

mat-su Reentry coalition Newsletter

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Inside this issue

Connecting those in need with what they need.....	2
LINKS Resource Fair Info.....	3
Mat-Su Reentry Events.....	3
Alaska Addiction Rehabilitative Services Event.....	3
Knik Tribe Events.....	3
Monthly Highlight of Resources in the Mat-Su.....	3
Mat-Su Job Center Update....	4

Mat-Su Community Service Providers Work Together to Help Improve Our Community

Each year community partnerships in the Mat-Su Valley have been getting stronger. This is important because community partnerships play an essential role in addressing issues that effect the health and wellbeing of our community and are needed to tackle larger challenges more efficiently.

For the last few years the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition/Reentry Program have been an active member of the Mat-Su Community Care Team. The Mat-Su Community Care Team is funded through the Mat-Su Health Foundation and

coordinated by Melissa Toffolon. This team of Community Service Organizations work closely together to improve the health of the community through various services, including: healthcare services, crisis services and support for individuals with disabilities. The Community Care Team also works on mitigating barriers and closing gaps in services.



Below are some of the Mat-Su Behavioral Health Crisis System utilization highlights from 2024:

Someone to Contact

Services like the 988 Lifeline and other behavioral health hotlines providing immediate, accessible support:
Careline/988: **1,673 Mat-Su calls**; VA crisis line: **146 Mat-Su calls**; 911: **665 Mat-Su calls**; DV/SA hotline: **685 calls**;
Mat-Su Health Services (MSHS) hotline: **582 calls**; True North Recovery (TNR) Hopeline: **1,184 calls**

Someone to Respond

Services like mobile crisis teams deliver rapid, on-site interventions to de-escalate crisis and connect individuals to care and other community-based supports that provide crisis prevention and postvention care: Mobile Crisis Team: **540 visits**

A Safe Place for Help

Emergency and crisis stabilization services that support on-demand crisis care and crisis-related supports in a variety of community settings:

Palmer Navigation Center: **317 visits**; TNR Launchpad: **1,138 visits**; MY House: **135 visits**; Set Free Alaska, crisis residential: **138 admissions**; MSRMC Behavioral Health Unit: **436 admissions**; Behavioral health emergency department: **1,062 visits**;
MSHS walk-in crisis visits: **64 visits**; DV/SA Shelter: **271 clients**

(The above highlights are from the Crisis Now Implementation Update, published in April 2025).

As we look to the future, we realize that fostering strong community partnerships is an essential element to addressing the evolving needs of our community and creating a healthier place to live.

Barbara Mongar,
Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Coordinator

Connecting those in need with what they need

By: Mark Kelsey For the Mat-Su Health Foundation, Frontiersman, Jan 22, 2025

A multitude of health and social service resources can be meaningless to the community if nobody knows they are available or who and how each resource can assist a person or family in need.

Connect Mat-Su was developed to address that gap. In existence since 2018, the nonprofit organization is a comprehensive health and social service information and referral hub.

Ashley Peltier, the organization's director, said Connect Mat-Su's goal is to streamline the process of referring people to the services they need by eliminating the barriers that prevent people from living their healthiest and most fulfilling lives. This is done through collaboration with service providers to understand the system of care and serve, ultimately, as a bridge to those services for Valley residents who need them.

"Our resource database includes over 1,700 community resources," Peltier said. "our staff ensure that those resources are updated frequently to accurately reflect what resources are available."

Connect Mat-Su provides more than just information. Whether potential clients call, text, reach out through social media, or schedule an appointment for an in-person visit, service provided by trained and knowledgeable local staff is personal and individualized to each client's specific situation.

"At Connect Mat-Su, we don't just provide a telephone number and address for the resource you need, we assist with establishing the connection," Peltier said.

The organization's website is also available for do-it-yourselfers to search the resource database on their own. A program of the Mat-Su Health Foundation, Connect Mat-Su works steadily to keep the resource database updated, maintained and as comprehensive and accurate as possible.

The Mat-Su Health Foundation has been a force in community health and wellness since 2008. As part owner of the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, the Foundation has invested more than \$130 million of its profits into the community in the more than 17 years of its existence.

Connect Mat-Su success stories are numerous, Peltier said. Recently, a veteran with a traumatic brain injury was referred to the Alaska Warrior Partnership for case management services that provided support assistance with employment and housing needs.

Another recent case involved an individual in sober living who inquired about possible assistance getting to and from work. Connect Mat-Su staff were able to tap into the organization's basic needs support fund to provide transportation options.

One project Peltier said Connect Mat-Su is particularly proud of is an electronic referral partnership with the Sunshine Community Health Center, near Talkeetna. By enabling clinic staff to send referrals for the social needs of their patients, like housing and transportation, they have more time to do what they do best.

"We're helping residents in the Upper Su connect to resources and allowing clinical staff to focus on addressing health concerns and issues", Peltier said. "we see ourselves as a safety net for people who may fall through the cracks otherwise."



Front-desk staff at Connect Mat-Su in Wasilla assist walk-in clients with health and social service needs.

