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**RESIDENT COUNCIL TOOLKIT:  
A STAFF MANUAL  
ALL THE TOOLS YOU NEED TO HELP RESIDENT  
LEADERS RUN A RESIDENT COUNCIL**

ALASKA OFFICE OF THE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN  
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# Introduction

## WHAT IS A RESIDENT COUNCIL?

Federal regulations offer nursing home residents the right to meet with other residents to talk about what works and what doesn't. A Resident Council is the process of ensuring this right is protected.

Resident Council meetings are for the residents and are meant to be run by residents. Residents come up with ways to address problems in Resident Council meetings.

Every Resident Council is different. There is no “right” way to run a Resident Council. This toolkit provides resources and ideas you might want to think about. It is up to each Council to decide how they want to do things.



## WHY A RESIDENT COUNCIL TOOLKIT?

One of the duties of the Long Term Care Ombudsman is to assist residents to resolve issues they are having in their facility. One way we can do this is to support Resident Councils to work with facility staff and administration to resolve issues. After seeing how Resident Councils are currently run in Alaska and the diversity of the residents of these Councils, the State Long Term Care Ombudsman hired consultants to help develop a culturally appropriate toolkit for Resident Council members and facility staff.

This toolkit includes videos for Resident Council members as well as a written guide for the facility staff person who is responsible to support the Resident Council. It begins with information on historical trauma and communication tips when interacting with Alaska Native residents.

This toolkit is for residents, staff that support Councils, and administrators. The toolkit includes:

- Two videos for residents about Resident Councils
- Staff manual. This is intended to be printed double-sided, and placed in a binder.
  - Checklists (preparation for a meeting, running a meeting and after a meeting).
  - Tools on how to set up meetings, how to choose leaders, how to solve problems, and ways that Councils can conduct meetings. Examples of agendas and Council meeting minutes are included.
  - A copy of the federal law and regulations specifying the role of the Council.
  - Readings on other states' resident council toolkits, Alaska Native Elders, historical trauma and nursing home care, and more.
  - Orange boxes include quotes from staff and resident council leaders around Alaska.
- A Council assessment tool for residents and administrators

You can find these materials on the website of the Alaska Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman – [www.akoltco.org](http://www.akoltco.org).

If you have any questions or concerns about the information in this document or would like a Long Term Care Ombudsman to come work with you and the Resident Council in your facility, please contact us.

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# Why is it important to know about historical trauma in Alaska?

Prolonged exposure to stress changes the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and relational aspects of a person. For Alaska Native peoples, as for American Indian people across the country, historical trauma began with forced relocation, removal from families as small children, and placement into boarding schools, where they were prohibited from speaking their language or practicing their cultures. The layers of stress, grief, loss, and abuse that resulted from these and other events are known as historical trauma.

Alaska's Native Elders have lived through times of enormous stress and have accumulated trauma not only over the course of their lifetimes, but from the trauma experienced by their parents and grandparents.

Staff who support Resident Councils should know about historical trauma experience by residents because trauma plays a role in a person's overall wellbeing. Trauma-informed care in long-term care settings acknowledges and respects Elders' life experiences, helps them feel safe, and empowers them to make their own care decisions.

Some resources on historical trauma and resilience are included in the Readings section, and their citations are listed in the footnote below. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (Lewis, 2011) (Roderick, 2010) (State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, 2018) (Lewis, 2019) (Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, undated)



# Communicating with Alaska Native Elders

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Alaska has 229 federally recognized tribes which is almost half of all the federally recognized tribes in the United States. Alaska Native cultures vary widely by region, by tribe, and by community. Serving a Tribal population in one community does not mean that one size fits all. Individual differences exist within a culture, community, and family depending on a person's life experiences.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE IN COMMUNICATION AS STAFF SUPPORT TO THE RESIDENT COUNCIL?

One of your roles is to support the Resident Council leader and other staff to understand the people of the region and acknowledge and honor the cultural differences among residents in order to have an effective Council. The following information on communication is a general overview but knowing how each Elder communicates is the most important place to start.

## NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Observation is important when interacting with Elders.
- If an Elder raises his/her eyebrows, it may mean "yes".
- If an Elder shrugs shoulders, it may mean "I don't know".
- Nodding does not necessarily mean "yes." Sometimes it means "I hear that you are speaking".
- As a sign of respect for the Elder, avoid making direct eye contact (follow lead of the Elders – if they do not make direct eye contact, use the same communication style).
- A gentle handshake is a sign of respect.

- Sit still and avoid distractions when speaking and listening to an Elder (put away your phone, notes, etc.)

## **VERBAL COMMUNICATION**

- Allow Elders to speak first.
- Ask an Elder's permission to speak.
- When an Elder does speak, listen to what is being said and respect the time you are getting from the Elder.
- Leave time after asking questions, or in discussion, for Elders to respond. They take time to reflect and compose a response, so leave adequate time for them to respond (like 2 minutes).
- Ask direct, open-ended questions.
- Defer to an Elder to offer an answer to a question.
- Elders may appreciate humor, so try to relay information with amusement or laughter.
- Use a soft, gentle tone and simple language.
- Be consistent with your voice; do not use high pitch as if you were speaking to a baby.
- Don't interrupt.

## **NARRATIVE COMMUNICATION**

- Alaska Native Elders often offer their teaching or advice in ways that are narrative, such as through storytelling.
- Some Elders do not answer questions directly. Rather, they share a story or respond with different information. Be Patient. Their response will either answer the question or provide insight on what the Elder wants others to know.
- Elders may ask for something while not being specific – they will ask for something indirectly so they are not viewed as a nuisance or needing something. For example, "I wish I had more coffee" can mean, "If you are

going to the store, please pick some up for me” or “I need a ride to the store”.

- Try to learn a few words in their traditional language to help better communicate with an Elder.
- If you have questions or comments for an Elder, you should wait until the end of the story to ask them.

## **SHOW RESPECT**

- Do not openly argue or disagree with an Elder.
- When food is served, serve Elders first.
- After trust is established, body contact may be appreciated.
- Bragging or bringing attention to oneself is not appreciated by Alaska Native or American Indian people, including Elders. Stay humble.
- Have a sense of humor.

## **PAY ATTENTION TO TIME AND PACE**

- Talk at a slow pace and use pauses. Be comfortable with silences.
- Allow time for opinions and thoughts to be expressed. This may be in the form of storytelling.
- The concept of time is “in the moment” rather than “by the clock”.
- Use the seasons for the year to talk about time. Example: “When did your knee start hurting?” “When snow came, when snow thawed, etc.”



# What do Resident Councils do?

**Identify problems and solutions, make recommendations to staff.** Residents can talk privately with each other at Council meetings. Staff can be invited to the meetings to listen. Council leaders talk with staff on behalf of residents.

**Welcome new residents, support residents.** Councils contribute to a sense of community, much like in a small town or village.

**Communicate with staff.** Tell staff about resident concerns without naming names, and also share what's going well.

**Inform residents of their rights.** Keep residents informed about what their rights are while living at the facility.

**Raise funds for projects that residents identify.** Residents may decide to do a project, and raise funds through the Council to support it.



## WHO CAN BE ON THE COUNCIL?

Anyone who lives in the facility can be on the Council. Some facilities are small, which makes it easy for everyone to talk together.

In large facilities, residents may decide to have someone who lives in the same area speak for them. For example, residents who live in the same cottage might select one resident to bring things to the Council.

Staff cannot be members of the Resident Council.

### ***From a staff person:***

*“The president is apprised of things that go on. There are things we think could help and get advice on: colors, furnishings—not just quality of care. We ask and get feedback.”*

## WHAT KIND OF THINGS DO RESIDENT COUNCILS TALK ABOUT?

Anything that residents like or think needs to be changed. Some examples of things that Councils in Alaska have worked on include:

- Food (changing up the menu, having more menu choices). Often residents want traditional foods from their culture.
- Broken things at the facility (the van to take residents out, the TV, call buttons, hot water for showers, ice cream machine).
- Resident’s clothes get lost or ruined in the laundry.
- Things missing from a resident’s room.
- Different activities or to decide where to go for trips outside the facility.
- Staff sleeping at night.
- Telling about someone who is not kind.

### ***From a Council leader:***

*“We can’t stand around. We are working people who have come here, we want something to do. We garden, we raise funds. We are kind of like a big family together, and we treat each other like family.”*

## HOW DOES A COUNCIL CHOOSE A LEADER?

Residents should pick a leader who is good at listening to others and who is willing to talk with the staff about what the Council wants to address. Find a resident who is respected. Sometimes the quiet people are the best leaders because they listen.

Sometimes a person volunteers to be a leader. Sometimes people ask someone to be a leader.

Sometimes more than one person wants to be a leader. When that happens, the residents choose to have an election. This is usually a vote by secret ballot. This way residents can vote without worrying about hurting someone's feelings.

***From a Council leader::***

*To recruit new potential presidents, I ask for their help with Council activities:  
"I need you to help me present this to the meeting tomorrow."*

## WHERE DO COUNCILS MEET?

The Council should have a quiet place to meet so that everyone can hear what each resident is saying. Some Councils have asked for a microphone so that everyone can hear.

