



February 19, 2020

DELIVERED VIA E-MAIL

Commissioner Kelly Tshibaka
SOA Department of Administration
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001
kelly.tshibaka@alaska.gov

RE: Request for DMV to Visit Tribes in the YK-Delta for REAL ID

Dear Commissioner Tshibaka,

The Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) provides healthcare services to approximately 30,000 people living in more than 50 remote communities in southwest Alaska. We write to request the State of Alaska Dept. of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to travel to our communities to enable residents to obtain REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses or ID cards by October 1, 2020.

This is necessary because many members of our communities do not have reasonable access to DMV services. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta is not connected to the road system, and the only DMV office in our region – a region the size of the Mat-Su Borough – is located in Bethel, which is not connected to any other of our communities by road.

Moreover, air travel to Bethel or Anchorage for the purpose of obtaining a driver's license or ID card is unduly burdensome. Many of our members live a traditional subsistence lifestyle mixed with the cash economy, but jobs are scarce and unemployment is high. Over 30% of our customers live below the poverty line. Yet the cost of living in rural Alaska has only increased over time. The cost of airfare from one of our communities to Bethel or Anchorage to obtain a new ID may be impossible for many in our communities to afford.

To make matters worse, the Bethel DMV office has been plagued by closures. In May 2019, the DMV office was closed for an extended period due to inadequate staffing. In addition, over approximately the last three months, the office has only been open the first two weeks of February 2020.

As a result, if the DMV does not take additional measures, many members of our communities will be unable to obtain REAL ID-complaint driver's licenses or ID cards by the deadline, and thus may be unable to travel on commercial

Akiak
Akiachak
Alakanuk
Andreafsky
Aniak
Anvik
Atmautluak
Bethel
Bill Moore's Slough
Chefnak
Chevak
Chuathbaluk
Chuloonawick
Crooked Creek
Eek
Emmonak
Georgetown
Grayling
Hamilton
Holy Cross
Hooper Bay
Kasigluk
Kipnuk
Kongiganak
Kotlik
Kwethluk
Kwigillingok
Lime Village
Lower Kalskag
Marshall
Mekoryuk
Mountain Village
Napaimute
Napakiak
Napaskiak
Newtok
Nightmute
Nunam Iqua
Nunapitchuk
Ohogomiut
Oscarville
Paimute
Pilot Station
Pitka's Point
Quinhagak
Red Devil
Russian Mission
Scammon Bay
Shageluk
Sleetmute
St. Mary's
Stony River
Toksook Bay
Tuluksak
Tuntutuliak
Tununak
Umkumiut
Upper Kalskag

airplanes to obtain necessary medical care. This has the potential to create a health care crisis in rural Alaska, as access to air travel is essential for our customers to obtain access to a higher level of care. In FY 2019 alone, YKHC arranged approximately 15,000 trips to/from Bethel and Anchorage for our customers. A lack of access to DMV services ultimately could lead to negative medical outcomes for members of our communities and higher costs for the state.

We believe the State of Alaska has an obligation to provide reasonable access to DMV services to communities in remote Alaska so residents will be able to travel to obtain necessary medical care. YKHC respectfully requests the State of Alaska DMV travel to our communities, listed below, so residents will have an opportunity to obtain REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses or ID cards by October 1, 2020.

Akiak	Akiachak	Alakanuk	Andreafsky	Aniak
Anvik	Atmautluak	Bethel	Chefornak	Chevak
Chuathbaluk	Crooked Creek	Eek	Emmonak	Grayling
Holy Cross	Hooper Bay	Kasigluk	Kipnuk	Kongiganak
Kotlik	Kwethluk	Kwigillingok	Lime Village	L. Kalskag
U. Kalskag	Marshall	Mekoryuk	Mt. Village	Napakiak
Napaskiak	Newtok	Nightmute	Nunam Iqua	Nunapitchuk
Oscarville	Pilot Station	Pitka's Pt.	Quinhagak	Red Devil
Rus. Mission	Scammon Bay	Shageluk	Sleetmute	St. Mary's
Stony River	Toksook Bay	Tuluksak	Tuntutuliak	Tununak

Sincerely,

YUKON-KUSKOKWIM HEALTH CORPORATION



Dan Winkelman, President & CEO

cc: Senator Lyman Hoffman (via e-mail)
Representative Tiffany Zulkosky (via e-mail)