Photo courtesy of Connect Mat-Su



LINKS RESOURCE FAIR



Friday, June 27th 2025
11AM-6PM



Wonderland Park
594 W Nelson Ave in Wasilla

- ✓ Community Nonprofit Organizations
- ✓ Door Prizes & Vendor Bingo
- ✓ Food Vendors
- ✓ Inflatables, Kids Games & Activities hosted by Thrive Mat-Su & Youth 360

**DISCOVER EXCITING ACTIVITIES,
CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY,
& ACCESS VALUABLE RESOURCES**



**MAT-SU HEALTH
FOUNDATION**

CONTACT US

907-373-3632

www.linksprc.org



Americans Don't Ever Forget



Monthly Highlight of Resources in the Mat-Su

- **LINKS Resource Center:** LINKS provides resources, advocacy, and connections to improve lives.
Address: 777 N. Crusey Street, Suite A101, Wasilla, AK 99654
Phone Number: 907-373-3632
Website: [LINKS Resource Center – LINKS Resource Center](#)
- **Connect Mat-Su:** A comprehensive health and social service information and referral hub, ensuring that every person in the Mat-Su Borough has what is needed to live a healthy and fulfilling life.
Phone Number: 907-373-2628
Website: [Local support, local resources | 907-373-2628 - Connect Mat-Su](#)

Mat-Su Reentry Events:

- **Mat-Su Reentry Coalition Steering Team Meeting**
Tuesday, Aug 5, 2025
9:00 to 10:30 AM

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition has a virtual Steering Team Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month. All Welcome to attend.

For questions, to sign up, or for zoom links to the above events please contact Barbara Mongar at: barbara.mongar@valleycharities.org

Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services

[Alaska Addiction Rehabilitation Services \(AARS\)](#) is again hosting [Fun Day](#) at our treatment facility.

- **Saturday, June 7**
- **11 am to 3 pm**
- **26731 W. Point Mackenzie Rd. Wasilla, AK 99623**

- Free barbecue
- Family activity tables (rock painting, water balloons, face painting, ladder toss) with prizes
- Volleyball, basketball, and pickleball for the adults
- Two bouncy houses for the kids
- Farm tours and greenhouse sales
- Door prizes every 30 minutes
All are invited to attend

Knik Tribe Events:

- **Knik Tribe Family Culture Nights** — Bi-Weekly, Wednesday, 5:30 - 7:30 PM; Location: 758 Shoreline Dr. Wasilla, AK; Open to All
Compact@KnikTribe.org
907-373-7991
- **Talking Circle**—Tuesday, at 6:30 and Wednesday at 5:30; Same location above;
Contact Ralph Lewis at 907-841-9773
- **Youth Wellbriety Circle** — Fridays, from 1 to 3PM; Location: MyHouse, Wasilla

Mat-Su Reentry Coalition

The Mat-Su Reentry Coalition is a collaboration of individuals, community stakeholders, public and not-for-profit agencies, faith-based and business partners who are united and committed to reducing recidivism among returning citizens to the Mat-Su community.

Our Mission

To promote public safety by identifying and implementing strategies that increase former prisoners' wellbeing within the community and reduce the likelihood of their return to prison through recidivating.

We will accomplish this by:

- Improved communication and collaboration between Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) and the community.
- Building community partnerships to strengthen local services.
- Identifying barriers for those being released from incarceration and taking an active role in addressing those concerns.
- Promoting community educational and training opportunities for those releasing regarding resources.
- Work in conjunction with Alaska DOC to inform and promote reentry efforts in Alaska.



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Mat-Su Job Center Update

By: **Amanda Carlson**, South Central Regional Manager

Summertime in Alaska is here, and the Mat-Su Job Center is bustling with activity! Our staff are hard at work assisting customers with summer job opportunities and apprenticeship openings across the state. We are conveniently located in Wasilla at 877 W. Commercial Drive and open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Stop by and see us, or refer job seekers our way for employment and training support.

Mat-Su Job Center staff regularly provide services and workshops in three local institutions: Goose Creek, Palmer, and Pt. Mackenzie. These ongoing In-Reach efforts help inform inmates about opportunities in Alaska's labor market and connect them with Department of Labor & Workforce Development services upon release. Some available services include: Assistance with job applications, Certified testing to enhance skills, Potential grant funding for training or supportive services, such as essential tools and work gear. We encourage returning citizens to visit one of the 13 Job Centers across the state so we can support their journey to meaningful employment at family-sustaining wages.

Last month, the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC) proudly celebrated its Spring 2025 graduating class of 84 students. Employment prospects for AVTEC graduates remain strong, with over half securing training-related positions before graduation. Graduates completed programs in nine technical fields: Business and Office Technology, Construction Technology, Culinary Arts, Diesel/Heavy Equipment Technologies, Industrial Electricity, Industrial Machine and Maintenance, Industrial Welding, Information Technology, and Plumbing and Heating.

AVTEC is an excellent training option for Alaskans, especially those who need room and board. The center even offers family housing and a variety of financial aid options, including grants that do not require repayment. To learn more, visit avtec.edu or contact admissions at (907) 224-3322 or admissions@avtec.edu.

The Department of Veterans Affairs hosts the Mat-Su Job Club every Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. to assist veterans in finding employment. The Mat-Su Borough has one of the highest veteran populations in Alaska, so please encourage any veterans needing support to connect with VA staff. For veterans seeking one-on-one employment or training assistance, the Mat-Su Job Center has dedicated veteran staff: Holly Brien and Cristal Fisher. They provide services through the Jobs for Veterans State Grant and Career Support & Training Services. Contact the Job Center at (907) 352-2500 to learn more.



For the latest information on recruitments, job fairs, virtual job readiness workshops, and training opportunities, visit Alaska's Job Center Network at jobs.alaska.gov and explore the main menu options.

[June Trends](#): Although less well-known, GDP is also available at the state level. It shows not just the composition of Alaska's economy and how it's changed over time, but also how our state differs from others. Also in this issue: What Alaska imports and exports internationally

Note: For more information on the Mat-Su Reentry Coalition contact Barbara.mongar@valleycharities.org or go to our Webpage at Mat-Su Valley Reentry Program | Valley Charities Inc