The Council should meet someplace private so residents can talk freely.



## HOW DO WE GET RESIDENTS TO COME TO THE COUNCIL MEETING?

All residents should know when and where the Council will meet. It is easiest to have the Council meeting at the same time and place each time. Most Councils meet once a month. Councils can meet as often as residents want to get things done.

Leaders and other residents should invite new residents to Council meetings.

Staff at the facility can remind residents of the Council meeting and help them to get to the meeting.

The Council can ask staff to provide snacks and drinks for the meeting.

Some Councils have their meetings just before a popular activity at the facility. Some Councils meet just before bingo, or before a traditional meal like fish head soup.

Activity staff should not schedule an activity during the time the Council is meeting.

Residents like to see that the Council makes a difference. It is good to share with other residents the problems the Council has solved.

Council leaders can talk to residents to hear about questions and concerns. The Council can survey the residents to identify questions or problems. All Councils share the minutes of their meetings with all the residents.

### **From Council staff:**

*“I focus on making it fun – always have a snack and drink – make it a party.*

*Meetings are followed by a preferred activity like story hour (they share stories from their lives) or watch a movie, take them to the cafeteria for coffee – helps to follow with an activity.”*

*“We offer raffle prizes for participating and snacks (that can be pureed for people with swallowing issues).”*

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING A COUNCIL MEETING?

It is helpful to have structure during a Council meeting. Some Councils have an agenda written on a paper or a checklist to follow. Usually the structure of the meeting looks something like this:

1. The leader welcomes everyone to the meeting.
2. The leader asks everyone to introduce themselves.
3. The leader talks about the last meeting and what has changed.
  - a. The Council should keep a list of the problems and when they are solved.
4. If there are past problems that have not been solved, ask the members what to do next. The Council can ask the Ombudsman for help to get the problem solved.
5. The leader asks if there are any new problems or things that are going well.
6. The residents talk about ways to they would like to see problems solved, and how to share compliments.
7. After the Council meeting, the leader asks some residents to help to share problems and compliments with the staff. The group tells the staff ways the Council would like the facility to solve problems.

Sometimes the Council leader will need help to plan and run the meeting. The Council might want to choose other people to help the leader run the Council.

## HOW DOES A COUNCIL KEEP TRACK OF WHAT HAPPENED?

It is important to keep track of what the Council discussed at the meeting because:

- The notes provide a written record of the work the Council is doing.
- The notes help the Council leader remember what he or she wants to share with the staff and administrator.
- The Council needs to keep track of problems that have been solved and which problems need to be fixed.
- The notes tell state surveyors what problems residents have had over the last year.

Someone should take notes during the meeting. Councils can invite other people to help at meetings, such as the Ombudsman, a family member of a resident or staff person. It is important to make sure that no names of residents are listed in the part of the notes that discuss the problems.

If residents are having problems with this task, they can contact the Ombudsman and they will assist in finding someone to take notes at the meetings.



## HOW ARE STAFF SUPPOSED TO HELP THE COUNCIL?

Staff at the facility can support the Council in a number of ways.

The facility should provide:

- A quiet and private space to have a Council meeting.
- Any tools needed for a Council meeting such as a microphone or recorder.
- Snacks for the meeting.

What staff can do:

- All staff should remind residents of the meeting.
- All staff should help residents get to and from the Council meeting if they need help.
- Activities staff can add the Council meeting to the activities calendar.
- Activities staff can make sure all staff know to help residents get to the meeting.

The Council can ask the staff to help:

- The Council can select a staff person to type up minutes of the Council meeting. This could also be the Ombudsman, a family member, or anyone else.
- The Council can ask the activities staff to help with an activity the Council would like to host. Some Councils host social events or hold an event to raise funds.
- The Council can ask the Ombudsman or anyone else to attend the meeting with the staff to discuss problems and solutions the Council members talked about.

The Council may ask staff to help if a resident is upset or angry during a Council meeting.



# Checklists, Tools, and Resources

The following sections are checklists, tools and resources that may be helpful to staff supporters.





# Checklists





## WHAT DOES A SUCCESSFUL COUNCIL LOOK LIKE?

- The Council has regular meetings.
- The Council has rules that it follows (may be called bylaws).
- Leadership is selected by the residents.
- Leadership are elected/selected by a fair process that residents agree upon.
- The residents can meet independently of staff.
- Residents attend the meetings.
- Residents trust Council leaders.
- Residents speak their mind.
- Staff and administrators seek out the Council for advice.
- Staff helps Council with things like typing the agenda, taking minutes, printing and sharing minutes.
- Administrators make sure staff have time to support the Council as they need.

### What may vary from Council to Council?

Sometimes it's called something else (Elders Council).

Leaders may have titles such as President and Vice President. Sometimes the leaders have different titles with similar roles.

Councils may have special projects like fundraising for items or events identified by residents.



## CHECKLIST FOR A RESIDENT COUNCIL MEETING

One week before the meeting:

- Ask guests if they can attend to speak about any specific topic.
- Ask if a specific resident would like to speak on a topic.
- Set the agenda
  - Review the draft minutes from the last meeting. Are there outstanding items?
  - Include any guest speakers
  - Usual topics such as menus and activities
  - Issues that residents want to hear about
  - Time for discussion.
  - Reminder of date and time of next meeting.
- Ask the staff to type up the agenda, print, and share it.
- Ask the staff to help with flyers and put them up.
- Remind residents individually about the meeting.

Day before the meeting:

- Remind residents individually about the meeting.
- Ask the staff to remind residents.

Day of the meeting:

- Remind residents individually about the meeting.
- Ask the staff to remind residents.
  - Some residents will need assistance getting to and from the meeting.
- If they want to, post a sign on the door during Council meetings to remind staff not to enter during the meeting (unless they are invited, of course!).
- Ask the staff to type up minutes for them to review.

Shortly after the meeting:

- Review draft minutes for edits or changes.
- Share draft minutes with residents who did not attend, so they hear what they missed.
- Share draft minutes with the administrator, director of nursing, and other staff and ask for their assistance in solving any problems.

## SOME RULES FOR RESIDENT COUNCILS

- Come to meeting on time.
- Don't interrupt. Give everyone a chance to talk. Don't talk over others.
- Speak up.
- Raise their hand to be recognized to speak.
- Everyone is safe here. Disagree respectfully.
- We have open, respectful communication.
- Write down thoughts or comments if not able to speak or too shy.





# Tools, Examples, and Exercises





# HOW TO ADVOCATE WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders in how they talk with administrators about problems and solutions that come up in Council meetings.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council chair with the minutes of the meeting. It is not the position for staff to report Resident Council issues to administration.

**A Council leader's** role is to be the liaison between the residents and the administration. The Council leader shares resident council concerns with the administrator and advocates for changes.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Help the Council leader to find others to go to the meeting with the administrator.
- Support the Council leader in having notes from the meeting. This could include a written list of problems and ways to solve the problems.
- Support the Council leader in listing the good things the Council notices.

**Council leaders can:**

- Have other residents attend the meeting to provide support.
- Ask the Ombudsman or another person to go with them to the meeting with the administrator.
- Share the good things the Council noticed and thank the staff for solving any past problems.
- Be strong but polite when talking to the administrator.

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## **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Did anything change as a result?

---

## **WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?**

The Long Term Care Ombudsman is a big resource to Councils.

# GETTING PEOPLE TO ATTEND A COUNCIL MEETING

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders to get residents to attend Council meetings.

Residents do not have to attend meetings.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to make sure all residents know about Council meetings and are able to get to meetings.

**A Council leader's** role is to work with other residents to invite and remind all residents about Council meetings.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Help Council leaders brainstorm ideas to get people to come to Council meetings.
  - Perhaps a resident's friend or trusted caregiver can encourage attendance.
- Ensure staff are scheduled to assist residents' transportation to and from the Council meeting (i.e., assist with wheelchair, etc.)
- Schedule a fun event after Council meetings like birthday celebrations, BBQs, big bingo game, etc.
- On the monthly activities schedule, emphasize the Council meeting by using a different color or larger font.
- Make sure there are no conflicting activities.
- Ensure staff provide several reminders to residents before the meeting – the day before as well as the morning of the meeting.

### **Council leaders can:**

- Brainstorm ideas for increasing participation at meetings.
- Talk with neighbors and friends about attending meetings. They can share the Council's successes.
- Set the Council meeting before a popular activity such as Bingo or Native food potluck.
- Set the Council meeting the same time and day every month.
- Consider reviewing the meeting minutes with residents individually after the meeting.

---

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Did they know about the meeting?
- Did they go to the meeting?
  - What was their favorite part?
  - If they didn't go, why not?

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### **WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?**

Examples of a flyer and an activities calendar showing the meeting follow.

# Resident Council meeting!

Tuesday at 1:30

In the Great Room

Come talk about what's  
going on at our home!

We will have snacks!

