

2026 Beneficiary Listening Sessions Summary

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority held Beneficiary Listening Sessions on **June 2 and June 30, 2026**, offered both in person and virtually. These sessions provided Trust beneficiaries and caregivers an opportunity to share firsthand experiences with Alaska's behavioral health and disability service systems. Written comments were welcomed through June 30, but none were received this year.

Between the two sessions, four individuals provided comments. Among commenters were representatives of Polaris House, a beneficiary-led clubhouse in Juneau. The following themes capture their feedback.

Themes Identified

- *System Concerns:* Feedback described distrust in the system, the medicalization of basic needs, feelings of marginalization, and concerns that grievance processes may be ineffective or harmful.
- *Positive Community Supports:* Participants highlighted the value of community-based programs, including supportive environments that help reduce isolation, provide practical assistance such as employment and housing support, and offer meaningful activities like teaching and peer engagement.
- *Program Growth and Impact:* Community programs reported increased enrollment and continued success in connecting individuals with wellness supports, education, and essential resources.

One participant also suggested that the Trust conduct focus groups with beneficiaries in the future to gather more in-depth feedback and explore specific topics in greater detail.

The Trust values the perspectives contributed during these sessions and will continue to use beneficiary feedback to guide priorities and strengthen services across Alaska.