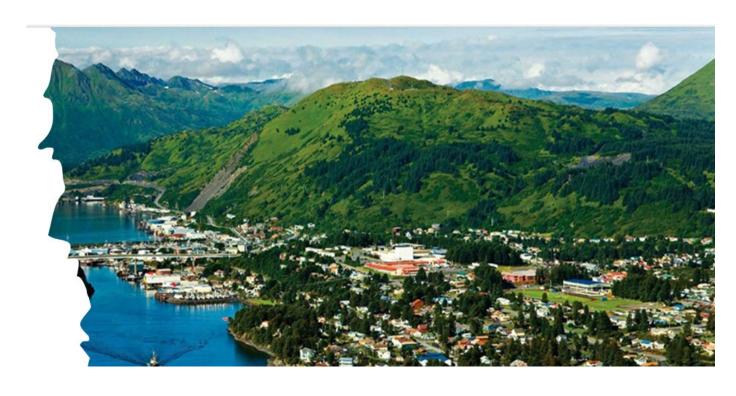
Fall Meeting Kodiak - October 14th & 15th

AGENDA

DAY ONE:

- Pat Branson,
 Kodiak Mayor
- Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner
 State of Alaska Department of Health
- Rhea Hayes, Kodiak Re-entry Coalition
- Stephen Flora, LPC-S,
 Behavioral Health Director, Kodiak Area
 Native Association
- Kim Saunders, Assistant Superintendent, Kodiak Schools & Staff





Fall Meeting Kodiak – October 14th & 15th

- Mayor Pat Branson Highlights:
- 2025 Survey Kodiak Community
- Community Strengths:
 - Collaboration of non-profit groups
 - High sense of community and support
 - High rate of diversity and inclusivity
 - Natural resources/environment, resilience, and resourcefulness.



Fall Meeting Kodiak – October 14th & 15th

Strategic Goals for Kodiak Behavioral Health (2023–2027)

- Expand Access to Culturally Grounded Care
- Strengthen Workforce and Capacity
- Enhance Community Engagement and Prevention
- Improve Service Integration and Coordination
- Advance Data-Driven Decision Making



Fall Meeting Kodiak – October 14th & 15th

Mayor Pat Branson Highlights:

2025 Survey Kodiak Community Needs

- Mental Health
- Housing
- Childcare
- Declining School Enrollment



Stephan Flora

Health Director, Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) Behavioral Health Director (staff of 37)

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES:

- Substance treatment in a timely fashion.
- Primary substances seen: Methamphetamine, cocaine, alcohol, and fentanyl
- Elaborate intake assessment process

SUGGESTIONS:

- More prevention efforts are needed
- More support programs, peer support program, a crisis center
- Provide work permits for youth 14 & 15 to keep them busy
- More funding assistance





Kodiak Re-entry Panel Rhea Hayes

Kodiak Re-entry Program

Lauren Cojei

Public Defender

Jill Wallace

Kodiak Reentry Program

- Challenges:
 - Lack of Housing on the island
 - Rejection of persons with felony convictions
 - Lack of Re-entry resources
- Social Security processing
- Lack of vocational rehabilitation services
- Lost federal funding for support from AmeriCorps



Kodiak Reentry Panel

- NEEDS:
 - Housing on the island
- Housing that accepts persons with felony convictions
- Re-entry Resources
- Assistance with processing Social Security paperwork
- Vocational rehabilitation services
- Restore federal funding for support from AmeriCorps
- Assistance in building mentor and peer coaching programs



Kodiak Island Borough School District Panelists:

- Kim Saunders Assistant Superintendent
- Tania Silva-Johnson District-wide Social Worker
- Jason Fox School Counselor
- Penelope Wood Providence Clinician at Kodiak High School
- Lucy O'Brien School Counselor
- Jennifer Pedersen School Counselor
- **Kelcie Kleaver** Providence Clinician at East Elementary

Kodiak Island Borough School District

Source: State Report Card to the Public, DEED ('23-24')