Bingo to follow



## EXAMPLE OF CALENDAR: BASED ON UTUQQANAAT INAAT, KOTZEBUE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	
	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>
Church on TV Cultural film/Bingo Fried Seal	9:30 exercise 1:30 Bingo 6:30 Checkers Musk Ox Stew	9:30 Nail spa 11 Social Van ride Seagull Egg Soup	9:30 Church 11 Coffee & KNOM Oatmeal cookies	9:30 Coffee Van ride Bingo Resident Council mtg	yoga/liz 11 coffee KNOM elders Fish Chowder	
	<b>08</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
Church on TV Birthday party Seagull Egg Soup	9:30 exercise 1:30 Social 6:30 Bingo Goose Soup	9:30 Nail spa Social Van ride Seagull Egg Soup	9:30 Church Coffee & KNOM Party Musk Ox Soup	9:30 Coffee Van ride Bingo cake	yoga/liz 11 coffee KNOM elders Fish Chowder	
	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
Church on TV Cultural film/Bingo Boiled Seal	9:30 exercise 1:30 Cafe 6:30 Checkers Musk Ox Stew	Nail spa Social Van ride Seagull Egg Soup	9:30 Church Coffee & KNOM Pizza party Fried Fish	9:30 Coffee Van ride Bingo Salmon Spread	yoga/liz 11 coffee KNOM elders Movie Fish Chowder	
	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
Church on TV Cultural film Eskimo food potluck	9:30 exercise 1:30 Card Game 6:30 Checkers Goose Soup	Nail spa Social Van ride Seagull Egg Soup	9:30 Church Coffee & KNOM Bingo Blueberry Cake	9:30 Coffee Van ride Bingo Homemade bread	yoga/liz 11 coffee KNOM elders Fish Chowder	



# COMMUNICATING WITH ALASKA NATIVE ELDERS

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff have excellent communications with Alaska Native Council leaders and residents.

Alaska Native cultures vary widely by region, by Tribe, and by Village. Serving a Tribal population does not mean that one size fits all. Also, individual differences exist within a culture, community, and family, depending on a person's life experiences.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to listen and communicate effectively with residents whose cultures are possibly different from yours.

**A Council leader's** role is to help staff understand the people of the region. They can teach staff how to communicate with residents who have a different culture from residents.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Know about non-verbal communication
  - Observation is important when interacting with Elders.
  - If an Elder raises their eyebrows, it may mean "yes".
  - If an Elder shrugs shoulders, it may mean "I don't know".
  - Nodding does not necessarily mean "yes." Sometimes it means, "I hear that you are speaking".
  - As a sign of respect for the Elder, avoid making direct eye contact (follow lead of the Elders – if they do not make direct eye contact, use the same communication style).
  - A gentle handshake is a sign of respect.

- Sit still and avoid distractions when speaking and listening to an Elder (put away your phone, notes, etc.).
- Know about verbal communication.
  - Allow Elders to speak first.
  - Ask an Elder's permission to speak.
  - When they do speak, listen to what is being said and respect the time from the Elder.
  - Leave time after asking questions, or in discussion, for Elders to respond. They take time to reflect and compose a response, so leave adequate time for them to respond.
  - Be comfortable with silence.
  - Ask direct, open-ended questions.
  - Defer to an Elder to offer an answer to a question.
  - Elders may appreciate humor, so try to relay information with amusement or laughter.
  - Use a soft, gentle tone and simple language.
  - Be consistent with your voice; do not use high pitch as if you were speaking to a baby.
  - Don't interrupt.
- Know about narrative communication.
  - Alaska Native Elders often offer their teaching or advice in ways that are narrative, such as through storytelling.
  - Some Elders do not answer questions directly. Rather, they share a story or respond with different information. Be patient. Their response will either answer the question or provide insight on what the Elder wants others to know.
  - Elders may ask for something while not being specific – they will ask for something indirectly so they are not viewed as a nuisance or needing something. For example, "I wish I had more coffee" can mean, "If you are going to the store, please pick some up for me" or "I need a ride to the store".
  - Try to learn a few words in their traditional language to help better communicate with an Elder.

- If you have questions or comments for an Elder, you should wait until the end of the story to ask them.
- Show respect
  - Do not openly argue or disagree with an Elder.
  - When food is served, serve Elders first.
  - After trust is established, body contact may be appreciated.
  - Bragging or bringing attention to oneself is not appreciated by Alaska Native or American Indian people, including Elders. Stay humble.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Pay attention to time and pace.
  - Talk at a slow pace and use pauses.
  - Allow time for opinions and thoughts to be expressed. This may be in the form of storytelling.
  - The concept of time is “in the moment” rather than “by the clock”.
  - Use the seasons of the year to talk about time. Example: “When did their knee start hurting?” “When snow came, when snow thawed, etc.”

**A Council leader can:**

- Explain to staff how the culture of the community works (structure of Council meeting, cultural protocols, Native foods, and so on).

---

**HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

If the residents are engaging, they are teasing and joking or participating in the meeting. If they are silent, there is room to improve.

Staff also need to be okay with Elders not always wanting to talk or share. There may be alternative ways to share, such as writing down their thoughts or concerns, or sharing with family or staff in the facility.



# SETTING THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders to set an agenda for a Council meeting.

Formal agendas are not necessary. Some Councils find them helpful to guide the meeting.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to ask Council leaders about possible agenda items and to assist the Council leadership in typing up the agenda as needed.

**A Council leader's** role is to talk with residents so they can set an agenda that meets the needs of the residents.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

### As staff, you can:

- Remind Council leaders that it's time to prepare an agenda.
- Meet with Council leaders and support them to create an agenda without directing them.
- Review previous minutes with the leader. See if there are items to add to the agenda.
- Ask if they would like you to type up the agenda.
- Type it up at their request.
- Share it with the residents at their request.

### Council leaders can:

- Review the minutes of the last meeting.
- Confirm what other residents might want to hear or talk about.

---

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- If they had something to talk about, did it get added to the agenda?
- Were any follow-up items from the last meeting added to the agenda?

## AGENDA: EXAMPLE 1

### Agenda of \* Resident Council

Date, time

Location

Welcome and introductions

Review Previous Meeting's Minutes

Business

Review activities calendar, give feedback

Review menu, suggestions for next month

Review progress on solving problems from last month

Review resident rights and grievance procedure

Open Forum

Discuss any new problems

Discuss what's working

Adjourn

## AGENDA: EXAMPLE 2

### Agenda of \* Resident Council

Date, time

Location

Call to Order

Review Agenda

Review Previous Meeting's Minutes

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

Guest Speaker/presentation

Old Business

Follow up on items from last meeting

New Business

Review activities calendar, give feedback

Review menu, make suggestions for next month

Review resident rights and grievance procedure

Member Comments

Adjourn

# HOLDING A COUNCIL MEETING

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## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff to support the Council during a meeting.

---

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council leaders as they run the meeting.

**A Council leader's** role is to convene, run, and end the meeting so that all residents can talk if they want to, and in a way that people are respectful to each other.

---

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Help the leaders create opportunities for each member to participate during a meeting – such as during introductions.
- Support the Council leaders in thinking about the questions below.
- Provide plenty of time for residents to express themselves.
- Support Council members' efforts to speak and negotiate for themselves.
- Speak in simple, direct language potentially accompanied by gestures, pictures, written words or verbal cues.
- Help Council leaders recognize and welcome new residents. Make sure everyone knows each other's names.
- Avoid taking on the role of the "authority with answers." Coordinate having staff members with authority over the topic at hand to speak at a Council meeting.
- Do not run the meetings and taking on other leadership roles.
- Do not direct Council activities and projects.

### **A Council leader can:**

- Convene the meeting. How can they welcome the people in the room, and make it easy for them to talk?
- Make it about friendship, not just business. We all live here. How can we support each other?
- Say “welcome” to new residents.
- Make sure everyone knows each other’s names. Ask them all to introduce themselves, even if they have done this before.
- Ask questions:
  - What activities do you want to do?
  - How are you liking the food?
  - Is everything clean enough?
  - Are their rooms and showers warm enough/cool enough?
  - Are there things that are broken or need to be fixed?
  - What is going well? Is there a staff member who is doing a great job?
  - What would they like to see done differently?
- Thank everyone for coming and invite them back. Share the details of the next meeting (date, time) if this information is known and can be shared.

---

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Did they think the meeting went well?
- Did they have a chance to say or learn about what they wanted to?
- What could we do differently next month?

## WAYS TO HOLD A MEETING: KITCHEN CABINET STYLE

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help Council leaders and staff use the Kitchen Cabinet as one method to run Council meetings.

A Kitchen Cabinet is an informal way to meet and discuss what is going well, what needs changing, and what the group can do. The Kitchen Cabinet can be convened quickly and easily, and does not include a formal agenda.

Kitchen Cabinets often involve food and drink, just like a conversation at a kitchen table.

The Kitchen Cabinet style works best when the group is small (5 to 10) and the residents know and trust each other.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff,** your role is to support the Council leaders as they run the meeting.

**A Council leader's** role is to convene and run the meeting. The leader can share how this style of meeting works, and ask if the residents want to try it.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Make sure the seats are set up at a table so everyone can see each other, and that there are refreshments if requested.
- Assist the leader to document the meeting so minutes can be typed up.

### **Council leaders can:**

- Have the meeting in a room where people can sit around a table casually.
- Ask the residents about what is working or not working, and what a solution could be to one of the mentioned problems.
- Make sure every person has a chance to talk.

