

# Suicide Facts & Figures:

## Alaska 2019 \*



On average, one person dies by suicide every 44 hours in the state.

Nine times as many people died by suicide in Alaska in 2017 than in alcohol related motor vehicle accidents.

The total deaths to suicide reflect a total of 5,286 years of potential life lost (YPLL) before age 65.



Suicide cost Alaska a total of **\$226,875,000** combined lifetime medical and work loss cost in 2010, or an average of **\$1,383,382 per suicide death**.

\*Based on most recent 2017 data from CDC. Learn more at [afsp.org/statistics](https://afsp.org/statistics).



## 5th leading cause of death in Alaska

### 1st leading

cause of death for ages 15-24

### 2nd leading

cause of death for ages 25-34

### 3rd leading

cause of death for ages 35-44

### 5th leading

cause of death for ages 45-54

### 7th leading

cause of death for ages 55-64

## Suicide Death Rates

	Number of Deaths by Suicide	Rate per 100,000 Population	State Rank
Alaska	200	27.11	2
Nationally	47,173	14.00	





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## Suicide Prevention Programs and Initiatives

- Alaska's Statewide Suicide Prevention Council, SSPC, (<https://bit.ly/2yguaVk>) was established in 2001 (AS §§ 44.29.300-44.29.390) and is currently housed within the Department of Health and Social Services. The Council's charter was renewed in 2013 extending the termination date to June 30, 2019 (AS § 44.66.010).
- The SSPC advises the governor and legislature on issues relating to suicide. In collaboration with communities, faith-based organizations, and public-private entities, the SSPC works to improve the health and wellness of Alaskans by reducing suicide and its effect on individuals and communities.
- In 2018, the SSPC released an updated 2018-2022 suicide prevention plan entitled Recasting the Net: Promoting Wellness to Prevent Suicide in Alaska (<https://bit.ly/2W17lvb>).
- Alaska law (AS § 14.30.362) requires school districts and the Dept. of Education and Early Development to provide youth suicide awareness and prevention training at no cost to every teacher, administrator, counselor, and specialist who is employed by the district or department; training must meet standards for professional continuing education credit and be periodically reviewed for consistency with generally accepted principles of youth suicide awareness and prevention. This training is required for individuals to be eligible for a teacher certificate (AS § 14.20.020).
- The Community Based Suicide Prevention Program (<https://bit.ly/2XXQ7Gj>) is housed within the Alaska Dept. of Health and Social Services Division of Behavioral Health. The program helps communities create projects to reduce self-destructive behaviors and conditions that lead to suicide and to increase individual, family, and community health. The program offers grants, training and postvention resources, and information through conferences and the Alaska Gatekeeper listserv.

## Get Involved

The **AFSP Alaska Chapter** brings together people of all backgrounds in communities throughout the state to fight suicide. We help fund research, offer educational programs, advocate for public policy and support those affected by suicide.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact:

**AFSP Alaska**  
[alaska@afsp.org](mailto:alaska@afsp.org)

## Become an Advocate

AFSP's Alaska advocacy volunteers build relationships with public officials and advocate on behalf of sound suicide prevention policy.

**Visit [afsp.org/advocate](https://afsp.org/advocate) to sign up!**





## RECASTING THE NET UPSTREAM CHECKLIST

### Individuals/Families

- ☐ Take a suicide prevention training
- ☐ Visit [StopSuicideAlaska.org](http://StopSuicideAlaska.org)
- ☐ Attend a Council meeting
- ☐ Attend a prevention coalition meeting
- ☐ Lock up your guns
- ☐ Lock up your medicines
- ☐ Lock up your liquor
- ☐ Get help to overcome unhealthy behaviors (drinking, drugs, etc.)
- ☐ Feeling depressed? Talk to a mental health provider.
- ☐ Join an after-school program (as a participant or leader)
- ☐ Call Careline if you or someone you love needs help. Share the number with people you meet.
- ☐ Have you lost someone to suicide? Reach out for help to Careline or some other resource. Hospice of Alaska offers grief groups, and many employers have employee assistance lines.
- ☐ Get (& read) Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style
- ☐ Ask the elders in your life if they feel depressed or suicidal (and connect them to services if they say yes). Visit them regularly, or look into services that do outreach (see Goal
- ☐ Get (and read) a copy of the Alaska Suicide Postvention Guide

### Communities

- ☐ Set up a coalition
- ☐ Create a webpage on [StopSuicideAlaska.org](http://StopSuicideAlaska.org) for your coalition
- ☐ Create an anti-stigma campaign or host an event
- ☐ Host a suicide prevention training
- ☐ Start an after-school program
- ☐ Establish a parenting class or support service
- ☐ Adopt an anti-bullying rule at school/at work
- ☐ Coordinate an anti-bullying campaign
- ☐ Contact United Way Anchorage or Southeast about starting a youth preventioncoalition in your community
- ☐ Implement the 40 Assets
- ☐ Implement suicide prevention in your medical practice
- ☐ Implement evidence-based screening for suicide risk in schools & senior centers
- ☐ Implement a means restriction program (limiting access to possible means of suicide such as guns and medications.)
- ☐ Ensure youth have treatment and support services after age 18/21

### State

- ☐ Promote and coordinate prevention programs across disciplines
- ☐ Encourage research and study of suicide in Alaska
- ☐ Promote evidence- and research-based practices

- ☐ Evaluate effectiveness and outcomes of suicide prevention programs
- ☐ Create and implement suicide prevention, intervention and postvention training programs for rural police and public safety officers
- ☐ Improve data and surveillance systems related to suicide
- ☐ Fund a long-term follow back study with enough participants to be statistically meaningful
- ☐ Ensure every Alaskan has access to suicide prevention training, regardless of means
- ☐ Fund innovative research-based prevention models
- ☐ Create a learning network via StopSuicideAlaska