- Number of Schools: 13
- Enrollment: 2,162 students across 13 schools
- Minority Enrollment: 58%, majority American Indian
- Attendance Rate: 90.58%
- Graduation Rate: 92%, top 5% schools in AK
- Proficiency Scores:
 - Math 32%, below the Alaska public school average (33%)
 - Reading: 29%, same as Alaska public school average
 - Science: 38%
 - Testing: Average testing ranking 5/10, bottom 50% of Alaska public school average
- **Student/Teacher Ratio:**14:1, lower than the Alaska public school average (18:1)
- Spending/student: 27,399, higher than state median of \$21,240

Kodiak Island Borough School District Panelists:



STRUGGLES:

- Anxiety 'Biggest cause is social media'
- Attendance—'District-wide concern'
- **Special Education** 'Alaska has seen a 350 percent increase in the last five years of children that qualify for special education services at age 3'
- **Vaping** '...starts at 6th grade. The vaping alarms in the bathrooms are going off all the time.'
- Alcohol and Marijuana
 — '...with children and families.'
- Housing 'Families and school staff'
- Parental Support '... challenges in reaching parents.'
- **Funding** 'Support for community-based counseling services.'

Kodiak Island Borough School District Panelists:



Community Counselor School Program

- The counseling center has worked with the school district to keep students safe for over 20 years.
- Four clinicians are embedded in Kodiak's public schools. Two serve the city's elementary schools and two serve its middle and high school.
- It's been at least nine years since a student in the Kodiak Island Borough School District has taken his or her own life.
- Attendance has increased



Kermit E. Wilson Executive Director



Marty Lange – Executive Director





Incarcerated Seniors and Dementia

Incarcerated population (statistics)

- > 5.22% are 65 years old or more
- > 50+ population **doubled** between 2003-2023
- > 22 confirmed dementia cases
- > 13 suspected dementia cases

How does this happen?

Long-term sentences

Dementia-caused incarceration

Creative Solutions

> Inmate Caregivers

> Training

What is needed?

> Training

> Innovations



Contact information

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What you will learn today

DD Waitlist Numbers

BRFFS Data on disparities between Alaskans with disabilities and general population

Data from our State Plan Community Forums and Surveys

Graduation and post school data on students with disabilities

The State of America's Direct Support Workforce Crisis 2025

Employment Data on Alaskans with disabilities

Recent MicroEnterprise Awards

Project SEARCH

Developmental Disabilities Wait List (As of Nov.12)

Number of individuals on the IDD Registry only: 279

Number of individuals on both the IDD and ISW Registries: 289

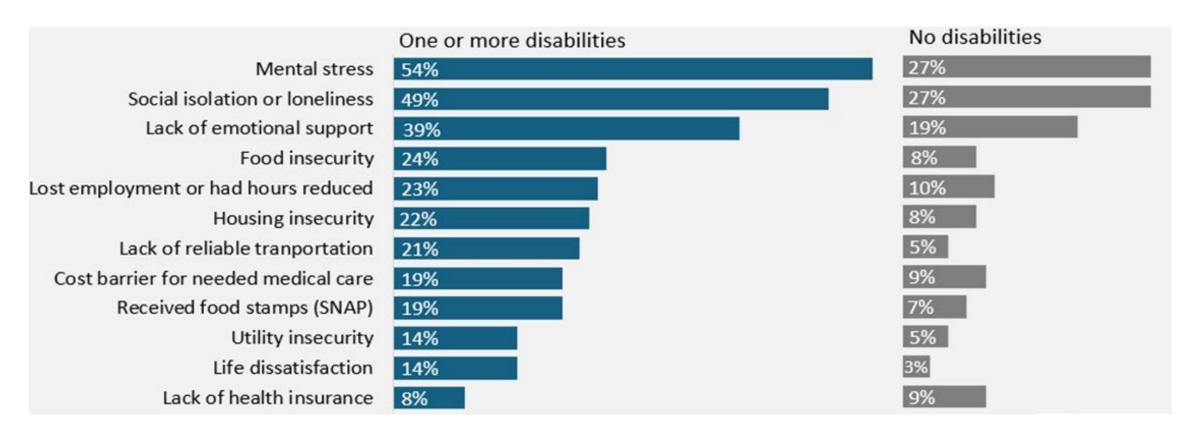
Number of individuals on the ISW Registry only: 78

Count of people on the waivers: 2,146 individuals are on, or currently offered a spot on the IDD waiver

There are currently 595 individuals on, or currently offered a spot on the ISW waiver