---

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Did they like talking this way?
- Is there a better way to learn and share with each other?

## WAYS TO HOLD A MEETING: TALKING CIRCLES

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders to use Talking Circles as one method to hold Council meetings.

Talking Circles create a safe space for people to talk about challenges in their lives. The circle is a non-judgmental and confidential environment that allows people to be heard. The formal structure of the



Talking Circle is based on traditional practices and has a framework that can be followed to allow for good facilitation and outcomes, so everyone can speak in a meeting.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff,** your role is to support the Council leaders as they facilitate the Talking Circle.

**A Council leader's** role is to convene and run the meeting. The leader can share how this style of meeting works, and ask if the residents want to try it.

---

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

### As staff, you can:

- Make sure the seats are set up in a comfortable sized circle so everyone can see each other, and that the Council has some way to “pass the talking stick/feather/rock”.
- Assist the leader to document the meeting so minutes can be typed up.

### Council leaders can:

- Convene the talking circle and make sure every person has a chance to talk.
- Ask the residents a question that stimulates conversation.
- Use a “talking stick” feather, a rock, or something to pass around the room. The person holding the “talking stick/feather/rock” gets to talk uninterrupted, and everyone else gets to listen.
- Some Talking Circles have three rounds: a beginning, a middle, and an end.
  - The first round is introductions, the second a question, and the third is a conclusion (is there anything else you wanted to say?).
- After everyone has the chance to share, Council leader can summarize sharing topics, ask for last minute comments and next steps.

---

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

### Ask the residents:

- Did they like talking this way?
- Is there a better way to learn and share with each other?

# WHAT A GOOD LEADER WILL DO AT A COUNCIL MEETING

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders in managing a Council meeting.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council leaders when they request it.

**A Council leader's** role is to make sure all residents have the opportunity to talk in the meeting.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff**, you can:

- Support the Council leader in working through the agenda.
- Help manage difficult discussions, as requested.

**Council leaders** can:

- Open the meeting.
- Make sure everyone knows each other. "My name is \* and I have lived here since \*. I am from (community)."
- Remind the staff guest and the Council that the guest is there at the invitation of the Council.
- Move the agenda along. "Thank you for your report. Does anyone have any questions?"
- Facilitate the conversation.
  - Ask people for their advice and thoughts.
  - Make sure everyone has a chance to have their say, including the quiet people.

- If someone doesn't share time with others, they can ask them to pause and let others talk.
- Thank people for participating.
- Close the meeting.

---

## **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Did the leader manage the meeting well?
- Do they feel like they were heard?

# HOW TO KEEP MINUTES

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff assist Council leadership to prepare and keep a record of what the Council does.

What should be in the minutes:

- Questions and concerns that get raised by residents;
- How the facility addressed questions and concerns raised in previous meetings;
- What is working well, and what people like; and
- Decisions of the Council

No names of people who identified a problem should be listed in minutes.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to assist the Council leaders to find someone to take minutes at the meeting, so that the Council's meetings and decisions are recorded.

**A Council leader's** role is to make sure that someone can take minutes at the meeting, so that the Council's meetings and decisions are recorded.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Type up draft minutes for the Council leaders' review.
- Share minutes with residents.
- Share minutes with administration as requested by the Council.
- Make sure meeting minutes are kept someplace safe and easy for residents to find, like in a notebook.

**Council leaders can:**

- Ask a family member, the Ombudsman, another Council member to take minutes during meetings.
  - Record the meeting, or staff and then ask someone to take notes from the recording.
- Make sure that administration and appropriate staff have copies of the minutes so they know what is going on.
- Make sure meeting minutes are kept someplace safe and easy for residents to find, like in a notebook.

---

## **HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the residents:

- Can they find out what happened at the last Council meeting if they wanted to?
- Do they know where to find the minutes of past meetings?

## **EXAMPLE OF MINUTES: PROVIDENCE EXTENDED CARE, VALDEZ**

### Providence Valdez Extended Care

### Resident Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 03-04-19

Start Time: 1:30

Attending: L.W., M.J., B.W., and M.W.

President Brian open the meeting stating 'YE Hah – give in

Treasurer's Report: Activity Asst. gave the Treasurer's report, stating there is \$75.75 in the Resident fund.

Review of Previous Minutes: Activity Asst. read last month's minutes. MJ approved the minutes BW second. All others agreed.

Old Business: BW nominated MW for the office of Treasurer. A vote was taken and passed 100 o/o. MW is our new acting Treasurer. The "Kissing Booth" did not take place because of illness. There was discussion for a fundraiser in April.

New Business: Activity Assistant informed residents of the addition of a new fellow coming. They were all pleased help him to feel welcome. All agreed.

Review of Monthly Calendar: The March Calendar was reviewed. Special events and visiting entertainer were pointed out. A special notice was made about the Iditarod and St. Patrick's party. MJ made a motion to accept the March Calendar B.W. second and MW third.

Open Forum: There were no complaints or concerns voiced. Activity Assistant stated that she voiced last month's concern to the nursing supervisor. Schedules were worked out for timely care for residents. M.W. was pleased with the outcome. The Activity Assistant then spoke on Emergency drills and

procedures, where to go and what to do in case of an emergency. Activity Assistant informed Residents of their rights. Who the Grievance officer is. It is Pauline. Where the Grievance box is located and how to use it. Where the numbers are located for ombudsman if they feel they cannot voice a concern to a staff member. Residents were also informed that they are welcome to meet together for a council meeting without staff at any time. All residents voiced they understood.

Adjourned: President BW adjourned the meeting stating, "close it please."

Emergency Evacuation plan reviewed – (fire procedures were discussed.)

Review of Contacts posted for questions or concerns regarding your rights

(We discussed the complaint box location and how to use it. We also discussed the location of names and numbers to call to report a complaint or concern. These were all noted as part of their rights as residents at Providence LTC.)

**EXAMPLE OF MINUTES FORM:  
WILDFLOWER COURT, JUNEAU**

**Wildflower Court**

**Officers in Attendance:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Residents in Attendance:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Staff Members Invited by Resident Council in Attendance:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Minutes of Previous Council Meetings**

- Read and approved as read
- Read and approved as corrected
- Council concerns from previous meeting were reviewed and accepted

**Old Business (follow-up from last month's minutes and identify staff person responsible):**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**New Business:**

Issue	Action Taken	Person Responsible

**Compliment/Notes of Appreciation:**

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**Resident Right(s) Reviewed:**

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**Review of Quality of Life Issues: Review at least two per meeting:**

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**Facility Policy or Procedures Developed/revised/updated in past 30 days:**

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**Activities: Review of Calendar/input by Residents:**

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Day:            Date:            Time:            **AM/PM**

Resident Council Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## BUILDING A CULTURALLY SPECIFIC COUNCIL

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders to make sure that the Council has meetings and makes decisions in a way that makes sense culturally to the residents.

The Council's format and style should reflect the range of cultures and traditions of its residents. Alaska Native Elders belong to tribes, village corporations and regional corporations, all run by boards and councils with a range of leadership styles and methods. They are familiar with how boards and councils work from traditional and historical perspectives to their experiences in more corporate/western meeting environments. Residents should decide as a group how they want to run meetings.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff,** your role is to become attuned to the cultures and villages of the residents. Staff should make sure that what you do and say (and what you don't do, and don't say) honors and respects the culture of the residents.

**A Council leader's** role is to make sure that the way meetings are held honors the strengths and unique characteristics of the cultures of the people who live at the home.

---

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

### As staff, you can:

- Start by learning the cultures of the residents. The best way to do this is to ask residents questions one-on-one, or in small groups:
  - What Tribe are they from?
  - What Village are they from?
  - Who are your relatives?
  - What languages do they speak?
  - What was the first language they learned?
  - What traditions does their Tribe or Village and/or family observe?
  - How does a person earn respect in their Tribe or Village?
  - How does a person point out something that can be changed?
  - Is humor important in solving problems?
  - Do people value telling stories?
  - How do they teach children what's important in their Tribe or Village?
- If you are not familiar with residents' cultural values and traditions, identify a cultural liaison from the local tribe to help you understand better (this can be a resident or family member). Most residents will be honored to share about their culture and educate others.
  - Consider inviting family members or outside guests to bridge gaps.
- Provide an interpreter for Council meetings if English is not the primary language of participants.

**A Council leader** probably knows the answers that staff need so they can be helpful to the Council. A Council leader can:

- Inform the staff about how their tribe or culture solves problems and makes decisions.
- Teach staff how to be helpful.

---

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Does this meeting feel like one their Elders Council meetings at home?

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## WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

Additional resources for serving Tribal people are listed in the bibliography. Some are located in Alaska, others are national.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> (University of Alaska Anchorage, National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders, 2019) (Uniting Nursing Homes in Tribal Excellence, 2019) (Lewis, et al., Undated) (Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services, 2019) (Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2016)



# HOW TO TALK ABOUT COMPLIMENTS AND SHARE WHAT'S WORKING

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders in identifying what's going well and how to share that. Councils hear compliments from individuals and forward these to staff.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff,** your role is to let the residents have their discussion and to help the Council leader share compliments with the administrator and with staff.

