

**VETERANS'**

**HOME**

**PROJECT**

**UPDATE,**

**2/5/04**

**SFIN**

**FILE**

# Fact Sheet: Alaska Pioneer Homes

## The facilities

There are six Alaska Pioneer Homes with a total of 602 beds. The homes are located in:

Anchorage -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/anchorage/home.htm>

Fairbanks -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/fairbanks/home.htm>

Juneau -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/juneau/home.htm>

Ketchikan -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/ketchikan/home.htm>

Palmer -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/palmer/home.htm>

Sitka -- <http://hss.state.ak.us/dalp/alp/sitka/home.htm>

## The services we provide to clients

For the last decade the Alaska Pioneer Homes have been licensed as assisted living facilities, offering a high degree of professional services to meet residents' needs. Typically, residents of the Homes are not able to live without some form of daily assistance, and may require nursing and other physical and emotional support services offered in a licensed assisted living facility. Professional services range from assurance of a safe environment and occasional help with daily life skills, to skilled nursing, personal care, and other support services including end of life care. Many residents receive a level of service that would otherwise be delivered in a nursing home or under the Older Alaskan Home and Community-Based Medicaid waiver.

## The residents

Occupancy of Pioneer Homes fluctuates, but system-wide as of January 2004 there are 427 residents. All residents require a safe home environment, room and board, and opportunities for social interaction and recreation. Of the 427 residents, 253 require the high levels of professional care available 24-hours a day. Another 117 residents need assistance with basic living skills at some time during the day, and 57 residents are fairly self-sustaining, occasionally requiring emergency assistance.

## Veterans in Pioneer Homes

During FY 2003, the Alaska Pioneer Homes served 553 seniors, of whom about 20 percent are veterans and about 26 percent had qualified for Medicaid before going into the Home. There were over 2,600 qualified Alaskan residents on the waiting list, which means they are over age 65 and intend to enter the Alaska Pioneer Homes in the future.

## Rates and how residents pay them

The rates for the Alaska Pioneer Homes range from \$2,135 per month for housing with some assistance in making appointments and other social services, to \$6,450 for the highest level of care including 24-hour supervision, extensive assistance with activities of daily living, and intermittent health care. About 60 percent of Pioneer Home residents depend on the state-funded payment assistance program to pay for at least part of the monthly rate.

For more information:

Dave Williams, Project Coordinator

Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes

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## **Chronology, Alaska Veterans Home**

**1970s** -- Alaska begins 20-year search for a way to address veteran's benefits within the State.

**1999** –Feasibility Study for a State Veterans Home requested by Department of Military & Veterans' Affairs, Division of Veterans' Affairs, State of Alaska, and partners including the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Health Dimensions Consulting Group feasibility study recommends a comprehensive survey of Alaskan veterans to assess their preferences for long-term care services.

**May 2002** – HCS SB 2001(FIN) SLA 2002 authorizes a pilot project to give veterans a preference for 125 beds in the Pioneer Homes system, contingent on an agreement between the federal Department of Veterans Affairs and the State of Alaska. The agreement is not negotiated; the bill's provisions do not take effect.

**July 2003** -- Alaska Legislature's "Alaska State Veterans Home Feasibility Study", completed by the McDowell Group, supports the need for 70 to 80 veterans beds in the Pioneer Homes system. The McDowell report provides three options: 1) convert Palmer Pioneers' Home to a State Veterans Home, 2) Convert 60 beds in the Anchorage Pioneers' Home and 19 Beds in Fairbanks Pioneers' Home, or 3) build a new, freestanding, 60-bed State Veterans Home in or near Anchorage.

**July 30, 2003** – Governor Murkowski identifies creation of a State Veterans Home in Palmer as an Administration priority, following face-to-face meetings in Washington DC with Secretary of Veteran's Affairs Anthony J. Principi.

**July 2003** – State submits initial federal Veterans Administration application.

**August 2003** – federal Veterans Administration representatives visit Palmer and Anchorage facilities. Veterans Administration facilities, geriatrics and care coordination representatives find Palmer appropriate for conversion with identified maintenance improvements and upgrades to facility systems.

**Sept 2003** – Veterans Administration conditionally approves 79 beds for Palmer facility. Federal Veteran Administration participation is calculated at 65 percent of the total allowable cost of improvements. All 82 beds at Palmer are ultimately approved – *minimum* of 62 beds are designated for veterans.

**Sept 2003** -- Health & Social Services Commissioner Joel Gilbertson presents the Palmer option to Pioneers of Alaska Convention.

