



Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition

Quality Care • Care Coordination • Social Engagement

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL ELDERCARE COALITION

February 6, 2026, at 8:30AM

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89966612080?pwd=Y2s1MU16dzdjbFkraFF4ZFZjcXNPQT09>

Meeting ID: 899 6661 2080

Passcode: 471844

1. **Call to Order** - 8:33AM
2. **Agenda Approval** – Wayne Stevens motioned for approval. John Smith seconded motion. Approved.
3. **Minutes Approval** – John smith motioned for approval. Wayne Stevens seconded motion for approval. Approved.
4. **SREC Project Update** – Tonya Muldoon
 - a. Construction Survey – survey has been sent out. Responses are looking positive for interest in accessibility and accommodation remodels. We will learn more in the coming months.
 - b. Innovation Summit Planning
 - i. Innovation Short – Project, Program, and Product sharing for 10 minutes.
 - ii. Training - Please note that for your staff that Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition is offering training on February 25. The courses are focused on providers, especially caregivers, DSPs, Peer Support, navigators, and case management staff.



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- iii. **Training A:** “Assistive Technology” with ATLA Alaska, learn about the amazing world of assistive technology that is used to improve independence such as glasses that can help the blind see, apps and web applications to help non-verbal people speak and communicate clearly, and gardening equipment that is user friendly as you age.
Training B: “Fundamentals of Case Management and Community Resource Navigation: What to do when you are out of ideas” with the Southeast Alaska Eldercare Coalition
Training C: “The Aging Brain Unpacked: What’s normal, What’s Not” with Alzheimer’s Resource Alaska
 - iv. **Training D:** “Dementia Virtual Simulation” with Alzheimer’s Resource Alaska
 - v. **Networking** – Immersive event with time to network and develop new relationships with community partners. You are asked to participate in the full event.
 - vi. **Travel Scholarships** – Available for SREC members who wish to attend the event. Flight and hotel discounts are available. Tickets are based on a sliding scale.
 - c. **Funding Planning:** Tonya Muldoon has been working with several groups to outline ideas for Letters of Intent for the Alaska Rural Health Transformational Program.
 - d. **Thank you** to Community Connections and SAIL for their work with Veterans.
5. **SREC Steering Committee Report** – Erin Walker-Tolles
- a. Erin Walker-Tolles provided encouragement for the SREC membership to sign up for updates after listening to Commission Hedberg speak last night on the Alaska Rural Health Transformational Program. The program is moving quickly, and the



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formal updates will help keep you knowledgeable for the possible funding opportunities.

i. Alaska Rural Health Transition Program SREC Discussion
Alaska RHTP Application Informational Webinar Feb 10

The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) invites you to an informational webinar on February 10, 2026, focused on the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) and the upcoming application process.

RHTP is a multi-year federal investment to strengthen rural health care across Alaska. Funding will support community-based and system-level projects aimed at improving access, workforce capacity, and care delivery statewide.

During the webinar, DOH will:

- Share an overview of Alaska's approach to implementing the RHTP.
- Introduce the Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) as Alaska's RHTP subrecipient administrator.
- Walk through what organizations can expect from the application process and portal.
- Outline near-term timelines and next steps.
- Answer questions from participants.

Tuesday, February 10th, 1pm-2pm. [Register for the RHTP webinar.](#)

Participants are encouraged to submit questions in advance to rhtp@alaskacf.org. Frequent questions will be addressed during the webinar.

This webinar is intended for health care providers, Tribes and Tribal Health Organizations, community-based organizations, local governments, workforce and education partners, and others interested in participating in RHTP.



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We encourage you to attend and to share this invitation with colleagues who may be interested.

Subrecipient Administrator: Alaska Community Foundation (ACF):

The Alaska Community Foundation (ACF) has been selected as the subrecipient administrator for RHTP. ACF is an Alaska-based philanthropic organization with deep roots and connections across the state. As the subrecipient administrator, ACF will manage the application process, support organizations as they apply, distribute funds to approved projects, and provide ongoing administrative support and reporting assistance over the life of the program.

- b. Alaska Rural Health Transformation Program information can be found at: <https://health.alaska.gov/en/education/rural-health-transformation-program/>
- c. Age Net fly was this week at the Alaska State Capital.