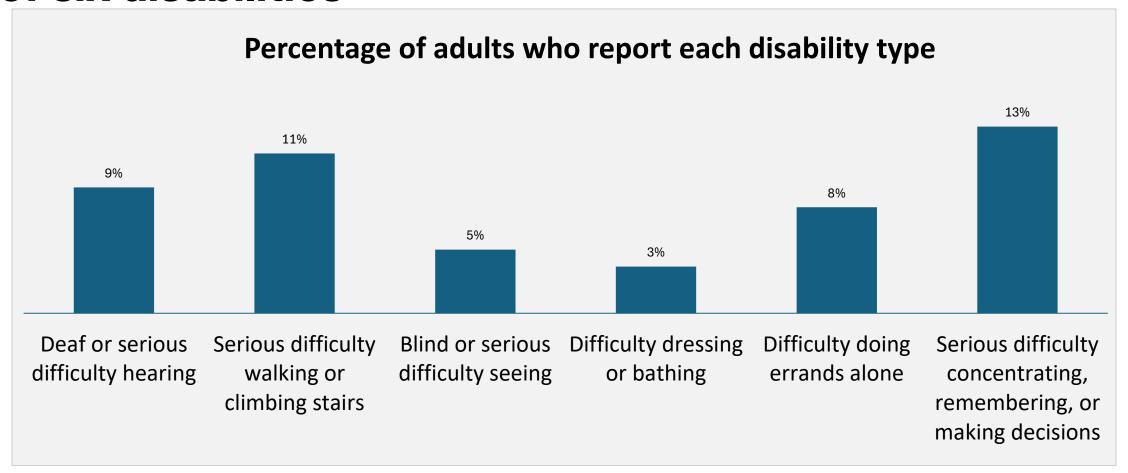
Draws: For FY26 we have drawn 51 people for the IDD waiver, and 51 people for the ISW.

Adults with disabilities experience more healthrelated social needs than those without disabilities



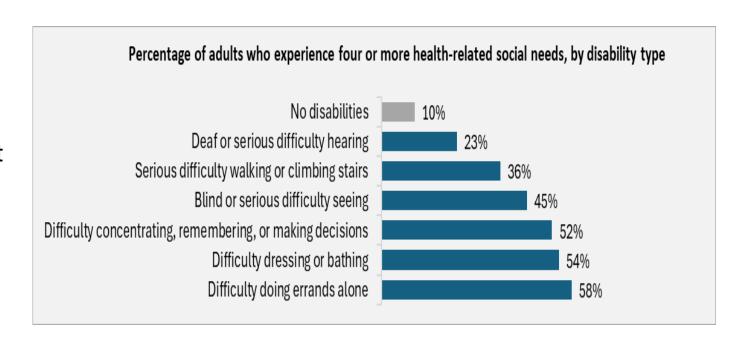
BRFSS BRIEF REPORT: HEALTH RELATED SOCIAL NEEDS AMONG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES (2022-2023)

Nearly one in three Alaska adults report at least one of six disabilities



The burden of health-related social needs is associated with the type and number of disabilities experienced

- Of adults experiencing four or more health-related social needs
 - Those who are deaf or have serious hearing difficulties experience the lowest burden among adults with disabilities.
 - Adults who have difficulty doing errands alone are nearly six times more likely to experience four or more health-related social needs than adults without disabilities.



BRFSS BRIEF REPORT: HEALTH RELATED SOCIAL NEEDS AMONG ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES (2022-2023)

GCDSE Five Year State Plan, Data collected by:

Community Forums:

- Fairbanks
- Juneau
- Anchorage (x2)
- Palmer
- Wasilla
- Kenai
- Homer

Virtual forums (3 total)

- Self-Advocate focus
- 2 others

Survey

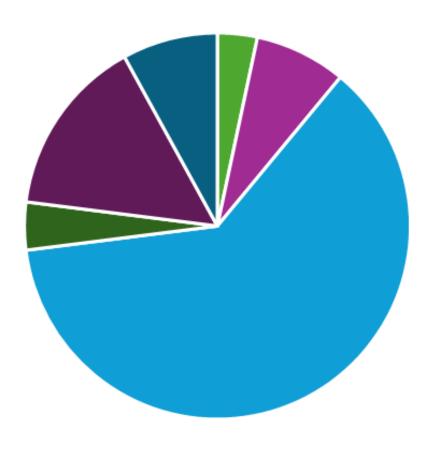
- Online
- Over the phone
- Printed paper copies