**Dec 2003** – federal Veterans Administration approves "General Renovations, 79-bed Veterans Home, Palmer, AK." Federal Veterans Administration lists Alaska in its top rank for federal renovation funds, pending appropriation of state matching funds. Construction cost, facility size, and proximity to military health center justify Palmer's high priority for funding.

**January 2004 – Construction schedule says Palmer Pioneers' Home can be renovated in 453 days, after completion of federal Department of Veterans Affairs construction/acquisition grant and legislative approval of state funding match.**

**Feb 2004 – Congressional Bill (HR 2673) provides for federal Veterans Administration payment to Pioneer Homes.** No information as yet on how the Veterans Administration will employ the language.

**Calendar**

- **April 2004 – A study of the feasibility of converting the Palmer Pioneers' Home into a Veteran's Home**, requested by the legislature and awarded to ASCG Incorporated (engineers/architects) will identify costs for renovation and the amount of state matching funds required for federal Veterans Administration participation. A subcontractor (McDowell Group) will conduct a community impact analysis and collaborate on development of a transition plan for the federal construction/acquisition grant application.
- **May 2004 – Alaska Veterans Home bill passes; State certifies 35% matching funds.**
- **Sept 2004 – Begin transition plan**, making admissions to the Alaska Veterans Home in Palmer.
- **April 2006 – Earliest possible beginning date for federal Veterans Administration per diem payments to Alaska -- \$26.95/day for residents of the Alaska Veterans Home.**

**For more information:**

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State Of Alaska  
 Department of Health & Social Services  
 Division of Alaska Longevity Programs  
 Pioneers' Homes Occupancy Report  
 Dec-03



	Sitka	Fairbanks	Palmer	Anchorage	Ketchikan	Juneau	Total
<b>Coordinated Services</b>							
Total	22	18	1	93	6	3	143
Unavailable	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
Occupied	9	16	1	22	6	3	57
Assigned	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Available	13	2	0	67	0	0	82
<b>Basic Assisted Living</b>							
Total	23	20	33	50	10	17	153
Unavailable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occupied	14	17	14	49	9	14	117
Assigned	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Available	9	2	19	1	1	3	35
<b>Enhanced Assisted Living</b>							
Total	25	41	26	22	14	19	149
Unavailable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occupied	10	37	27	18	14	17	123
Assigned	0	3	0	0	0	2	5
Available	15	1	1	4	0	0	21
<b>ADRD</b>							
Total	24	16	18	21	14	9	102
Unavailable	6	0	0	0	0	0	6
Occupied	15	16	16	17	11	9	84
Assigned	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Available	3	0	2	3	3	0	11
<b>Comprehensive Services</b>							
Total	8	2	2	40	3	0	55
Unavailable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Occupied	6	2	2	33	3	0	46
Assigned	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Available	2	0	0	7	0	0	9
<b>Total Spaces</b>							
Total	102	97	82	226	47	48	602
Unavailable	6	0	0	4	0	0	10
Occupied	54	88	60	139	43	43	427
Assigned	0	4	0	1	0	2	7
Available	42	5	22	82	4	3	158
<b>Transitional Beds</b>							
Total	6	1	2	0	0	2	11
<b>Available Beds Occupied &amp; Assigned</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>73.2%</b>	<b>63.1%</b>	<b>91.5%</b>	<b>93.8%</b>	<b>73.3%</b>

<b>Veteran Residents</b>							
Male	12	17	17	30	3	7	86
Female	1	5	0	3	1	0	10
<b>Total Veteran Residents</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>96</b>

<b>Waiting List</b>							
Active List	2	78	12	14	4	20	130
Inactive List	699	887	933	1,379	489	878	5,265
Number of applicants choosing more than one home on list							2,614
Total Number of Actual Applicants on Active Waiting List							116
Total Number of Actual Applicants on Inactive Waiting List							2,665
<b>Total Applicants on Waiting Lists</b>							<b>2,781</b>

<b>Status Changes For December 2003</b>							
	Sitka	Fairbanks	Palmer	Anchorage	Ketchikan	Juneau	Total
<b>Admission</b>							
Coordinated Services	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Basic Assisted Living	1	0	1	4	0	2	8
Enhanced Assisted Living	0	1	0	2	1	0	4
ADRD Unit	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
Comprehensive Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Deaths</b>							
Coordinated Services	0	1	0	1	0	0	2
Basic Assisted Living	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Enhanced Assisted Living	2	2	1	0	0	0	5
ADRD Unit	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Comprehensive Services	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
<b>Discharges</b>							
Coordinated Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Basic Assisted Living	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Enhanced Assisted Living	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ADRD Unit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Comprehensive Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* Unusual Occurrences

John Vowell, Director