

Alaska Federation of Natives

Statewide Briefing



Week of November 8-12, 2021

AFN Applauds Alaska's Congressional Delegation for Bipartisan Work on Infrastructure Bill

President Biden signed the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* into law yesterday, November 15. The measure provides historic investments into roads, bridges, ports, airports, broadband, ferries, water and wastewater, resilience, and energy projects—modernizing and upgrading the nation’s core infrastructure.

AFN commends Senator Lisa Murkowski for her work as a lead author and negotiator of this bipartisan infrastructure package, securing a range of provisions that are critical to improving, maintaining, and upgrading Alaska’s infrastructure. AFN thanks our congressional delegation — Senator Murkowski, Senator Dan Sullivan, and Congressman Don Young — for voting yes on this historic legislation.



“This is a big win for Alaska,” said AFN President Julie Kitka. “Investment in areas such as water and sanitation, broadband, transportation, energy transition and affordability and climate resilience are foundational for our future.”

The full impact of the Act will be felt over many years. Provisions for rural Alaska, including tribal broadband connectivity and affordability, will not only improve communication, health, and safety for Alaska Natives but will level the playing field as Alaska transitions out of the pandemic to compete in the global economy and adapt to climate change. For a list of the Native provisions in the Act, click [HERE](#).



AFN Navigator Program

*Helping Alaska
Natives stop COVID
and secure resources.*

Grant Writing Assistance Hotline.

Following the “Grant Writing Basics” training this week, AFN and the Alaska Municipal League are collaborating to offer tribal governments a free opportunity to talk through the pre-grant application process with an experienced grant writer. Tribal government representatives will be able to discuss their needs and priorities and learn about basic processes to apply for federal grants.

To learn more and meet with a grant writer, contact the Alaska Municipal League at membersupport@akml.org or 907-586-1325 to indicate your interest and schedule a time to meet over the phone.

For more resources on grant writing, please visit <https://alaskaarpa.org/resources/grant-writing-tools/#AlaskaFederationOfNatives #AlaskaMunicipalLeague #AFNNavigatorProgram>



AFN Navigator Program Trainings, Events & Workshops

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

This week: CARES Act and ARPA Funding: Eligible Uses, Tracking and Reporting — November 18, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Interior Seeks Input on Indian Boarding School Initiative

— Consultation Sessions This Week —

As the first steps in addressing Indian boarding school policies and their effects as part of its report due to the Secretary by April 1, 2022, the U.S. Department of the Interior is conducting initial collection and review of Department documents and records, and compilation of its existing data.

Interior 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 site work 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 site work 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. 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 or by phone at (202) 208-7163.



Get Involved

Ensuring *all Alaskans* have the opportunity to be educated and engaged in the redistricting process.

Divided Redistricting Board Votes For Controversial Senate Pairings Plan

The Alaska Redistricting Board voted November 9 on House district pairings for Senate seats for the Anchorage area that increases Eagle River representation in the Alaska Senate to the detriment of the racially diverse Muldoon area. The board is charged with rewriting Alaska's political boundaries following the U.S. Census, conducted every 10 years. The overall plan, once finalized, can be challenged in court.

The plan was opposed by two of the five board members, Nicole Borromeo and Melanie Bahnke. Borromeo said at the board meeting that by splitting predominantly white Eagle River into two Senate seats and paring each with minority-heavy Muldoon districts, the plan would open the board to charges of partisan gerrymandering.

"It defies logic that we would do a minority reach-in to south Muldoon and pair it with a very white district eight miles away on a highway that crosses one mountain range and expect the court to believe with any satisfaction that we have satisfied the public trust in the process," Borromeo said.

Bahnke said the pairings she (Bahnke) had proposed “eliminated questions around dilutions of minority voters’ ability to elect somebody into office.” She said the board’s actions would have the effect of stifling the voices of voters in the Muldoon area, which she described as racially diverse.

To view maps of the plan, and for more Alaska Districticing Board information, click [HERE](#).