306 Survey Responses (303 used / 3 out of State so discarded)

ANSWER CHOICES	•	RESPONSES	•
▼ Individual with a developmental disability		16.50%	50
▼ Family member of an individual with a developmental disability		44.88%	136
▼ Member of an advocacy organization		24.75%	75
▼ Direct support professional		27.39%	83
▼ Administrative service provider		12.87%	39
▼ Employee of a government agency		13.86%	42
▼ Appointed member of a citizen advisory or regulatory board or committee		3.63%	11
▼ Elected official		0.66%	2
▼ Concerned citizen		34.32%	104
▼ Clinician		8.25%	25

- Other (57)
 - Educator
 - Family member with physical/ mental disability
 - Friend of individual with DD

Region

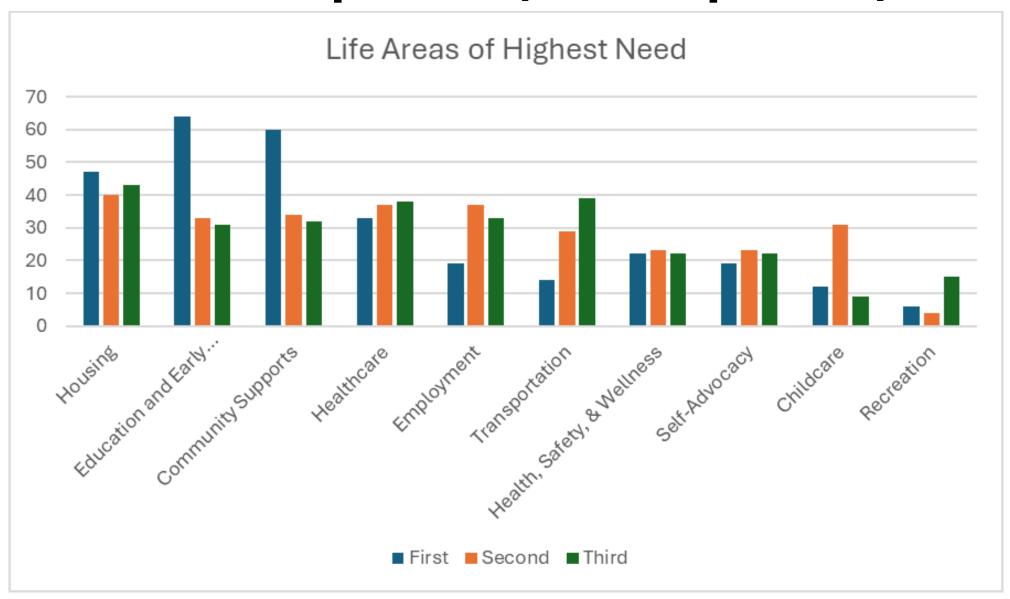


■ Northern

- Interior
- Anchorage/ Mat-Su SouthWest
- Gulf Coast

■ SouthEast

All Responses (296 responses)

