Alaska cannot afford to wait until this becomes a crisis.

The aging of our population is already reshaping our workforce and economy.

If we plan ahead, we can turn this into an opportunity—
keeping experienced Alaskans working,
strengthening our care workforce,
and ensuring communities remain strong and sustainable.

If we delay, the costs—economic and human—will be significantly higher.

JEDC
Juneau Economic Development Council

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www.jedc.org/eldercare/

Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition
Quality Care • Care Coordination • Social Engagement

ALASKAN SENIORS SUPPORT ALASKA

ALASKA'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON YOU

Southeast Regional Eldercare Coalition
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What's Happening

Alaska is aging faster than ever before. The 60+ population has increased by more than 78% since 2010. Seniors are one of the fastest-growing segments of the state population.

Many seniors are aging in rural or isolated areas with increasing health care access challenges, transportation barriers, and the rising cost of services.

Alaska has a smaller working-age population pipeline due to outmigration of younger workers and declining birth rates. The state faces persistent workforce shortages impacting health care, caregiving, construction, tourism, and public services. Alaskan senior employment has tripled for those 65+ since 2003 to help fill the gap.

The economic contribution of senior Alaskans is significant. Iser in 2024, found that income and wages from retirees aged 60+ was $6.7 Billion. When compared to other industries tourist spending was $4.37 billion, mineral production was $4.0 billion, seafood harvest was $1.03 billion, while senior support was 50% of Alaska's total economy

Alaska's senior population is not just a social issue—
It is a workforce issue, an economic issue, and a community viability issue. Seniors support the Alaskan economy and Alaska needs to return the favor.

Risk to Alaska

- **Economic strain:** Fewer workers → slower economic growth, higher costs
- **Workforce gaps:** Not enough caregivers, nurses, skilled trades
- **Public spending pressure:** Increased demand for Medicaid, long-term care, and support services
- **Community sustainability risk:** Rural communities struggle to maintain and obtain services
- **Family burden:** More unpaid caregiving falls on working-age Alaskans and families

Driving Forces

- Longer life expectancy
- Aging of the baby boom generation
- Outmigration of younger workers
- High cost of living discouraging immigration
- Limited in-state training pipelines for critical jobs

What Alaska Can Do Now

1. EXTEND WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION
- Encourage older Alaskans to stay employed longer
- Flexible work, part-time, phased retirement
- Retain programs for 50+ workers

2. GROW THE WORKFORCE PIPELINE
- Expand apprenticeships and career/technical education
- Attract and retain younger workers (housing + cost-of-living strategies)

3. BUILD THE CARE ECONOMY
- Invest in health care and direct care workforce
- Increase wages and career pathways for caregivers
- Expand telehealth and rural health delivery

4. SUPPORT AGING IN PLACE
- Home-based services instead of institutional care
- Transportation solutions in rural areas
- Age-Friendly Housing development
- Maintain Senior Benefits programs

5. REDUCE FUTURE SYSTEM COSTS
- Focus on prevention, wellness, and early intervention
- Plan now to avoid crisis-driven spending later