



**Alaska  
Pioneer  
Homes**

# About Our Homes

**Division of  
Alaska Pioneer  
Homes**

P.O. Box 110690  
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**Alaska Department of Health  
and Social Services**  
Governor, Bill Walker  
Commissioner, Valerie Davidson



*Visit the Pioneer Homes Website at:*

**[dhss.alaska.gov/daph](https://dhss.alaska.gov/daph)**

## Table of Contents

# About Our Homes



➤ Alaska Pioneer Homes Systems	2-6
➤ Alaska Pioneer Home Services	7
➤ Anchorage Pioneer Home	8
➤ Fairbanks Pioneer Home	9
➤ Juneau Pioneer Home	10
➤ Ketchikan Pioneer Home	11
➤ Alaska Veterans & Pioneers Home in Palmer	12
➤ Sitka Pioneer Home	13
➤ Employment Opportunities	14
➤ Contact Information	15

For answers to questions regarding the Alaska Division of Pioneer Homes programs, please call: **(907) 465-4416**

For answers to questions regarding costs and billing, please call our toll free number: **1-888-355-3117**

## The Alaska Pioneer Homes System

The Alaska Pioneer Homes have a proud history of service to Alaskans that predates statehood.

- In 1913 the territory established the use of a Marine barracks in Sitka as a home for indigent men.
- In 1915 the age requirement of 65 years was instituted.
- In 1934 a new building was built in Sitka to replace the Marine barracks.
- Women were first admitted in 1950 and housed in a nearby apartment building.
- The Fairbanks Home opened in 1967, followed by the Palmer Home in 1971, the Anchorage Home in 1977, the Ketchikan Home in 1981, and then the Juneau Home in 1988.
- In 2007 the Palmer Home became the first federally certified Veterans Home in Alaska.

The Alaska Pioneer Homes currently serve over 450 Alaska seniors.

## **Our Mission**

*Alaska Pioneer Homes: Providing elder Alaskans a home and community, celebrating life through its final breath.*

Since the Pioneer Home system began, the mission of the Alaska Pioneer Homes has continued to evolve to best serve the needs of the growing Alaska senior population. Today, many seniors who require assistance choose home and community-based services, and those who enter the Pioneer Homes do so later in their lives. As of 2014, the average age of residents in the Alaska Pioneer Homes is 86.5. Some residents have few needs for assistance, while others need extensive care. Many current applicants and residents seek care related to Alzheimer's disease, a degenerative brain disease.

## Vision for the Future

The Alaska Pioneer Homes system is a team of caring professionals who are committed to creating homes that enrich the lives of our residents and our staff, and reach out to Alaska's Alzheimer's disease or related disorders community.

The Pioneer Home system continues to evolve in order to best care for the existing population of residents and to plan for future needs. This evolution is guided by the use of best practices, up to date information, and expertise in the field of geriatric care.

## Core Values

**Positive Attitude** "We enjoy what we do."

Optimism inspires open-mindedness and creativity.

**Love** "We love who we serve."

Out of love and respect for our residents, we put their needs before staff convenience.

**Accountability** "We do what we say."

We are accountable to our residents, to their families and to each other. Accepting responsibility is essential as we plan and deliver care.

**Trust** "We say what we mean."

Open and honest communication is crucial to earning the trust of our residents, their families and our coworkers.

**Excellence** "We provide excellent care, every resident, every day, every time." Our own excellence inspires excellence in others, including residents, families and our coworkers.

There are six Alaska Pioneer Homes. The locations are shown on the map below.



Alaska Pioneer Homes are licensed assisted living homes owned and operated by the State of Alaska, and operate in accordance with all Alaska statutes and regulations pertaining to assisted living home licensure. The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes, located in Juneau, administers all six Pioneer Homes. Individual Pioneer Homes are managed onsite by certified assisted living administrators and licensed nurses who are on duty 24 hours a day. Professional staff provides health-related services to all residents who require them. Other staff members include social service, activity, food service, housekeeping, and maintenance personnel.