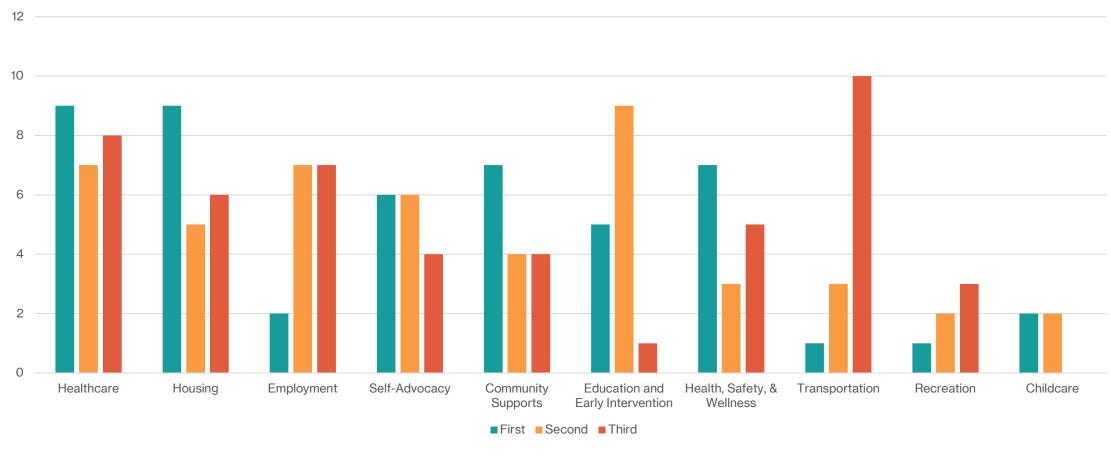


Forum Data Recap

	First	Second	Third	Total
Self-Advocacy	19	23	22	64
Education and Early Intervention	64	33	31	128
Childcare	12	31	9	52
Healthcare	33	37	38	108
Health, Safety, & Wellness	22	23	22	67
Employment	19	37	33	89
Housing	47	40	43	130
Transportation	14	29	39	82
Recreation	6	4	15	25
Community Supports	60	34	32	126

Self Advocate responses (49 responses)





Self Advocate Data

	First	Second	Third	Total
Housing	9	5	6	20
Community Supports	7	4	4	15
Education and Early Intervention	5	9	1	15
Healthcare	9	7	8	24
Employment	2	7	7	16
Transportation	1	3	10	14
Health, Safety, & Wellness	7	3	5	15
Self-Advocacy	6	6	4	16
Childcare	2	2	0	4
Recreation	1	2	3	6

Top Priorities



1) EDUCATION & EARLY INTERVENTION



2) HOUSING



3) COMMUNITY SUPPORTS



4) HEALTHCARE

Current 5 Year Plan

GOALS

- Community Inclusion and Supports
 - Shared Vision
 - Includes housing & healthcare
- Self Advocacy & Leadership
- Employment

COMMITTEES

- Community Inclusion and Supports (CISS)
- Self Advocacy and Leadership (SAL)
- Employment
- Legislative
- Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)*
- Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP)*
- Special Education Service Agency (SESA)*

State Plan Structure

Goals Objectives Activities Data collection

Example: Celebrate the joy of autumn in the community

- host at least three fallthemed events
 - Organize a "Pumpkin Pie vs. Apple Pie Bake-Off"
 - Residents who attended, amount of pies entered into contest, attendees surveyed

5 Year Plan- Next Steps

Using data collected---- Goals will be chosen

Objectives will be defined

Staff will begin Activity language

Public comment and review period to follow

Post Secondary Outcomes for Students with Disabilities one year after graduation

A: enrolled in a higher education program

B: enrolled in a higher education program OR that are competitively employed

C: enrolled in a higher education program OR that are competitively employed OR in a post secondary training program

	FFY 2020	FFY 2021	FFY 2022
Α	8.15%	8.26%	7.64%
В	58.8%	61.38%	55.02%
С	67.18%	70.54%	64.85%

Graduation Rates: Students w/Disabilities and Students w/out Disabilities

Students with Disabilities

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
4 year graduation	61.45%	56.9%	58.02%
5 year graduation	68.33%	69.13%	65.81%

Students without Disabilities

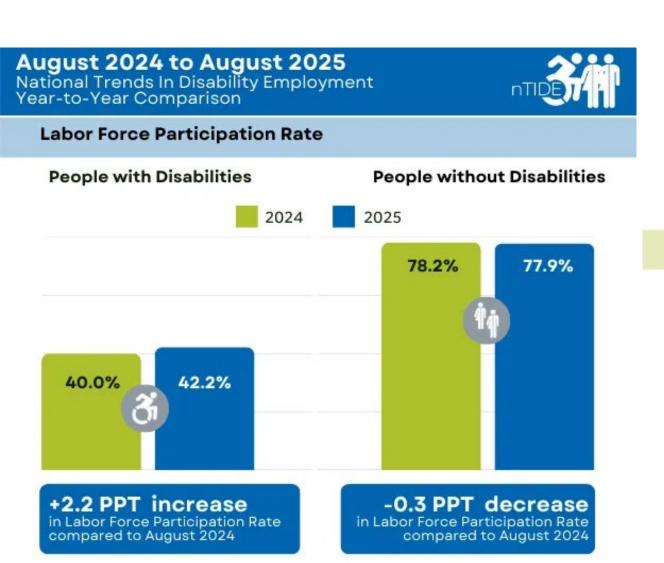
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
4 year graduation	80.39%	80.87%	81.34%
5 year graduation	85.06%	84.95%	85.26%

