



## Thank You for Passing the Supported Decision Making Agreements Act (HB 336)

**Self-determination -- to make decisions and take responsibility for one's own life – is the mark of adulthood.**

*In Alaska, increased accessibility to self-determination and decision-making is now available to everyone, through the Supported Decision-Making Agreements Act.*

**The Council thanks the Alaska Legislature for passing HB 336, the Supported Decision-Making Agreements (SDMA) Act.** Now, an adult who wants assistance with getting information, weighing options, identifying possible outcomes, or communicating decisions to others can use a SDMA. It is a tool that can help seniors who have an early diagnosis of dementia and who want a commitment of support from multiple caregivers, rather than relying only on their spouse or an adult child. Adults who want to continue the support and advice of family and friends but who don't want to lose responsibility for their choices can avoid unnecessary guardianships with supported decision-making agreements (possibly cost saving for the State). And those adults who have guardians, but who understand the nature and effect of an agreement, can use the agreements to build their capacity by experiencing shared responsibility for making decisions – while still having the oversight of a guardian. More information is available on the SDMA webpage for the Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/gcdse/Pages/projects/SDMA/default.aspx>.

The Council asks that you help spread the word about this exciting opportunity by:

- Posting Alaska SDMA information and website link on your social media
- Including Alaska SDMA information and website link on your website newsfeed or headline section
- Featuring Alaska SDMA information and website link in your constituent newsletter
- Getting the word out via any other highly used communication avenues
  - Please let us know if you'd like SDMA brochures for your office



Service Providers  
and Care  
Coordinators



Decision-Makers,  
Supporters, and  
Family Guardians



Lawyers, Paralegals  
and Non-lawyer  
Advocates



Public Guardians and  
Court Visitors



Policy Makers  
and the Alaska  
Court System



Students, Parents  
and Educators

## Supported Decision-Making Agreement (SDMA)



There are currently 11 Alaskans who have entered into Supported Decision-Making Agreements with trusted friends, family members and advisors. Several more are in the process of developing agreements, with the assistance of service providers and legal services staff. Here are three of those Alaskans:



*K.C. Delaune, Fairbanks*

K.C. experiences FASD along with mental health issues and has worked hard to overcome obstacles. His goal is to become a better self-advocate, make his own decisions and life choices, and to live independently. **He is proud to be the first person in the state to have a SDMA. K.C. says that the most important part of having a SDMA is that he is now able to make his own decisions. A few months ago he was ready to quit his job but he met with his support team who gave him ideas that helped him to keep working. He feels more independent because of his SDMA.**

*Ric Nelson, Anchorage*

Ric has a SDMA only to direct support for communication. Some people have difficulty understanding his speech, so his supporters are available when he has important appointments, meetings, or for his presentations to large audiences at work. He says that SDMAs are important because third parties can't exclude his supporters from appointments or private meetings. Ric also notes, "Having a SDMA makes it clear to other people that my supporters are not speaking for me, they are only repeating my words."



*Ian Miner, Anchorage*

Watch Ian's story about how he works, lives, and plays in Anchorage, Alaska. The Council is grateful to Ian for showing us what he has achieved for himself, with the encouragement and advice of his supporters and friends.

<https://vimeo.com/321368848>