6. Advocacy Update: Wayne Stevens

- a. Advocacy Letter Draft
 - i. Discussed two draft letters, one for every representative and one for coalition members to use to support legislative actions.
 - ii. Erin Walker-Tolles and Shirly Yeisley will sign for SREC membership.
- b. **ACoA Legislative Priorities this Session**
 - i. Our legislative priorities for this legislative session include:
 - ii. Passing HB255 Senior PFD Raffle Bill
 - iii. Passing SB190 Guardianship / Conservatorship
 - iv. Passing SB124 / HB131 Nursing Licensure Compact
 - v. Increasing Funding to Non-Medicaid Senior Services



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- vi. Supporting the Governor's budget for Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Senior Citizens Housing Development Program
 - vii. Considering Guidehouse Long Term Support Services (LTSS) Rate Recommendations
7. **Best Practice:** Dr. Charla Brown on Innovation Summit February 25-26, 2026. Discussed the upcoming event in Juneau February 25-26. SREC is supporting pre-conference training. Travel support is available.
8. **Comments from members:** None, meeting was cut short due to technical programs with internet connection.
9. **Adjournment: 9:24AM**
10. **Next Meeting:** Scheduled March 6, 2026, at 8:30AM
- a. Sub-Committees:
 - i. **Senior Empowerment and Advocacy** – Wayne Stevens Sub-Committee Chair
Goal: Support policy, regulation, law, and procedural changes in the Alaska system to improve direct care services for seniors. **Third Wednesday of the month at 9am. Next meeting February 18, 2026**
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85018791334>
Meeting ID: 850 1879 1334
 - ii. **Senior Access and Outreach Committee** Erin Walker-Tolles, John Smith III Subcommittee Co-Chairs
Goal: Increase the number of elders receiving services.



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Fourth Wednesday of the month at 9am. Next meeting is February 25 at 9am.

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 282 714 215 098 46

Passcode: 2yz3PY6G

- iii. **Direct Care Talent and Training Subcommittee:**
Sharyl Yeisly, Brian Holst Subcommittee Co-Chairs
Goal: Workforce Development, increasing the number of direct-care staffing in the region. **Second Wednesday of the month at 9am. Next meeting February 11, 2026.**

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 238 259 257 373 05

Passcode: zg3ot2ZG

- iv. **Safe Homes and Accessibility Subcommittee:** Joan O'Keefe, Subcommittee Chair
Goal: Support and resources for Aging-in-Place, Environment Modification Services in Se Alaska for Medicaid Wavier and the general community.
First Wednesday of the Month at 9am. Next meeting February 4, 2026, March 4, 2026.

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 215 796 840 623 78

Passcode: Qq3Qh6Bc

11. Upcoming events:



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a. **Senior Benefits Program Reduction Begins February 1**

Many seniors have already reported receiving notification letters in the mail that read, for example:

"Effective February 1, 2026, your Senior Benefits payment will change from \$125 per month to \$76 per month. This change aligns the payment amount with the available state general fund appropriation for the Senior Benefits program. This action is supported by State Regulations at 7 AAC 47.570 and 7 AAC 47.563."

This reduction in Senior Benefits payments is the result of insufficient general fund appropriations in the FY26 state budget, not a new law or policy change. While the Senior Benefits Program remains authorized in statute, benefit levels are dependent on annual legislative funding. When appropriated funds are not sufficient to pay full benefits for the entire fiscal year, state regulations require the Department of Public Assistance to adjust monthly payments so available funds can be spread across all eligible recipients. As a result, payments were reduced mid-year to align with the enacted FY26 general fund appropriation. Restoring full benefits would require a supplemental appropriation approved by the Legislature.

Seniors, families, and advocates who are concerned about the reduction are encouraged to contact their state legislators and ask for a supplemental appropriation and/or increased funding in the next budget cycle to restore full Senior Benefits payments.

b. **AARP Alaska: Share Your Story**

Please share your story and feedback on the below topics of [Senate Bill 190](#) with AARP Alaska. Email tholt@aarp.org preferably by February 6th (and Feb. 13th at the latest).