The State of America's Direct Support Workforce Crisis 2025 (Recent ANCOR Report)

Five Key Facts & Trends

- Majority of providers face serious staffing shortages: 90% of respondent agencies reported experiencing moderate or severe staffing challenges in the past year. This underlines that workforce strain is not isolated or temporary – it's systemic.
- Service access is being reduced due to staffing gaps: 69% of providers reported turning away new referrals this year because they cannot staff additional services. Meanwhile, 39% of agencies reported discontinuing programs or services. In short: people are being denied access due to lack of DSPs.
- Delayed launches and further cuts are being considered: 64% of providers intend to delay launching new programs due to
 workforce issues. And 34% are considering additional cuts if recruitment and retention don't improve. This risk of "frozen
 innovation" matters for systems like Alaska's which are seeking new models.
- Quality and safety are increasingly at risk: 45% of agencies said they are experiencing more frequent reportable incidents.
 And roughly 57% of case-managers reported struggles connecting people with services due to provider shortages. When staff are stretched, both access and quality suffer.
- <u>Workforce hardship is tied to structural under-investment</u>: The report points out that long-standing under-investment in HCBS services, stagnant reimbursement rates, and inability to offer competitive wages lie at the heart of the crisis.

Employment of Persons with Disabilities Data



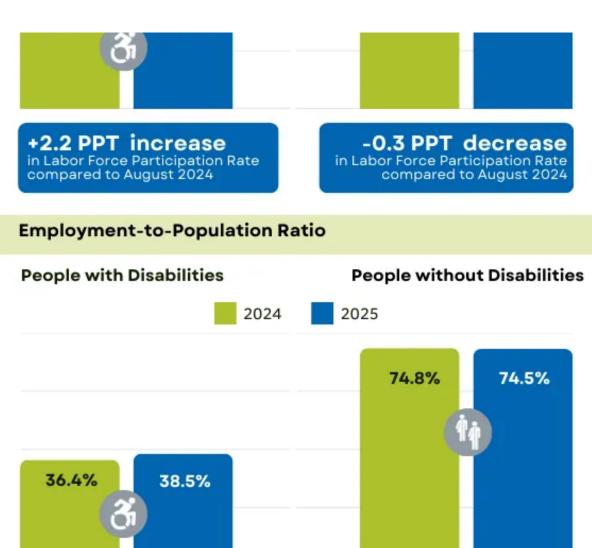
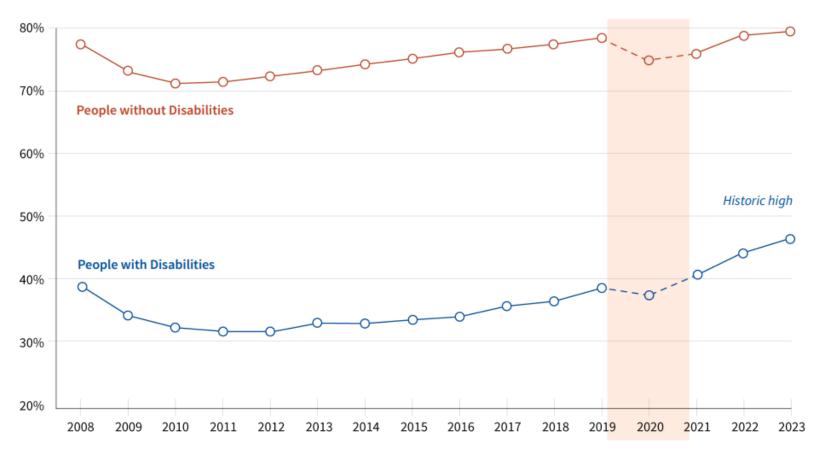
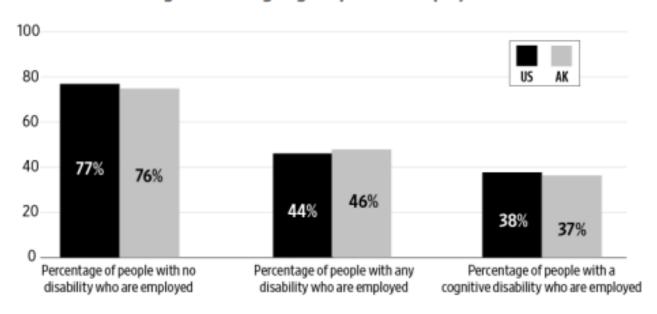