**A Council leader's** role is to encourage residents to talk about what is working well for them, and to bring forward compliments to the administration.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Assist the leader to document the compliments are so they can be passed forward.

**Council leaders can:**

- Ask the residents what's going well.
- Some Councils make small gifts or notes to staff to pass on a compliment (a small piece of chocolate or a gold star).

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Did their compliments get to the administrator or to the right staff person?

## Compliments that Councils hear about: Quotes from Council leaders

*“The new PT is good, making a difference for one person’s quality of life”*

*“New resident said he was generally grateful to be there, found a home when he had been unsure where he was going to end up.”*

*“Compliments are passed along to staff to treatment team meeting (every morning), staff accesses the system to review the documented follow-up prior to the next resident council meeting.”*

*“For staff who receive compliments from the council, the social worker gives them “chocolate lily bucks” for the commissary along with a thank you note. Complaints are taken by social worker to the staff person responsible and then re-visited at the following meeting.”*

*“We write a card together, take the compliments to the department head – whatever the residents want to do. They have a lot of compliments.”*

# HOW TO TALK ABOUT PROBLEMS AND FIND A WAY TO SOLVE THEM

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## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help Council leaders and staff identify problems and concerns, and ways to resolve them.

Fear of retaliation can be a very real concern for residents, despite the best efforts of staff and administration.

A benefit of a Council is an individual's identity can be protected when a complaint is aired at the Council. Every effort should be made to keep confidential the identity of the person who talked about a problem.

---

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to help Council leaders and members document concerns, come up with suggestions and bring forward critical issues to the administration.

**A Council leader's** role is to encourage residents to talk about any concerns they have, come up with ways to address problems, and to share this with the administrator.

Council leaders can explain that this improves the life of everyone in the facility. It is not often that Elders or Alaska Natives discuss problems or share complaints, so it is the leader's role to structure the conversation. This helps shift the focus of the concerns from the individual resident having a problem, to a solution focus that will help other residents feel better and not experience same concerns.

---

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

### As staff, you can:

- Step outside the room during the time that the Council talks about problems so that residents talk freely.
- Help the leader to have a way to record concerns and compliments.
- When there are opportunities to implement changes or respond to requests from the Council, give credit to the Council for triggering change.
- Verbally and in writing communicate the Council's impact to staff, family and other residents.
- Do not fill out a grievance form for each issue that arises at the Council meeting.
- Help the Council leader to set up a meeting with the administrator to share concerns.

### Council leaders can:

- Ask for concerns and complaints from the residents.
  - Share them with the administrator.
- Turn a problem into an opportunity to learn.
- Ask staff to come to a meeting to explain the issue or how they solved it.
  - For example: the head of the kitchen or laundry can come to a meeting to listen to a concern or report a solution.

---

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

### Ask the residents:

- Did they identify a problem that needs solving? Did the problem get solved?

---

## **WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?**

The Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman can help individual residents. Council leaders can ask the Ombudsman to help in resolving an issue. The facility's grievance process is an important resource.

- Council leaders can direct individual residents to the grievance process.



## PROBLEMS THAT RESIDENT COUNCILS HAVE FOUND AND SOLVED

Resident Councils have solved many problems in facilities. Here is a list of problems that Councils have solved in nursing homes in Alaska.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>What the Council did</b>	<b>Nursing home response</b>
The menu was boring.	Ask for different meals.	Changed the menu.
The food was cold.	Told the dietary department.	Served food more quickly.
The food was too fancy: I like my food plain.	Told the dietary department.	Served plain food like people are used to.
We want traditional foods.	Told the dietary department.	Changed up the menu to include more traditional foods.
The van was broken.	Advocated and raised funds for a new van.	Bought a new van.
The call button was broken.	Informed maintenance.	Fixed the call button.
The ice cream machine broke again.	Advocated for a new ice cream machine.	Bought a new ice cream machine.
A resident's clothes were lost in the laundry.	Informed the laundry staff.	Found the clothes.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>What the Council did</b>	<b>Nursing home response</b>
Some things went missing from a resident's room.	Informed the security staff.	Found the missing items.
Some residents wanted to do different activities.	Advocated with the activities staff.	Changed the activities schedule.
Staff was sleeping at night.	Told the nursing director.	Disciplined staff; changed schedules.
CNA trainees spending time on their cell phones.	Told their supervisor.	They are now working on a policy regarding cell phone use.
A staff person was mean to residents.	Told their supervisor.	Staff person was moved out of that position.
Council saw a need for one more person on two shifts to accommodate current levels of care.	Told the nursing director.	The administration added one person.
Some residents wanted to make a garden.	Told the activities staff.	Made outdoor garden space for the residents.
There was a rule about not eating in their room.	Advocated with nursing director.	Now they can eat in their room unless they have an eating disorder (swallowing issues).

<b>Problem</b>	<b>What the Council did</b>	<b>Nursing home response</b>
Someone wanted diet Dr. Pepper to be available in the soda machine.	Told the dietary staff.	Working on changing the soda orders.
Another person talked about a disturbing TV show being shown in the common area in her wing.	Told the floor supervisor.	Changed the channel.
It is too cold in certain areas of the building.	Council informs staff.	Staff contacts maintenance after the meeting to address.
Elders want boiled fish, veggies on the side. No fancy western food like spaghetti or Mexican food.	Council informs kitchen director.	Menu changes.
Current acquisition by another hospital, staffing levels are impacted. Responses are not as timely and consistent, for many months things have been uncertain. Residents are concerned about the change.	Council advocates to administrator.	Administrator now meets with residents monthly.



## PROBLEM-SOLVING: MEETINGS ARE NOT PRIVATE

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Councils provide a critical, private space for residents to identify problems and issues within the facility. Council meetings are intended to be a private time and space for residents to say what is working and what isn't working for them. Staff should not attend this part of the meeting.

The purpose of this tool is to help staff understand when they should be at the meetings. This opportunity for anonymity should be stated regularly.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to help the Council leaders arrange for the meeting to be held in a quiet, private room.

**A Council leader's** role is to ensure the meeting is held in a private space, and to have someone besides staff take notes about problems.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Help the council reserve a quiet, private space for meetings.
- Leave the room when your presentation/sharing is done.
- Help Council leadership in making it clear to staff and residents that Council meetings are private.
- Help Council leaders find a way to take notes during the time residents talk about concerns, without staff there.
- Remind other staff that the meetings are private.

### Council leaders can:

- Identify a way to take notes without staff in the room when talking about concerns.
- Ensure guests and staff attend only at the request of the Council.
- Remind staff and residents at each meeting that:
  - Staff attend Council meetings *at the invitation of the Council*.
  - Other staff may attend as guests of the Council to provide reports and information.

---

### HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Did they feel like they could meet without the staff present?
- Did they feel like they could speak freely?

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL LEADERS:

- Special guests are invited to speak to the council **before** the meeting – example if there's been lots of dietary issues – invite dietary manager, sometimes administrator comes.
- Invite guest speakers (other key staff) to talk about opportunities or changes (like dietary, risk management).
- Try to bring in key people so they know who they can talk to – goal is residents see their faces and remember

## PROBLEM-SOLVING: SOMEONE TALKS TOO LONG

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help Council leaders manage a meeting when a resident dominates the conversation. This is a problem only if the residents identify it as an issue.

### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council leader in finding a way for everyone to talk at a meeting.

**A Council leader's** role is to make sure there is time for all residents to have their say, and to respect those who have something to say.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff**, you can

- Support the Council leaders in managing time limits for speakers

**Council leaders can:**

- Tell residents that they have a time limit.
- Thank them for their contribution and move to the next person.
- Invite a resident who needs to keep talking to meet with the leader separately, after the meeting.

### HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Did they get a chance to speak if they wanted to?



## **PROBLEM-SOLVING: SOMEONE GETS VERY UPSET, OR IS SAYING UNKIND OR FRIGHTENING THINGS AT A MEETING**

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this tool is to help staff support Council leaders in managing a meeting when a resident says unkind or frightening things in a meeting. This is a problem when one resident is acting frightening or being unkind to others, which is not permitted during these meeting. This should be a private follow-up discussion with the Council leader and resident, involving staff or administration if necessary.

Each Council needs to decide as a group what behavior is acceptable at Council meetings. Some residents have problems talking and remembering, or with being sad or angry. The Council can work with the Ombudsman or staff at the facility to help residents with ways to participate in the Council meetings without disrupting the routine or agenda of the Council.

Staff and Council leaders need to know about trauma. People who have had trauma do not need to experience more unkindness. Alaskans, especially Alaska Native people, have higher rates of trauma and abuse in their lives than most people in the US. Historical trauma and personal trauma are magnified by grief as Elders lose physical or mental abilities and skills, loss of family and community connections, and other losses as a result of age-related changes. Some of their trauma may be made worse by moving to a facility, which may trigger trauma from abuse when they were in boarding schools. Council leaders may need assistance to make sure Council meetings are held in a way that is respectful to every resident's experiences and background.

---

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council leader in managing the emotional and cultural safety of the meeting.