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Clarity and Transparency: The bill simplifies guardianship, conservatorship, and minor guardianship processes, making them easier to understand for families and legal professionals. It also ensures transparency by requiring the disclosure of criminal and credit histories for potential guardians and conservators.

Updated Terminology: Several terms have been updated to reflect societal changes regarding recognizing the dignity of all people. For example, the terms "ward" and "incapacitated person," "disabled person," are replaced with a more respectful and empowering terms such as "individual under guardianship" or "respondent."

Increased Protections for Adults: The bill strengthens protections for adults in guardianship proceedings with more robust petitions, notices, and reports. Guardians and conservators are required to submit annual reports for continued oversight by the courts. It expands what must be included in a guardianship plan to ensure that the individual's specific needs are being addressed, and the guardian is fulfilling their duties. It ensures that plans evolve as an individual and their needs change over time. The bill also changes "temporary" guardianships to "emergency" to better reflect the need for urgency without compromising due process and limits the duration to 60 days.

Conservatorship Changes: The bill ends the practice of putting property titles in the conservator's name, ensuring the individual keeps their property while still receiving the necessary help and supervision.

Less Restrictive Alternatives: The bill allows courts to create flexible protective arrangements tailored to the individual's needs,



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such as supported decision-making agreements, rather than assuming a full guardianship is always required.

Combating Abuse and Exploitation: Enhances safeguards against abuse and exploitation by expanding notification requirements for guardianship appointments, prohibiting guardians from restricting communication with family and friends without court authorization.

c. **Medicare January–March Enrollment Window Is Open (ACoA)**

January 1 – March 31 is Medicare’s General Enrollment Period. This window is for people who:

- Are sixty-five or older, and
- Did not sign up for Medicare Part B when first eligible, and
- Do not qualify for a Special Enrollment Period

Important to know:

- Late enrollment penalties may apply.
- Coverage does not start right away.
- Waiting beyond March 31 means waiting another full year

This is different from Medicare Open Enrollment (October to December) and different from [Special Enrollment Periods](#) for people who delayed Part B due to employer coverage. If you or someone you help may have missed signing up for Part B, now is the time to act. [Learn more.](#) For Medicare help, contact the [Alaska Medicare Information Office](#).

d. **Alaska Health Fairs: Spring Schedule Now Live**

Visit www.alaskahealthfair.org for details. As always, walk-ins are welcome at all events, and online appointments are available as well. New this season: Free Prostate Cancer Screening (PSA) blood tests are available at all events, thanks to a partnership with Aurora Integrated



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Oncology Foundation and Alaska Men's Run. If you know a man over forty, this is the perfect opportunity, no appointment needed, just walk in. Read more about it [here](#).

February 6th at the Sullivan Arena hockey game is their first appearance of the season featuring PSA screenings. If you are planning to attend the game, come and talk to AHF volunteers and staff, learn about upcoming events, volunteering, exhibiting and everything else health- and wellness-related!

Questions? Please call at (907) 278-0234 Anchorage/Statewide, (907) 374-6853 in Fairbanks and Tanana Valley, (907) 723-5100 in Southeast.

e. **Senior and Disabilities Services: Accepting Proposals for Full Lives Conference April 16-17 in Anchorage**

The 25th Annual Full Lives Conference is seeking proposals for break-out sessions inspired by this year's theme: "Honor. Celebrate. Advocate." Submissions should use evidence-based best practices to motivate and educate professionals working with Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiaries: people who need support due to behavioral health, developmental disabilities, substance misuse, Alzheimer's and related dementia, and traumatic brain injuries. Each presentation will have a 60 or 90-minute time limit. Completed applications must be submitted by 5pm on Friday, February 23, 2026. To submit a session

proposal: <https://form.jotform.com/252867108096970>

Audience: Full Lives participants may include direct support professionals, direct service providers, care coordinators, case managers, mental health clinicians and to a lesser degree, individuals (beneficiaries) or families receiving services. The focus of Full Lives is on the workforce audience that supports Trust beneficiaries.



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Conference details can be found [here](#).