Figure 6. Employment-to-Population Ratio



Employment-to-population ratio, also called the employment rate,[1] is a statistical ratio that measures the proportion of a country's working age population (statistics are often given for ages 15 to 64) that is employed. This includes people that have stopped looking for work.

Percentage of Working - Age Population Employed in 2022



2025

ALASKA		Employment and unemployment rates for people with disabilities	
Demographic Data		Employment rate for People with Disabilities (PwD)	48.1%
Total state population	701,511	Unemployment rate for PwD	7.7%
Total number of people with disabilities	92,855	Percent of PwD not working but actively looking for work	8.3%

Alaska job growth rate slightly overtakes U.S.



Note: 2023 and 2024 are preliminary.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Job openings rate remains significantly higher in Alaska



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

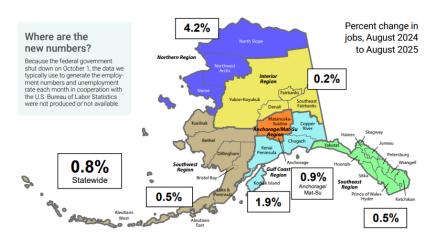
Job recovery forecast by industry

Industry	2019	2025	Change
Total Nonfarm Employment	330,000	339,700	2.9%
Total Private Sector	250,200	259,400	3.7%
Mining and Logging	13,400	13,500	0.7%
Oil & Gas	9,900	8,700	-12.1%
Construction	16,400	20,600	25.6%
Manufacturing	13,100	11,400	-13.0%
Trade, Transp, and Utilities	64,600	66,900	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	6,600	6,500	-1.5%
Retail Trade	35,600	34,700	-2.5%
Transp, Warehousing, Util	22,500	25,700	14.2%
Information	5,400	4,300	-20.4%
Financial Activities	11,600	10,600	-8.6%
Professional/Business Services	27,700	29,500	6.5%
Educational and Health Svcs	50,800	54,000	6.3%
Health Care	38,700	43,000	11.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	36,200	36,200	0.0%
Other Services	11,000	12,400	12.7%
Total Government	79,900	80,300	0.5%
Federal	14,900	15,600	4.7%
State	23,200	24,000	3.4%
Local	41,800	40,700	-2.6%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

IOBS FORESAST

Employment Growth by Region



Unemployment Rates

Seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revi	sed
	8/25	7/25	8/24
United States	4.3	4.2	4.2
Alaska	4.7	4.8	4.7