## **“Eden Alternative®” Philosophy of Caring:**

The Eden Alternative® philosophy is learned and practiced by all Alaska Pioneer Homes personnel. This philosophy, developed by Dr. William Thomas, seeks to eliminate loneliness, boredom and helplessness as the three major “plagues” of life in a long term care facility. This is accomplished by enhancing the work environment of all caregivers, while surrounding residents with the best possible human habitat. This habitat includes many plants, animals and children. In this supportive atmosphere, spontaneous and positive experiences occur for our elders.

### **Memory Care**

Many current applicants and residents seek care related to Alzheimer’s disease, a degenerative brain disease. The physical and behavioral challenges of individuals with dementia often make it impossible for family members to provide necessary care on a 24 hour basis.

Because Alzheimer’s disease or related disorders tends to strike older individuals, the number of persons entering the Pioneer Homes with these illnesses is far greater than before. Because of the advanced age of the residents, memory care is a primary part of the services provided at the Alaska Pioneer Homes. Approximately 59% of Alaska Pioneers Home residents have some form of dementia.

### **What services are available to Pioneer Home residents?**

Services available to residents of the Homes include:

- Meal preparation
- Dietary assessment; medically prescribed diets
- Laundry/housekeeping
- Emergency call systems/assistance
- Assistance with bathing, dressing
- Assistance with medications
- Health assessment
- Recreational opportunities/programs
- Social work services
- Opportunities for spiritual devotion
- Care during periods of illness not requiring hospitalization
- Care specially suited to the needs of persons with Alzheimer's disease or related disorder.

## The Anchorage Pioneer Home



The Anchorage Pioneer Home is a five-story building occupying one third of a city block overlooking an area known as the Park Strip. This greenbelt in the center of the metropolitan Anchorage area divides the business district from the oldest residential area of the city. The Pioneer Home sits like a jewel in the crown of this historical community core. Behind Anchorage to the south and east lie the Chugach Mountains, easily visible from most floors of the Home. Mt. McKinley peeks out over the skyscrapers of the downtown area to the north and Cook Inlet lies to the west. The Home has accommodations for 168 residents.

Population *Municipality of Anchorage* **300,950** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperatures: winter ranges from 6° to 20°F and summer ranges from 50° to 70°F

Annual precipitation: 15.71 inches of rainfall and 70.6 inches of snow.

## The Fairbanks Pioneer Home



The Fairbanks Pioneer Home is the second of the six Pioneer Homes to open. It began serving the community at the time of the big flood of 1967. The floodwaters were so dangerous that residents, along with many other Fairbanksans, were evacuated to higher ground up the hill at the University. After the floodwaters receded and clean-up was completed, operations normalized and new residents became a part of the Pioneer Home community. The Fairbanks Home has accommodations for 93 residents.

Population *Fairbanks North Star Borough* **32,324** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperatures: winter ranges from -19° to 12°F and summer ranges from 27° to 73°F

Annual precipitation: 10.87 inches of rainfall and 67.4 inches of snow.

## The Juneau Pioneer Home



The Juneau Pioneer Home was completed in 1988. The Home is nestled in the wetlands along Juneau's Egan Drive and has breathtaking views of nearby mountains and the channel that divides the mainland from Douglas Island. Living on the parameter of a true wilderness provides residents the opportunity to view wildlife such as black bears, eagles, ravens, blue herons, kingfishers, porcupines, deer, and squirrels. The Juneau Home can serve up to 45 residents.

Population *Juneau Borough* **32,660** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperature: winter ranges from 25° to 35°F and summer ranges from 44° to 65°F

Annual precipitation: 56.47 inches of rainfall and 98.4 inches of snow.

Note: Juneau is a "landlocked" community, accessible only by boat or plane.

## The Ketchikan Pioneer Home



The Ketchikan Pioneer Home opened its doors to residents in November 1981. The three story building is located on the local bus line, close to both the Alaska Marine Highway and airport ferry terminals. The convenient central location means the Home is a natural hub for family and friends to congregate and visit. The Ketchikan Home has the capacity to serve 48 residents and they are cared for by approximately 80 dedicated staff members, some of whom have been working at the Home since it opened.

Population *Ketchikan Gateway Borough* **8,214** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperatures: winter ranges from 20° to 29°F and summer ranges from 51° to 65°F

Annual precipitation: 152 inches of rainfall and 37 inches of snow.