AFN 2021 Convention Delegate Packet Now Available



Following the Board's decision to hold the 2021 Convention virtually on December 13 and 14, AFN has sent 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.

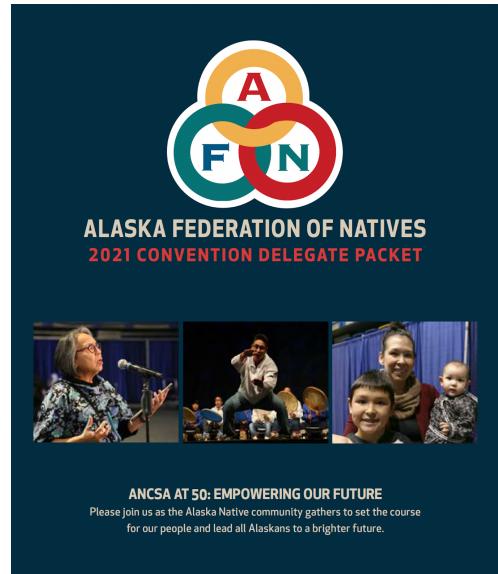
Included in the Delegate Packet is an updated resolutions section that includes procedures for filing and amending resolutions for a virtual Convention, AFN's official resolution policy, and links to online submission form.

The deadline for the 2021 resolutions has been extended to November 12, 2021. Please email resolutions@nativefederation.org 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!



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.

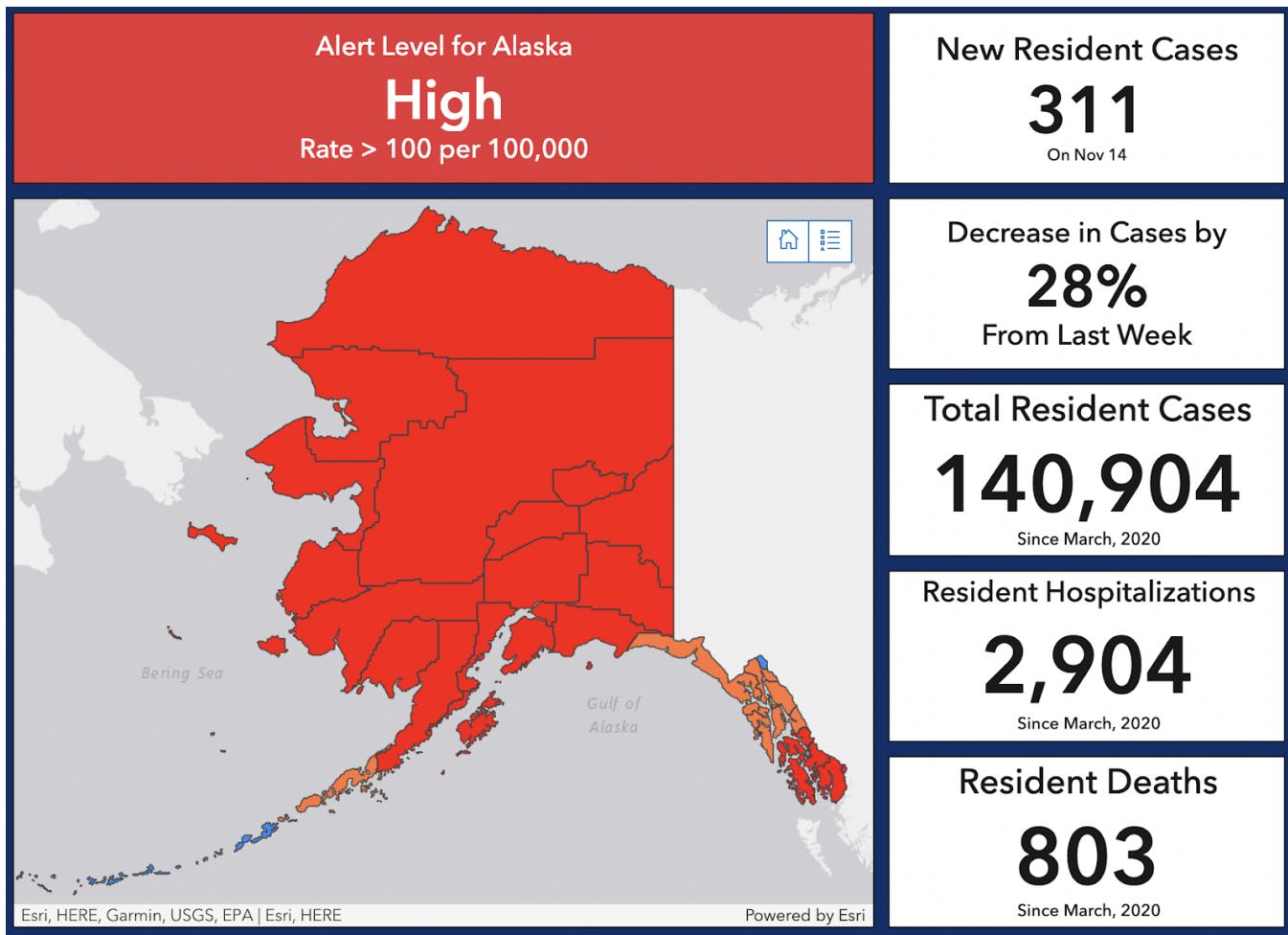
Please include your name and contact info in the video file name.