Not seasonally adjusted

	Prelim.	Revi	sed
	8/25	7/25	8/24
United States	4.5	4.6	4.4
Alaska	3.9	4.5	4.1

The outlook for statewide jobs, by industry

					JOBS FORECAST		o I
	Monthly avg, 2023 ¹	Monthly avg, 2024 ¹	Change, 2023-24	Percent change	Monthly avg, 2025	Change, 2024-25	Percent change
Total Nonfarm Employment ²	327,800	334,400	6,600	2.0%	339,700	5,300	1.6%
Total Private	249,300	254,500	5,200	2.1%	259,400	4,900	1.9%
Mining and Logging	11,700	12,500	800	6.8%	13,500	1,000	8.0%
Oil and Gas	7,600	8,100	500	6.6%	8,700	600	7.4%
Construction	17,100	19,100	2,000	11.7%	20,600	1,500	7.9%
Manufacturing	12,800	12,000	-800	-6.3%	11,400	-600	-5.0%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	65,300	65,900	600	0.9%	66,900	1,000	1.5%
Wholesale Trade	6,400	6,400	0	0%	6,500	100	1.6%
Retail Trade	35,300	34,800	-500	-1.4%	34,700	-100	-0.3%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	23,600	24,700	1,100	4.7%	25,700	1,000	4.0%
Information	4,600	4,400	-200	-4.3%	4,300	-100	-2.3%
Financial Activities	10,900	10,700	-200	-1.8%	10,600	-100	-0.9%
Professional and Business Services	28,100	29,000	900	3.2%	29,500	500	1.7%
Educational (private) and Health Services	51,400	52,900	1,500	2.9%	54,000	1,100	2.1%
Health Care	40,300	41,800	1,500	3.7%	43,000	1,200	2.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	35,700	35,900	200	0.6%	36,200	300	0.8%
Other Services	11,700	12,100	400	3.4%	12,400	300	2.5%
Total Government	78,500	79,900	1,400	1.8%	80,300	400	0.5%
Federal, except military	15,200	15,600	400	2.6%	15,600	0	0%
State, incl. University of Alaska	23,100	23,800	700	3.0%	24,000	200	0.8%
Local and tribal, incl. public schools	40,200	40,500	300	0.7%	40,700	200	0.5%

¹Preliminary and adjusted estimates. ²Excludes the self-employed, uniformed military, most commercial fishermen, domestic workers, and unpaid family workers.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Come Learn More About Alaska DB 101!

Wednesday, November 12th

11 AM - 12:30 PM AKDT



Find Alaska DB101 at https://AK.DB101.org



Alaska Disability Benefits 101 (DB101)

is your one-stop resource for employment and benefits information — from SSA disability, Medicaid, and Medicare to job supports and accommodations. Learn how to use this tool to navigate work and benefits for yourself, your clients, or your family.

Professionals will learn how to use DB101 to:

- Explain SSI/SSDI rules/work incentives and the impact on state/federal benefits because of employment
- Complete Estimators, including quick Estimators, and explain the results of the impact of earnings on benefits
- Motivate and support plans for employment and transition to selfsufficiency

Use registration <u>link</u> or scan the QR code to register:



Contact: Benefits101@wid.org for more information



Join Experts for an ABLE 101 Presentation.

Our 30-minute presentation will highlight important topics such as:

ABLE Account Basics | Who Qualifies | How it Works | The Benefits



Ask Questions Live

Participants can ask questions live to our experts.



ASL Interpreter

ASL Interpreters join us for all our webinars.



Twice Per Month

We offer two per month: one daytime and one evening.



Open To The Public

All our webinars are free and open for everyone to join.

SEE FULL CALENDAR & LEARN MORE:

www.abletoday.org/intro





CONNECTED FOR SUCCESS TRANSITION FAIR

Join LINKS Community Parent Resource Center and MSBSD for this free event; connecting students with disabilities ages 14–21, their families, educators, and community members to essential resources for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.

SAVE THE DATE



2pm-6pm 19 January, 2026



Mat-Su Day School 2360 Tait Dr. Wasilla



CALL US (907) 373-3632



VISIT OUR WEBSITE WWWW.LINKSPRC.ORG



Calling All Vendors and Exhibitors! Reserve Your Spot Now!



Attendees will have two opportunities to win in our prize drawing.





SCAN TO **LEARN MORE**



Join us for our Transition Series

ALASKA TRANSITION

as we explore the

PATHWAY TO

ADULTHOOD &

EMPLOYMENT



MEANINGFUL LIFE

INDEPENDENCE

FREEDOM

EDUCATION

) ''' '

CAREER



Navigate Social Security. Medicaid, and other vital supports.

Last Wednesday of

each month

6:00pm - 7:30pm



Learn how Individualized

Education Programs (IEPS)

connect to successful transitions

IEPS & TRANSITION

PLANNING

Find out how Vocational Rehabilitation and Senior & Disabilities Services support long-term goals.





SELF-EMPLOYMENT & OTHER

Discover creative routes to employment, including microenterprise options





Gain skills to support and empower youth



MICROENTERPRISE GRANTS



17 original applications, 9 made it to review process.

- 4 MI
- 3 DD/MI
- 1 DD
- 1 SA

8 of 9 approved requests

\$62,336.13 of \$78,328.20 requested funds granted

Spring Application Deadline: Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at 12 p.m.



797 Program Sites 48 US States

Countries

53,782 People Served