**A Council leader's role** is to make sure that all residents are safe and feel respected in a meeting. A council leader can develop or update rules for treating each other with respect during meetings.

---

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff, you can:**

- Encourage the Council leader to ask the Long Term Care Ombudsman to attend the meetings.
- Assist the upset resident in leaving the room to have the conversation outside of the Council meeting.
  - Connect them with someone to talk with if requested.

**Council leaders can:**

- Interrupt and tell the resident who is being mean that this is not okay behavior at a Council meeting.
- Ask the staff person to help you, perhaps by assisting the person out of the room to calm down. A staff person could help if a resident gets really upset or angry during a Council meeting.
  - The leader could push their call button to have a staff person come assist when this happens.
- In some instances, you can have an Elder available to talk with the resident (peer mentor, counselor, family member similar in age and same gender).
- After the meeting, the leader can assist the upset resident to call the Long Term Care Ombudsman.

---

## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Was it hard to hear what s/he had to say?
- Did they feel like they were safe during the Council meeting?



# ELECTIONS AND CHOOSING COUNCIL LEADERS

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff in supporting residents in choose leaders for its Resident Council. Leaders are residents who run the meetings, make sure people are listened to, and tell staff about concerns and compliments discussed during each meeting.

- Councils usually elect someone to be the leader for a specific amount of time. Usually a person can serve as a leader several years in a row.
- Leadership decisions should be made in Council meetings, recorded in minutes, and reviewed regularly by residents (every year is good).
- Leaders may have titles such as President and Vice President. Sometimes they have different titles.
  - Councils can select a title that works for them, and honors their cultural practices and values.
- Councils often vote by secret ballot so no one knows who voted for any person.
- Some Councils use paper ballots with photos and names of candidates.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support residents in choosing leaders that represent them.

**A Council leader's** role is to make sure that residents have a chance to choose their leadership periodically.

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## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff,** you can help make it easy for residents to choose.

- If they choose an election process, help prepare ballots.
  - One Council uses ballots with the name and picture of residents who are interested in being a leader.
- If the Council chooses not to elect leaders, document this in the minutes. Also document who will lead meetings, share discussion with the administration, etc.

### **Council leaders can:**

- Make it easy for residents to choose leaders.
- Make sure that residents have a way to pick leaders in the way that works for them. Some questions to ask:
  - How do leaders get picked in their villages or towns?
  - Do they use elections?
- Make sure that people who have a hard time writing on ballots have someone to help them.
- Review the leadership every year (elections or similar).

### **Residents can:**

- Select leaders who are respected by others.
- Select leaders who like to listen to other residents.
- Select leaders who like to be in a group meeting.
- Some Councils don't choose an official leader.

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## HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?

Ask the residents:

- Do they feel like the leaders listen to them?
- Does the leader run the meeting so everyone can speak?
- Does the Council leader talk with the administrator to resolve issues?

# WHAT TO DO IF THE RESIDENT COUNCIL LEADER IS NOT ABLE TO LEAD

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

If the leaders stop being able to do the work of the Council, it is time for the Council to select a new leader.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the residents in selecting a new leader.

**A Council leader's** role is to step aside when they don't have the ability to do the work.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff**, you can:

- Support the Council to talk with the current leader and the need to select a new leader.
- Encourage the transition as positively as possible.

**What residents can do:**

- Ask for elections.
- Volunteer to be a leader.
- Ask someone else to become a leader.



# PICK THE RIGHT STAFF PERSON TO SUPPORT THE COUNCIL

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Councils rely on staff to support the Council. Often this is the Activities staff. This person should be someone residents trust and that the residents pick.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As an administrator,** your role is to offer staff time to support the Council.

**A Council leader's** role is to help the Council decide which staff person they want to support the Council. Then the leader asks administration to make the assignment.

## WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff,** you can: support the Council's right to select the staff person they want to support the Council.

- Typing up the agenda and minutes.
- Support the Council to arrange with staff members to speak at a Council meeting.
- Share the agenda and minutes with residents and other staff.
- Preparing a flyer or other materials to get people to meetings.
- Help get refreshments for the meetings.

Other things that staff can do:

- Encourage residents to handle Council roles and tasks.
- Encourage residents in choosing, planning and implementing Council activities.
- Support Council members' efforts to speak and negotiate for themselves.
- Avoid presiding over meetings and taking on other leadership roles.

- Avoid initiating and directing Council activities and projects.
- Avoid speaking or negotiating on behalf of the Council.

**What a Council leader can do:**

- Hold a Council meeting so members can identify a staff person that the residents respect and listen to. The staff person to the Council should be someone that residents consider neutral and supportive.

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**HOW DO WE KNOW THIS IS WORKING?**

Ask the Council members:

- Do they have the help they need to make the Council work?

## HOW TO PROVIDE SUPPORT WITHOUT TAKING CHARGE

As the staff person it can be tempting to help too much, but this interferes with the role of the Council.

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### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this tool is to help staff provide support, but not take over, the job of the Council leadership.

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### WHAT IS MY ROLE?

**As staff**, your role is to support the Council leader in their role.

**A Council leader's** role is to conduct the meetings and be the liaison between the residents and the administration.

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### WHAT CAN WE DO?

**As staff**, you can:

- Ask the leader what support they need.
- Assist leader to find support from others, besides staff.
  - Ombudsman, family, friends, etc.
- Ask questions to prompt discussion.
- Support the Council leaders to develop the agenda by asking questions.
- Be prepared to say “no” if the request puts you in an awkward position.
- Type up documents as requested by the Council leader (agenda, minutes, election ballots).
- Assist the leader to find a way to document the part of the meeting when the Council discusses problems.
  - A non-staff person like the Ombudsman, volunteer, etc.

- Assist the leader to find others to attend meetings with the administrator.
  - Council members, Ombudsman are some choices
  - Facility staff should not attend this meeting. It puts staff in an awkward position.

**What a Council leader can do:**

- Tell the staff person what they would like them to help with.
- Tell the staff person when they are doing more than the leader needs them to do.

## **IDEAS FOR EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THE COUNCIL**

Councils work closely with the Activities staff to keep engaged and having fun in and out of the facility. Some activities that Activities staff and Councils engage in:

- We garden, we raise funds. We are kind of like a big family together, and we treat each other like family.
- Valentines cookies to those who go above and beyond.

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### **FUNDRAISING**

- Make jams and jellies for the hospital sale. Everyone can be proud because we all help out. We make strawberry, raspberry, and blueberry.
- We had a food booth on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
- The Council does fundraisers. Funds are kept locked in a staff office. They make charitable donations or for Council activities.

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### **COORDINATED ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL TRIBE**

- They take the Elders to all the Tribal Elder activities: tribal events, etc.
- They go to all the community events, the traditional potlucks, and other tribal activities.
- The tribe comes when the facility hosts an Elders' gathering.

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### **COORDINATED ACTIVITIES WITH LOCAL SENIOR GROUPS**

- The local senior center members come for potlucks.
- The local seniors come for activities in the facility.

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## **COORDINATED ACTIVITIES WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Coordinate activities with AVTEC students' activities coordinator.
- Coordinate activities with elementary school children.

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## **VISITS TO THE HOME FROM OTHERS**

- People love to have family, friends, kids come up on special days – really enjoy the kids. Picnics and get togethers.
- Because locals are becoming a population served by the facility (they are aging), families are showing up for arts and crafts.

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## **TRIPS AWAY FROM THE HOME**

- We get to go to high school basketball games for free.
- It's important to stay connected to the community. I saw my nephews last night, we surprised each other.
- Van rides every Wednesday and Saturday. Everyone loves the van rides to view Christmas decorations, out the road and see the animals: horses, chickens, wild animals.
- Friday afternoons = impromptu visiting.
- Staff takes residents out.
- Take Elders to cultural festivals, berry picking, potlucks after village council meetings, fishing.
- They go to all the Native food potlucks.
- They go to all the local celebrations: fairs, library events.
- They go to fish camp.
- The women go to the Tribe's women's sewing circle.
- The men go play pool together at a local bar.
- They go to the local schools to tell stories.
- The guys go to a bar and play cribbage and pool, drink a couple of beers.

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## IN-HOME ACTIVITIES

- Native food events are so important! People say: “I miss my food”.
- We play cards, board games.
- We have bingo Monday, Wednesday and Saturday.
- We show movies and DVDs and YouTube with old Native hunting footage.
- Fridays is Native movies with traditional foods.
- Ceramics, movies, bible study groups, book group, going out to eat, Fred Meyer/Walmart, bingo.
- Special events are always packed, bible study it depends on the person leading the group. In winter, it’s hard to get them out of their beds.
- The women mainly participate in beading.



# Resources





## RESIDENT RIGHTS

The 1987 federal Nursing Home Reform law establishes rights of nursing home residents:

### **The Right to Be Fully Informed of**

- Available services and the charges for each service
- Facility rules and regulations, including a written copy of resident rights
- Address and telephone number of the State Ombudsman and state survey agency
- State survey reports and the nursing home's plan of correction
- Advance plans of a change in rooms or roommates
- Assistance if a sensory impairment exists
- Residents have a right to receive information in a language they understand (Spanish, Braille, etc.)