Questions? Email us at afninfo@nativefederation.org.

COVID-19 UPDATE

WE'RE STILL IN A FIGHT!

While the number of new cases and hospitalizations is on the decline, Alaskans should keep their guard up and not relax COVID-19 mitigation measures like masking, testing and social distancing. The need remains critical for Alaskans to vaccinate against both COVID and the flu, since cold weather is forcing people indoors.



STATE OF ALASKA HELPLINE

All Alaskans can also call the state's coronavirus helpline at 907-646-3322 for assistance finding and making an appointment. That phone line is monitored from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays, and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekends.

CDC FACTS

Click [HERE](#) for the U.S. Center for Disease Control's tribal specific fact sheet: What Tribal Communities Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines.

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!

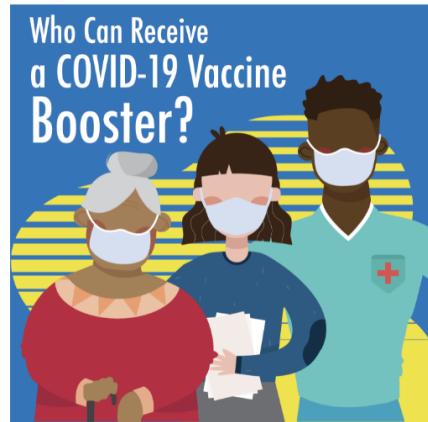
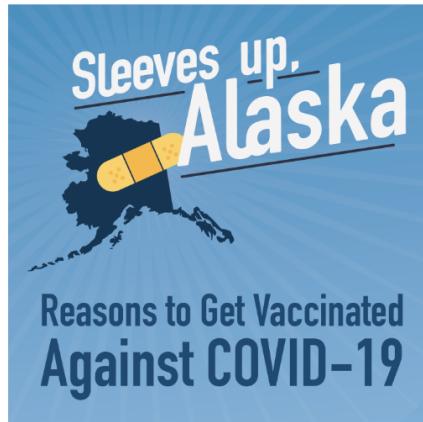
[Booster doses](#) are available for Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines with [mixed dosing allowed \(PDF\)](#).

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.

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 Meeting Schedule

AFN Legislation & Litigation Committee — November 18 — 9:00AM to 10:30AM

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



Established in 1966 to achieve a fair and just settlement of aboriginal land claims, AFN is the oldest and largest statewide Native organization in Alaska. Its membership includes 169 federally recognized tribes, 166 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 12 regional nonprofit and tribal consortiums that contract and compact to run federal and state programs. AFN is governed by a 38-member board, which is elected by its membership at the annual convention held each October. AFN'S mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community.

Learn more at www.nativefederation.org.

Copyright © 2021 Alaska Federation of Natives, All rights reserved.