Note: Ketchikan is located on an island, accessible only by boat or plane.

## Alaska Veterans & Pioneers Home in Palmer



In May 2004, the Alaska Legislature approved development of the state's first veteran's Home. After extensive remodeling and program development to meet U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requirements, the facility were renamed the Alaska Veteran's and Pioneer Home. 75 percent of the 79 beds in the Home are designated for veterans, and 25 percent are available for non-veterans.

Population *Matanuska-Susitna Borough* **95,192** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperatures: winter ranges from 9° to 27°F and summer ranges from 47° to 65°F

Annual precipitation: 15.80 inches of rainfall and 50 inches of snow.

## Sitka Pioneer Home



The Sitka Home is the original Pioneer Home with a history stretching back to the late 1800s. The Pioneer Home program began in 1913 when a vacant Marine barrack was converted to the Sitka Pioneer Home. The program was created by the first territorial legislature to serve indigent elderly men. The Home initially provided housing, meals, and basic medical assistance. In the mid 1950s women and Native Alaskans also became eligible for admission. The Sitka Home currently has the capacity to serve 75 residents.

Population *Sitka Borough* **9,020** (2013 estimates, [www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/))

Average temperatures: winter ranges from 23° to 35°F and summer ranges from 48° to 61°F

Annual precipitation: 96 inches of rainfall and 39 inches of snow.

Note: Sitka is located on an island, accessible only by boat or plane.

## Employment Opportunities

Pioneer Homes' residents receive a high level of direct care and staffing levels often exceed national standards for long term care. Employee turnover is much lower than national figures for long term care facilities, with a significant number of employees serving their entire careers within the Pioneer Homes system.

**For a list of job openings and applications, please go to the State of Alaska's online recruitment system:  
[www.workplace.alaska.gov](http://www.workplace.alaska.gov)**

## Contact Information

**For further information  
please contact The Pioneer Homes Central  
Administrative Office at:**

### **Division of Alaska Pioneer Homes**

P.O. Box 110690  
Juneau, AK 99811-0690  
(907) 465-4416  
Fax: (907) 465-4108

**Anchorage  
Pioneer Home**  
923 W. Eleventh Ave.  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 276-3414

**Fairbanks  
Pioneer Home**  
2221 Eagan Ave.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
(907) 456-4372

**Juneau  
Pioneer Home**  
4675 Glacier Hwy  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 780-6422

**Ketchikan  
Pioneer Home**  
141 Bryant St.  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
(907) 225-4111

**Alaska Veterans  
& Pioneers Home**  
250 E. Fireweed Ave.  
Palmer, AK 99645  
(907) 745-4241

**Sitka  
Pioneer Home**  
120 Katlian St.  
Sitka, AK 99835  
(907) 747-3213

### **Other important numbers:**

**Pioneer Home Revenue Unit (Billing Office)**  
Toll-free 1-888-355-3117

**Pioneer Home Pharmacy**  
Toll-free 1-888-546-7294

## Fun Alaska Facts

*Governor:* Bill Walker

*State capital:* Juneau

*State motto:* “North to the Future”

*State nickname:* “The Last Frontier”

*State mineral:* Gold

*State sport:* Dog mushing

*State dog:* Malamute

*State bird:* Willow Ptarmigan

*49th State:* Became a state January 3, 1959

*Land area:* 570,373.6 square miles—largest in the U.S.; one-fifth the size of the “Lower 48”

*Extreme temperatures:* 100°F at Fort Yukon in 1915;  
- 80°F at Prospect Creek Camp in 1971

*Heaviest annual snowfall:* 974.5 inches at Thompson Pass near Valdez during the winter of 1952-53

*Tallest mountain:* Mount McKinley, 20,320 feet; tallest in North America

*Attractions:* Unsurpassed natural beauty, glaciers, abundant hiking, wildlife, northern lights, gold rush and historical sites, and rich native cultures.

This booklet is one of five providing information about Alaska Pioneer Homes. Other booklets in the series:

**A Matter of Rights**

**Payment Assistance**

**Pharmacy Program**

**Admissions & Discharge**

**State of Alaska**

Bill Walker, *Governor*

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