

# Alaska Federation of Natives

## Statewide Briefing



## Week of November 1-5, 2021



### AFN Releases Updated 2021 Convention Delegate Packet

Following the Board's decision to hold the 2021 Convention virtually on December 13 and 14, AFN is sending to members and delegates an updated Delegate Packet. The packet has important information on registering for the Convention, sponsorship opportunities, and filing resolutions. An electronic version has been sent out and is accessible online at [AFN's website](#). A print version will be mailed out this week.

As was done for the all-virtual 2020 AFN Convention, a robust virtual meeting platform on the AFN app will be combined with live statewide TV and radio broadcast coverage, and live streaming on multiple video channels. A full agenda will be released in early December.

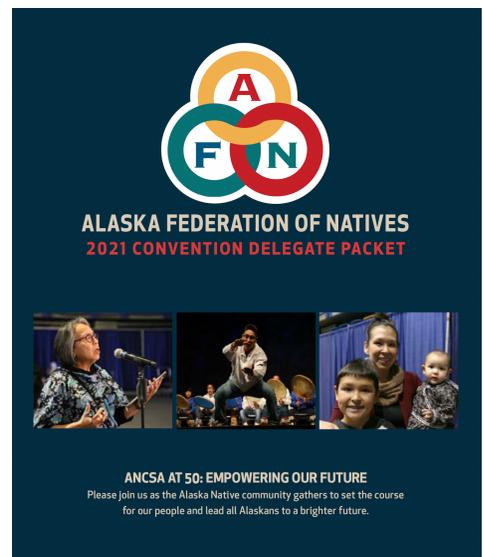
Included in the Delegate Packet is an updated resolutions section that includes procedures for filing and amending resolutions for a virtual Convention, AFN's official resolution policy, and links to online submission form.

The deadline for the 2021 resolutions has been extended to November 12, 2021. Please email [resolutions@nativefederation.org](mailto:resolutions@nativefederation.org) if you have any questions. Click [HERE](#) to download the AFN resolution policies and submission format.

Please register by filling out the form in the packet or click [HERE](#) for the fillable form online. If you've already registered, you do not need to re-register. Watch for the Convention Guide with instructions on how to log into the AFN app, the full agenda, and important links to workshops and exhibitors.

Visit the Delegate Page on AFN's website by clicking [HERE](#).

We sincerely hope you'll join us this December 13 & 14 for a virtual 2021 AFN Convention!



Click on above image or [HERE](#) for the 2021 Convention Delegate Packet

### Convention Welcome Messages Is Back By Popular Demand

#### Send AFN your videos!

For last year's Convention we invited AFN delegates and members to share short video messages of welcome, and it was a huge hit. The invitation is open for the virtual 2021 AFN Convention. Video welcome messages from AFN delegates and members will be compiled, posted on AFN's convention app, social media, and video channels, and aired during the agenda in the 2021 Convention broadcast!

#### Welcome Message Criteria

**Length:** Up to 30 seconds total.



**Content:** 1) In the video please say your name and/or your organization's name and what village or city you are sending from; 2) Welcome, well-wishes, "Have a great convention!," and other positive and friendly greetings are encouraged; and 3) Please avoid political, critical or negative messages.

**Tech:** Cell phone videos are accepted and encouraged. If you do some editing or other post-production video work, please send as a high-resolution video .mp4 file.

**Deadline: Videos must be uploaded by 5 p.m. Friday, December 3, 2021.**

Where to send your video:

Click [HERE](#) for the link to the folder where you can upload your videos.

Please include your name and contact info in the video file name.

Questions? Email us at [afninfo@nativefederation.org](mailto:afninfo@nativefederation.org).



## 2021 White House Tribal Nations Summit November 15 and 16

The White House has announced that the 2021 White House Tribal Nations Summit will officially take place November 15-16, 2021. Please note that the date has changed. This year the Summit will take place virtually.

The White House announcement stated that President Biden and Senior Administration Officials look forward to hosting a robust and meaningful dialogue with Tribal leaders on key issues, policy initiatives, and goals for Indian Country. To better reflect the federal government's Nation-to-Nation relationship with Tribal Nations, we have changed the name from a conference to a summit. The Biden-Harris Administration is deeply committed to honoring our trust and treaty responsibilities with federally recognized Tribes and the Summit provides an opportunity for Tribal leaders to engage directly with officials from the highest levels of the Administration.

[Click here to register for the 2021 Tribal Nations Summit](#)

The Summit will feature panel discussions and listening sessions with high-level Administration officials on Tribal priorities. Your input is highly valued and the White House asks that you fill out this short questionnaire. AFN highly recommends members submit what priorities are most important to be taken into consideration. [Click here to fill out the questionnaire](#)

If you have any questions, please reach out to [TNS@who.eop.gov](mailto:TNS@who.eop.gov).