Questions? Please email SDSTraining@alaska.gov

12. Weekly Events

- **Sitka Coffee Time**

Wednesday March 11, 2026

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Thursday May 14, 2026

11AM-1:30PM

Harrigan Centennial Hall

Sitka, Alaska

Contact: Sitka Tribe of Alaska (907) 747-3207

- **Juneau Senior Center**

Mondays 11AM Senior Sing Along with Jackie

Tuesdays 11:45AM Music with Tom Locher

Wednesdays 11:00AM Senior Chair Yoga

- **Art for Self-Care**

Tuesdays

5:30-7PM

418 Harris St #315 Juneau

These are groups designed to promote self-care using a variety of art activities. For adults to help relieve anxiety, depression, and stress especially during the winter months. Please RSVP: Shawn Hatt Cohen (907)321-5414 txt

- **Beginning and Advanced ESL Classes**

Tuesdays

5:30-7:30PM

Mendenhall Valley Public Library

3025 Diamond Park Loop Juneau, Alaska 99801



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Beginning ESL offered from 5:30PM-6:30PM and Advanced ELS Classes are offered from 6:30-7:30PM. Free. Check out the Learning Connection website at <https://tcalaska.org/english-language-learning-citizenship/> or call (907) 586-5718 for more information.

- **Senior Balance Class**

Activities vary each week including tea & chat, trivia, arts etc.

Wednesdays at 2PM

Alaska Native Brotherhood Founder's Hall

Sitka, Alaska

Info Brave Heart Volunteers (907)747-4600

Tai Chi

Mondays 7-8:00AM

Mountain View Manor

Petersburg, Alaska

- **Family Game Night**

Tuesdays and Fridays 6:30-8:30PM

Parks and Rec Community Center, Activities Room

Petersburg, Alaska

Monthly Events

- **Coffee, Tea and Chat for Patients and Family**

Bartlett Regional Hospital Cafeteria Juneau

Tuesday 10-11:00AM

Event info: www.bartletthospital.org

Contact: Rhonda Ward 907-796-8918

- **Chair Yoga at the Library**

Tuesdays 10:30-11:30AM

Ketchikan Public Library



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398 Copper Rd Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

- **Sacred Harp Sing**
Beginners and listeners' welcome
Every Second and Fourth Sundays on the month
3:00PM
Pioneer Home Chapel
Sitka, Alaska
Contact: Sara at (907)747-2915
- **Sharing Coalition Meeting**
The group focus is community health and engagement through strong partnerships between organizations and individuals. Everyone is welcome.
Date varies, monthly.
12-1:00PM
Dorothy Ingle Conference room Petersburg Medical Center
Petersburg, Alaska

Support Groups (Juneau)

- **Riverview Senior Living**, in Juneau is offering free Support for Memory Care, RSVP Zoom meeting, See flyer for more details: [Riverview Memory Matter Support Group flyer](#)
Every 2nd Tuesday of the month
- **Widow's and Widower's Garden Support Group (WE ARE ALL LIVING IN THE GARDEN OF LIFE)**
Riverview Senior Living
3041 Clinton Dr
Juneau, Alaska 99801
First Monday each month 2-4PM



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More information contact Diane Kyser at (907) 723-1917

- **Virtual Low Vision Support Group**
Every 3rd Tuesday of the month
Wildflower Court (Juneau)
Call Linda Newman at Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL) for more info: Email: lnewman@sailinc.org.
- **Deaf Support Group**
Mets in Juneau in various locations. Contact Pam Guy for details. Email psmguy2@gmail.com or text 907-314-0732 for more information.
- **Cancer Connection Support Group**
Every 3rd Tuesday of the month
First Floor Conference Room
8711 Teal St Juneau, Alaska 99801
Contact: www.cancerconnectionak.org
(907)796-2273, or email: admin@cancerconnectionak.org
- **NAMU Juneau Peer-Led Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills Workshop**
First Wednesday of the month
5:30-6:30PM
8711 Teal St. Main Floor Conference Room
Information: www.namijuneau.org/support-groups
- **Caregiver Support Group**
Every 1st Friday of the month
Ketchikan Saxman Senior Center
2401 Eagle Ave
Saxman, Alaska
Information: (907) 225-8080



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- **Low Vision Support Group**

First Monday's 1:00-2:30PM at the Plaza Mall, Ketchikan.

Contact Brenda Loughman for more information. Email:

loughmanb@kpunet.net