### **Right to Complain**

- Present grievances to staff or any other person, without fear of reprisal and with prompt efforts by the facility to resolve those grievances
- To complain to the ombudsman program
- To file a complaint with the state survey and certification agency

### **Right to Participate in One's Own Care**

- Receive adequate and appropriate care
- Be informed of all changes in medical condition
- Participate in their own assessment, care-planning, treatment, and discharge
- Refuse medication and treatment
- Refuse chemical and physical restraints
- Review one's medical record
- Be free from charge for services covered by Medicaid or Medicare

## **Right to Privacy and Confidentiality**

- Private and unrestricted communication with any person of their choice
- During treatment and care of one's personal needs
- Regarding medical, personal, or financial affairs

## **Rights During Transfers and Discharges**

- Remain in the nursing facility unless a transfer or discharge:
  - is necessary to meet the resident's welfare;
  - (b) is appropriate because the resident's health has improved and s/he no longer requires nursing home care;
  - (c) is needed to protect the health and safety of other residents or staff;
  - (d) is required because the resident has failed, after reasonable notice, to pay the facility charge for an item or service provided at the resident's request;
- Receive thirty-day notice of transfer or discharge which includes the reason, effective date, location to which the resident is transferred or discharged, the right to appeal, and the name, address, and telephone number of the state long-term care ombudsman;
- Safe transfer or discharge through sufficient preparation by the nursing home.

## **Right to Dignity, Respect, and Freedom**

- To be treated with consideration, respect, and dignity
- To be free from mental and physical abuse, corporal punishment, involuntary seclusion, and physical and chemical restraints
- To self-determination
- Security of possessions

## **Right to Visits**

- By a resident's personal physician and representatives from the state survey agency and ombudsman programs

- By relatives, friends, and others of the residents' choosing
- By organizations or individuals providing health, social, legal, or other services
- Residents have the right to refuse visitors

### **Right to Make Independent Choices**

- Make personal decisions, such as what to wear and how to spend free time
- Reasonable accommodation of one's needs and preferences
- Choose a physician
- Participate in community activities, both inside and outside the nursing home
- Organize and participate in a Resident Council
- Manage one's own financial affairs

<https://ltcombudsman.org/issues/residents-rights#what>



## FEDERAL REGULATIONS ABOUT RESIDENT COUNCILS

*F565 (Rev. 173, Issued: 11-22-17, Effective: 11-28-17, Implementation: 11-28-17)*

§483.10(f)(5) The resident has a right to organize and participate in resident groups in the facility.

- (i) The facility must provide a resident or family group, if one exists, with private space; and take reasonable steps, with the approval of the group, to make residents and family members aware of upcoming meetings in a timely manner.
- (ii) Staff, visitors, or other guests may attend resident group or family group meetings only at the respective group's invitation.
- (iii) The facility must provide a designated staff person who is approved by the resident or family group and the facility and who is responsible for providing assistance and responding to written requests that result from group meetings.
- (iv) The facility must consider the views of a resident or family group and act promptly upon the grievances and recommendations of such groups concerning issues of resident care and life in the facility.
  - a. The facility must be able to demonstrate their response and rationale for such response.
  - b. This should not be construed to mean that the facility must implement as recommended every request of the resident or family group.

§483.10(f)(6) The resident has a right to participate in family groups.

§483.10(f)(7) The resident has a right to have family member(s) or other resident representative(s) meet in the facility with the families or resident representative(s) of other residents in the facility.

DEFINITIONS §483.10(f)(5)-(7) “A resident or family group” is defined as a group of residents or residents’ family members that meets regularly to:

- Discuss and offer suggestions about facility policies and procedures affecting residents' care, treatment, and quality of life;
- Support each other;
- Plan resident and family activities;
- Participate in educational activities; or
- For any other purpose.

GUIDANCE §483.10(f)(5)-(7) This requirement does not require that residents organize a resident or family group. However, whenever residents or their families wish to organize, they must be able to do so without interference. Additionally, they must be provided space, privacy for meetings, and staff support. The designated staff person responsible for assistance and liaison between the group and the facility's administration and any other staff members may attend the meeting only if invited by the resident or family group. The resident or family group may meet without staff present. The groups should determine how frequently they meet. Facility staff are required to consider resident and family group views and act upon grievances and recommendations. Facility staff must consider these recommendations and attempt to accommodate them, to the extent practicable. This may include developing or changing policies affecting resident care and life. Facility staff should discuss its decisions with the resident and/or family group and document in writing its response and rationale as required under 42 CFR §483.10(j), F585, Grievances.

PROCEDURES §483.10(f)(5)-(7) During the entrance interview, determine:

- If there is a resident or family group;
- Who the resident or family representative is for each of these groups; and,
- Who the designated staff person is for assisting and working with each of these groups.

If residents or their families attempted to organize a group and were unsuccessful, why? Through interviews with the representatives for the resident

and family groups and staff designated for assisting and working with these groups, determine:

- Are groups able to meet without staff present unless desired?
- If a resident wants a family member present during a resident group meeting, how is this handled? Facility staff should not require said family member to leave the group meeting, without the permission of the group.
- How views, grievances or recommendations from these groups are considered, addressed and acted upon; and,
- How facility staff provide responses, actions, and rationale to the groups.

Examples of noncompliance may include, but are not limited to:

- Facility staff impede or prevent residents or family members ability to meet or organize a resident or family group;
- Resident and/or families were not always informed in advance of upcoming meetings.
- Facility staff impede with meetings and/or operations of family or resident Council by mandating that they have a staff person in the room during meetings or assigning a staff person to liaise with the Council that is not agreeable to the Council;
- Private meeting space for these groups is not provided;
- The views, grievances or recommendations from these groups have not been considered or acted upon by facility staff;
- Facility staff does not provide these groups with responses, actions, and rationale taken regarding their concerns;
- Facility staff are not able to demonstrate their response and rationale to grievances;
- Facility staff prevent family members or representatives from meeting with those of another resident.



## CONTACTS

### HOW TO CONTACT OTHER RESIDENT COUNCILS' LEADERS AND STAFF IN ALASKA

Staff to Resident Councils tend to be employed as activities staff or as social workers. The individuals in these positions change over time. The best way to find out who staffs a nursing home Resident Council is to contact the nursing home. Contact information is listed below, current as of September 2019.

Location	Name	Phone	Website
Anchorage	Prestige Care & Rehabilitation Center	907-333-8100	<a href="https://www.prestigecare.com/location/prestige-care-and-rehabilitation-center-of-anchorage-">https://www.prestigecare.com/location/prestige-care-and-rehabilitation-center-of-anchorage-</a>
Anchorage	Providence Extended Care	907-212-9200	<a href="https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/pec#laid=5847">https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/pec#laid=5847</a>
Anchorage	Providence Transitional Care Center	907-562-2281	<a href="https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/ptcc">https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/ptcc</a>
Bethel	Yukon-Kuskokwim Elders Home	907-543-6780	<a href="https://yk-health.org/wiki/LTC">https://yk-health.org/wiki/LTC</a>
Cordova	Cordova Community Medical Center	907-424-8000	<a href="https://www.cdvcmc.com/long-term-care/">https://www.cdvcmc.com/long-term-care/</a>
Fairbanks	Denali Center	907-458-5100	<a href="https://www.foundationhealth.org/dc">https://www.foundationhealth.org/dc</a>
Homer	South Peninsula Hospital - LTC	907-235-8101	<a href="https://www.sphosp.org/services/long-term-care/">https://www.sphosp.org/services/long-term-care/</a>
Juneau	Wildflower Court	907-463-8700	<a href="http://www.wildflowercourt.org/">http://www.wildflowercourt.org/</a>
Ketchikan	PeaceHealth New Horizons LTC	907-228-8300	<a href="https://www.peacehealth.org/ketchikan/services/new-horizons-transitional-care-unit">https://www.peacehealth.org/ketchikan/services/new-horizons-transitional-care-unit</a>
Kodiak	Providence Chiniak Bay Elder House	907-486-3281	<a href="https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/providence-chiniak-bay-elder-house">https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/providence-chiniak-bay-elder-house</a>
Kotzebue	Utuqqanaat Inaat	907-442-3321	<a href="https://www.maniilaq.org/long-term-care/">https://www.maniilaq.org/long-term-care/</a>

Nome	Quyanna Care Center	907-443-3311	<a href="https://www.nortonsoundhealth.org/services/hospital-services/quyanna-care-center/">https://www.nortonsoundhealth.org/services/hospital-services/quyanna-care-center/</a>
Petersburg	Petersburg Medical Center & LTC	907-772-4291	<a href="https://www.pmcak.org/long-term-care.html">https://www.pmcak.org/long-term-care.html</a>
Seward	Providence Mountain Haven	907-224-5241	<a href="https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/psmh">https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/psmh</a>
Sitka	Sitka Long-Term Care	907-747-3241	<a href="https://searhc.org/location/sitka-long-term-care/">https://searhc.org/location/sitka-long-term-care/</a>
Soldotna	Heritage Place	907-714-5000	<a href="http://www.cpgh.org/continuingcareheritageplace">http://www.cpgh.org/continuingcareheritageplace</a>
Valdez	Providence Valdez Medical Center & LTC	907-835-2249	<a href="https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/pvmc/extcare">https://alaska.providence.org/locations/p/pvmc/extcare</a>
Wasilla	Maple Springs of Wasilla	907-802-6645	<a href="https://maplespringsliving.com/wasilla/">https://maplespringsliving.com/wasilla/</a>
Wrangell	SEARHC Wrangell Medical Center & LTC	907-874-7000	<a href="https://searhc.org/location/wrangell-medical-center/">https://searhc.org/location/wrangell-medical-center/</a>

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## HOW TO CONTACT THE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

Alaska Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

(907) 334-4480

(800) 730-6393

[OLTCO@alaska.gov](mailto:OLTCO@alaska.gov)

## READING

**Adult Home Resident Council Tool Kit** Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled, 2014.

<http://www.ciadny.org/documents/AdultHomeResidentCouncilToolkit.pdf>. A guide for residents of New York State nursing homes, this 80-page toolkit includes work sheets and tip sheets can be taken out, copied, and distributed; information on local resources can be added, as well as other materials; examples of bylaws, minutes and other documents used by existing resident councils and food committees; fact sheets on laws and regulations relevant to council work, and on other matters of interest; and leadership development materials for council members who want to improve their skills.