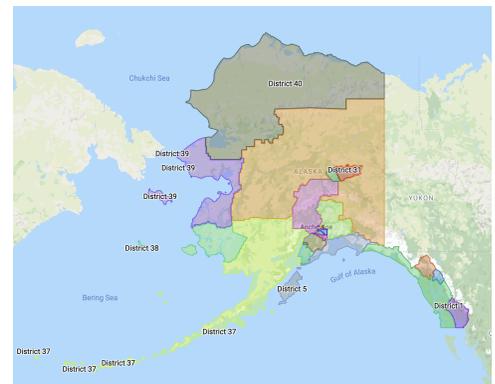
## Alaska Redistricting Board Adopts Final Redistricting Map

The five-member board in charge of redrawing Alaska's legislative districts approved a new map of the state's 40 House districts on Friday, November 5. The board has been working since August on the once-a-decade job of adjusting political boundaries to account for changes in population. The new map could affect election results, funding for local projects, and control of the state House and Senate.

Board member Nicole Borromeo drew the Anchorage portion of the map. She said she aimed to draw compact districts while staying within legal limits for population differences. "The Supreme Court has said: 'Focus on compactness and contiguity.'"

Board members are scheduled to meet again today, November 8, to pick state Senate districts. They face a November 10 deadline to finish work, and after that date, Alaskans will have 30 days to challenge the result in court.

Check out the final redistricting plan's interactive map, click [HERE](#).



# BLM Completes First Allotments Under Alaska Native Vietnam-Era Veteran Land Allotment Program

The U.S. Department of the Interior announced last week that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed the first federal land allotments under the Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veteran Land Allotment Program. The John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act was signed into law in March of 2019 and contained language allowing several thousand Alaska Native veterans who served during the Vietnam era to apply for congressionally promised land allotment of up to 160 acres. Due to their service, many of these veterans missed the initial opportunity to apply for these allotments.

“AFN advocated for the correction of this injustice for many years,” said President Julie Kitka. “Without the decades of persistence and dedication of Nelson Angapaq, former AFN Vice President, this never would have happened. We acknowledge the effective work of Alaska’s congressional delegation, Congressman Don Young, Senator Lisa Murkowski, and Senator Dan Sullivan.”

In 1998 Senator Ted Stevens and Senator Daniel Inouye worked together to pass an earlier version of the Alaska Native Vietnam-era Veteran Allotment Program, which covered veterans who were serving in the military from 1969 to 1971. The newly passed version is an expansion that covers the qualifying years of 1964 to 1971.

In his press statement, Congressman Young said, “Alaska Native Vietnam Veterans put their lives on the line for our nation, and for too long, the federal government fell shamefully short of making good on the promises of land allotments made to them. This has been a long time coming, and I encourage eligible veterans to submit interest to the BLM as soon as they can.”

Lands are available for selection through December 29, 2025. For more information on the Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Program and how to submit interest, please visit [BLM's program page](#).

## Background courtesy of the Department of the Interior:

The Alaska Native Vietnam Era Veterans Land Allotment Program was established by the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019. Through this program, the BLM can provide eligible individuals the opportunity to select an allotment of up to 160 acres from vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved federal lands in Alaska or lands selected by the state or Native corporations, if that entity agrees to relinquish that portion of their selection. This represents the third time that federally managed land has been offered to Alaska Native Vietnam veterans, who did not have access to land allotments while serving during the Vietnam War.

The BLM has worked with the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, as well as Interior’s Bureau of Indian Affairs to identify eligible veterans and their families. To date, over 1,400 veterans and families have been contacted to apply, with almost 130 applications received. Each application can involve hours of consultation with the applicant by BLM staff, followed by weeks or more of researching files and adjudication.

---

## Interior Seeks Input on Indian Boarding School Initiative

The U.S. Department of the Interior seeks Tribal and stakeholder input regarding the implementation of the Indian Boarding School Initiative that Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland announced in June 2021. In a [Dear Tribal Leader letter](#), Interior stated that the Initiative's purpose is an initial collection and review of Department documents and records, and compilation of its existing data. These are first steps in addressing Indian boarding school policies and their effects as part of the Department's report due to the Secretary by April 1, 2022.

For over a century, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was involved in the operation and oversight of Indian boarding schools in the United States. As a result, the Department is uniquely positioned to assist in the effort to recover the histories of Federal Indian boarding schools.

The Department seeks to consult with Tribal governments, Alaska Native Corporations, and Native Hawaiian Organizations on key issues for inclusion in the Department's Initiative report and help lay the foundation for future sitework to protect potential burial sites and other sensitive information. To facilitate discussion during the consultations, participants are requested to address the following topics:

- Appropriate protocols on handling sensitive information in existing records;
- Ways to address cultural concerns and handling of information generated from existing records or from potential sitework activities;
- Potential repatriation of human remains, including cultural concerns and compliance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act;
- Future policy and procedure implementation to protect burial sites, locations, confidential information, and culturally sensitive information;
- Management of sites of former boarding schools;
- Privacy issues or cultural concerns to be identified as part of the Initiative; and
- Other issues the Department should address in its review.

