



Stay up to date on our public reports

In the first half of 2024, the Alaska State Ombudsman released three public reports.

These include an Ombudsman-initiated investigation of Department of Corrections (DOC) dental care at Goose Creek Correctional Center (GCCC), an investigation of Adult Protective Services (APS), and an investigation of the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

Our public reports are available online at ombud.alaska.gov/case-summaries.

Adult Protective Services

After a person alleged that APS did not do enough to intervene to protect a vulnerable adult and prevent their death, the Ombudsman investigated the agency's actions related to the complaint. Evidence showed that APS was unable to find solutions to address an adult's dangerous living environment. After consultation with APS, the Ombudsman made eight recommendations meant to strengthen APS's ability to confidently and lawfully provide services to vulnerable adults. APS accepted six of these recommendations and partially accepted two others.

Department of Corrections

Alaska State Ombudsman Kate Burkhart initiated this investigation in 2023 after our office received dental care-related complaints from incarcerated people. Evidence showed that DOC did not timely provide dental health care to people incarcerated at GCCC and was inconsistent in its response to dental care requests and complaints. After consultation with DOC, the Ombudsman made 12 recommendations to address systemic issues and strengthen the dental program. DOC accepted all of the recommendations.

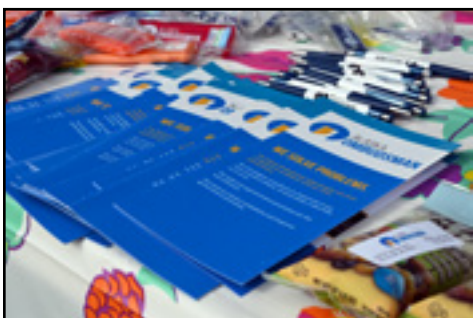
Department of Juvenile Justice

A parent whose child was in DJJ's temporary custody made a complaint containing several allegations about DJJ's actions, including a lack of effort to reunify the parent with their child.

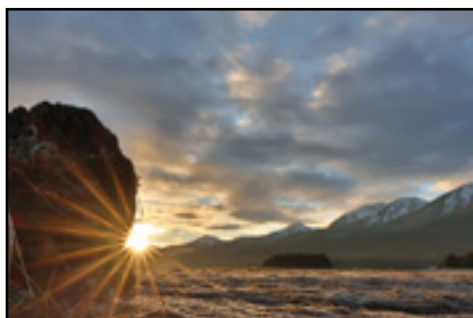
Eighteen allegations were investigated based on concerns raised by the complainant and questions raised by evidence. After multiple consultations with DJJ, the Ombudsman made 10 recommendations meant to help DJJ improve operations and relationships with families. DJJ accepted seven of the recommendations.

In this edition

Ombuds Outreach



Report Reminder



Success Stories





On the road again

In May, we participated in the annual Pacific Island Cultural Flag Day event held in Anchorage's Delaney Park for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. During the event, members of our team met with hundreds of people, sharing information about our office and handing out goodies.

In April, members of our team visited Fairbanks to share information and visit with state agency offices and community resources, including the Office of Children's Services, The Door Emergency Youth Center, Fairbanks Correctional Center, Fairbanks Youth Facility, and the Alaska State Troopers.



Download and catch up

2023 Annual Report is available online

The 2023 Alaska State Ombudsman Annual Report includes a few more pie charts than your typical beach read. It is available online now and ready to be added to your summer reading list.

The annual report includes information about the number and type of complaints our office received in 2023, a recap of the public report released by our office last year, a message from the Ombudsman, and information about our investigations. Last year was a busy one for our office, with us helping over 2,300 people receiving assistance with complaints and problems.

Our annual report is available online at ombud.alaska.gov/public-reports/, or use the QR code on this page.



Spotlighting success stories

Most of the complaints accepted by our office don't lead to public reports, but that doesn't mean that there isn't problem-solving happening every day.

Here are examples of successfully resolved complaints.

- The Alaska State Ombudsman received multiple reports of incarcerated people experiencing lice infestations while at a DOC facility. The problem was affecting incarcerated people who were in a special management unit for people experiencing acute mental health issues. After an Ombudsman Investigator brought this to the attention of DOC Leadership, DOC implemented weekly lice checks in that area of the building. Since then, our office has received confirmation that this new initiative has been successful.

- An incarcerated person alleged that DOC was not providing them medication that they had been prescribed for a serious medical condition and that DOC was delaying scheduling an appointment with an outside health care provider.

Evidence showed that the complainant was receiving all medications prescribed by DOC providers, and that the scheduling delay was caused by the outside provider. After being contacted by our office, DOC was able to schedule the outside appointment for the Complainant, resolving the complaint.

- A Complainant alleged that the Department of Corrections gave them medication to treat a chronic disease, but when they became incarcerated again, DOC refused to provide them with the medication. An Ombudsman Investigator reviewed the Complainant's medical files and confirmed that they previously received the medication.

While the investigation was ongoing, the Complainant was released from DOC custody then arrested again shortly thereafter. They were taken to a different correctional facility than the one the complaint originated from. The Ombudsman Investigator confirmed that the Complainant was receiving the medication, according to DOC policy, at the new facility.