**Alaska Native cultures and issues: Responses to frequently asked questions**

Roderick, Libby. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2010. This book was designed and prepared by Alaska Native leaders from across the state and compiled by University of Alaska staff. It addresses frequently asked questions and assumptions of non-Native people about Native people in and from Alaska. It provides critical information about health care and the Indian Health Service, subsistence, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and more.

**Care partner information: Tips for providing older adult care.** Lewis, Jordan and Brooks-Cleater, Lauren. National Resource Center on Alaska Native Elders/ University of Arizona Center on Aging, Undated.

[https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/nrc-alaska-native-elders/resources/\\_documents/Dementia%20-%20Changing%20Life%20Roles.pdf](https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/nrc-alaska-native-elders/resources/_documents/Dementia%20-%20Changing%20Life%20Roles.pdf). This brochure offers tips for care to Native Elders who have dementia.

**Communicating With Elders.** Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Elder Outreach // ANTHC Elder Outreach, September 15, 2004.

[http://anthctoday.org/community/docs/Communicating%20with%20Elders%2004.09.15\\_print.pdf](http://anthctoday.org/community/docs/Communicating%20with%20Elders%2004.09.15_print.pdf). This paper describes ways that non-Native people can successfully communicate with Alaska Native Elders.

**Community living for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian elders** Tilly, Jane and Hudgins, Kristen. Administration for Community Living Center for Policy and Evaluation, October 2017. <https://acl.gov/aging-and-disability-in-america/issue-briefings>. This issue briefing is designed for aging service providers, and succinctly describes tribal sovereignty, a brief history of US/tribal relations, historical trauma, culture and relationship to healing.

**Cultural Resources for Alaska Families: Traditional health and wellness guide** State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services // Cultural resources for Alaska families, June 2018. <http://dhss.alaska.gov/ocs/Documents/Publications/pdf/CulturalResourcesGuide.pdf>. This book, produced by the State of Alaska for child welfare workers, orients the child welfare worker to Alaska Native families, communities, food, and political issues.

**Elders' perspective on how to age successfully** Lewis, Jordan, Senior Voice / prod. Older Persons Action Group, May 1, 2019. <https://www.seniorvoicealaska.com/story/2019/05/01/columns/elders-perspective-on-how-to-age-successfully/1970.html>. This article, by Alaska Native gerontologist Dr. Jordan Lewis in an Alaska statewide senior newspaper, describes elements of successful aging.

**Empowered, effective, and independent family councils** The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, undated. <https://ltcombudsman.org/uploads/files/issues/family-council-brochure.pdf>. This two-page, tri-fold brochure with graphics informs families about family councils, how to form a council, the responsibility of the facility, and ways to advocate for family members in nursing homes.

**How to make resident councils dynamic: In just a few simple steps** [Online] / auth. Quality Insights, September 2017. <http://www.qualityinsights-qin.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?guid=1cedafc5-349d-45bc-83a6-75bfcc65c006>. This is a short (4 pages double sided) guide for resident councils, administrators, and staff to assess the function of resident councils and make resident councils more relevant to all.

**How to organize and direct an effective resident council: A technical assistance manual of the Missouri Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** [Online] / auth.

Missouri Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, undated.

[https://health.mo.gov/seniors/ombudsman/pdf/HowToOrganizeAnd\\_DirectAnEffectiveResidentCouncil.pdf](https://health.mo.gov/seniors/ombudsman/pdf/HowToOrganizeAnd_DirectAnEffectiveResidentCouncil.pdf). Describes history and mandate of resident councils; provides context for resident council development, examples of how resident councils make a difference, and advocacy tips.

**National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders** University of Alaska

Anchorage, National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders // University of Alaska Anchorage, June 2019. - <https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-health/nrc-alaska-native-elders/>. This website is the home of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders, and is the repository of literature, websites, and brochures relating to services and research on and for Alaska Native Elders.

**Organizing a resident council in your home: A manual for adult home and nursing home residents** Coalition of Institutionalized Aged and Disabled, 1997.

<http://www.ciadny.org/documents/OrganizingManual7.pdf>. A 40-page manual on the value and purpose of resident councils, replaced by the Adult Home Resident Council Toolkit (2014).

**Politics and Alaska Natives** Napoleon, Harold. - Fairbanks : Alaska Department of Education and Center for Northern Educational Research, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1975. This book, published in the early years following the authorization of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, describes the history of U.S. and Alaska politics and Alaska Native people.

**Resident council best practices** Long Term Care Ombudsman Program & Vounteer Resident Advocate Program in partnership with the Statewide Coalition of Resident Councils // Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, September 2006.

<http://www.ct.gov/lcop/lib/lcop/pdf/bestpractices0906.pdf>. Describes in a series of paragraphs activities and practices that are particularly valued by resident councils in Connecticut.

**Resident council handbook: A guide to building a long-term care resident council**

Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, August 2018.

<http://ombudsman.myflorida.com/publications/rr/Residents-Council-Handbook-2018.pdf>. This is a 33-page, large-print guide to establishing and maintaining effective long-term care resident councils. Intended for residents of assisted living, not only nursing homes. Appendices include examples of bylaws, agendas, and minutes.

**Resident councils in nursing homes**

Hawaii State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, undated. <https://ltcombudsman.org/uploads/files/support/hi-resident-council-brochure.pdf>. This two-page, tri-fold brochure with graphics informs residents about the role of the LTCOP, the role of resident councils, and the importance of residence councils.

**Successful aging through the eyes of Alaska Native Elders. What It means to be an Elder in Bristol Bay, AK** Lewis, Jordan P. Gerontologist vol. 51 (4). pp. 540–549. 2011. This article, by Alaska Native gerontologist Dr. Jordan Lewis in a peer-reviewed nationally recognized journal, describes elements of successful aging for Elders in the Bristol Bay region of Alaska.

**The Tribal Nursing Home Collaborative** Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services // Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services, 2019. <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-is-the-U.S.-government-website-for-tribes-that-have-nursing-homes>.

**Tribal Nursing Home Best Practices: Traditional Foods** Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services // Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, December 15, 2016. - <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-Alaska-Native/AIAN/Downloads/NH-best-practices-traditional-foods.pdf>. This monograph describes how to incorporate traditional foods into the dietary and activity programs of nursing homes.

**Tribal Nursing Home Best Practices: Trauma and Person-Centered Care**

Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, undated. <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-Alaska-Native/AIAN/LTSS-TA-Center/pdf/NH-Best-Practices-Trauma-Informed-Care.pdf> . This short monograph describes addressing and incorporating trauma-informed care in the tribal nursing home. It recommends acknowledging historical trauma and avoiding re-traumatization.

**Tribal Nursing Homes: Communicating with your governing board.** Kauffman & Associates, July 2017. <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/American-Indian-Alaska-Native/AIAN/LTSS-TA-Center/pdf/communicating-with-your-governing-board.pdf>. Describes how tribal nursing home residents communicate with their governing boards.

**Uniting Nursing Homes in Tribal Excellence** Uniting Nursing Homes in Tribal Excellence // Uniting Nursing Homes in Tribal Excellence website, 2019. <http://tribalnursinghomes.weebly.com/>. The website of the U.S. tribes' nursing home collaborative.

**DO YOU NEED HELP?**

**DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN?**

**DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?**

**AS OMBUDSMEN WE...**

**Advocate** for older Alaskans

Make regular **Visits to facilities**

**Educate** Older Alaskans about their rights

Assist older Alaskans in **Resolving Issues**



**FOR FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELP:**

Alaska Long Term Care  
Ombudsman

3745 Community Park Loop,  
Suite 200  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

(907) 334-4480  
800) 730-6393 toll free

Visit our website at:  
[www.akoltco.org](http://www.akoltco.org)

File a complaint by email, in  
writing, by phone or online at:  
[www.akoltco.org](http://www.akoltco.org)



ALASKA  
LONG TERM CARE  
OMBUDSMAN

Produced by the

Alaska Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

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