Interior will conduct the webinar consultation sessions listed below and will accept oral and written comments. Please register in advance for any consultation session you plan on attending. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Please note that these Tribal consultations

will be closed to the press and the public to protect confidential information that may be discussed during the sessions.

The consultation schedule is:

**Tuesday, November 16**

1 :00 p.m. - 5 :00 p.m. ET

Please [register in advance](#).

**Thursday, November 18**

1 :00 p.m. - 5 :00 p.m. ET

Please [register in advance](#).

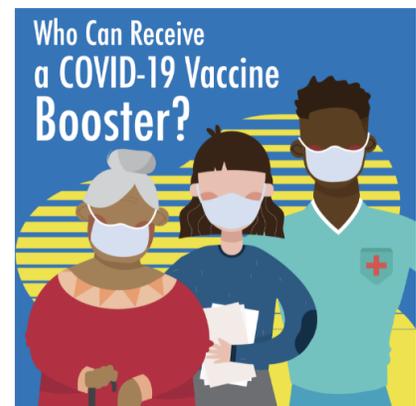
You may provide written input by Friday, December 17, 2021 to [consultation@bia.gov](mailto:consultation@bia.gov). I look forward to speaking with you. If you have questions regarding this effort, please contact Heidi Todacheene, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, by email at [Heidi\\_Todacheene@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Heidi_Todacheene@ios.doi.gov) or by phone at (202) 208-7163.

---

## COVID-19 UPDATE

### Vaccination Is Our Best Tool to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

Getting vaccinated remains the best defense against serious illness and death, health authorities say. The recent report found unvaccinated Alaskans were 7 1/2 times as likely to be hospitalized as vaccinated people.



#### Don't miss out on your COVID-19 vaccine booster!

[Booster doses](#) are available for Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines with [mixed dosing allowed \(PDF\)](#).

Find out if you're eligible with this quick quiz:

[Booster eligibility survey](#).

If you received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the following groups are eligible for a booster shot 6 months or more after their initial series:

- Age 65+
- Residents and staff in [long-term care settings](#)
- Age 18+ and have [underlying medical conditions](#) including asthma, diabetes, obesity
- Age 18+ and work in [high-risk settings](#) including healthcare workers, teachers, grocery store workers

For the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, booster shots are recommended for those who are 18 and older and who were vaccinated two or more months ago.

Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some people may have a preference for the vaccine type they originally received while others may prefer to get a different booster.

Click [HERE](#) to go to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Booster page.

**Misinformation about vaccinations** and how well they work and the downplaying of the seriousness of COVID-19 continues to be a big factor in why so many Alaskans remain unvaccinated. There is a lot of misinformation out there, particularly on social media. Click [here](#) for CDC's helpful page for [mythbusting](#). For facts, guidance, and data at the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services' main COVID page, click [here](#).

YOU CAN TAKE ACTION – Choosing to get vaccinated is the single most important action you can take to protect yourself and your community and to reopen our economy. Check with your local health care provider to get the facts about vaccines, wearing masks and protecting your families. If you haven't been vaccinated yet, [find a vaccine](#).

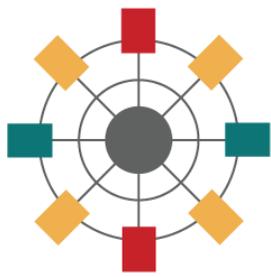
For more information about vaccines, visit [covidvax.alaska.gov](https://covidvax.alaska.gov).

#### Vaccinate to stop the spread of the flu!

Keep yourself and those around you safe! Flu season is upon us and ANTHC, state, and federal health officials are urging Alaskans to vaccinate against the flu. Many tribal health organizations are running flu clinics across Alaska. Please check with your local facility for times and dates near you. It is important for all people to get vaccinated for the flu to protect ourselves, as well as our family, coworkers and community. In addition, influenza poses a greater risk to certain people like pregnant women, children and Elders – they are all at high risk for flu-related complications. For more information about flu vaccines from ANTHC, click [HERE](#). For CDC info, click [HERE](#).

A common myth about the flu vaccine is that it can cause you to get the flu. Fact: You cannot get the flu from a flu vaccine. The vaccine does not contain live flu viruses or in many cases, the flu virus at all. Vaccine safety is closely monitored annually by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). To learn more about influenza and vaccination myths and facts, click [HERE](#).

---



## **AFN Navigator Program**

*Helping Alaska  
Natives stop COVID  
and secure resources.*

### **AFN Navigator Program Trainings, Events & Workshops**

Click [HERE](#) for a calendar list of upcoming AFN Navigator events, workshops, and training.

This week: Grant Writing Basics Workshop. Wednesday, November 10, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Click [HERE](#) to register.

---

### **AFN Meeting Schedule**

AFN Special Board Meeting — November 10, 2021

AFN Annual Convention — Virtual, December 13 & 14, 2021