

# Know Your Rights! Domestic Partnership Benefits in Alaska



## Our Survey of Public Employers

To evaluate the extent to which Alaska's public employers are providing domestic partnership benefits equal to those provided to spouses, the ACLU of Alaska conducted a survey of all public agencies in the State of Alaska. Below is an initial summary of our findings to date:

## Alaska Supreme Court: Public Employers Must Provide Equal Benefits

On October 11, 2005, the Alaska Supreme Court ruled that public employers in the state of Alaska could not offer employment benefits to married couples without providing similar benefits to same-sex domestic partners, finding that to do so would violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Alaska Constitution. While the State of Alaska and the Municipality of Anchorage were the primary defendants in the case, the ruling sends a clear message to city, borough, and state agencies all over Alaska that to deny access to domestic partnership benefits is unconstitutional. **Public employers such as a municipal governments, state agencies, and school districts have an obligation to provide the same benefits to same-sex domestic partners that they provide to spouses.**

## A. Public Employers Currently Providing Domestic Partnership Benefits

### AK Cities & Boroughs

Municipality of Anchorage  
City of Akutan  
City of Aniak  
City of Chuathbaluk  
City of Cordova  
City of Delta Junction  
City of Dillingham  
Fairbanks North Star Borough  
City of False Pass  
City of Galena  
Haines Borough  
City of Homer  
City of Hoonah  
City & Borough of Juneau  
City of Kaktovik  
City of Kenai  
Kenai Peninsula Borough  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough  
City of King Cove  
City of Kodiak  
City of McGrath  
City of Nenana  
City of Nome  
North Slope Borough  
City of Palmer (as of 1/10)  
City of Petersburg  
City of Saint Paul  
City of Sand Point  
City of Seldovia

### School Districts, Colleges, & Universities

Alaska Gateway School District  
Aleutians East Borough School District  
Anchorage School District  
Annette Island School District  
Bristol Bay Borough School District  
Chugach School District  
Cordova School District  
Delta-Greely School District  
Dillingham City School district  
Hydaburg City School District  
Ilisagvik College  
Juneau School District  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough  
Klawock City School District  
Lake and Peninsula Borough  
Lower Kuskokwim School District  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
Nenana City School District  
Northwest Arctic Borough  
Pelican City School District  
Petersburg School District  
Pribilof School District  
Sitka Borough School District  
Skagway City School District  
Southeast Island School District  
University of Alaska  
Valdez City School District  
Wrangell Public Schools

### State of Alaska and other Publicly-Funded Agencies and Organizations

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation  
Alaska Railroad Corporation  
Bartlett Regional Hospital  
Cook Inlet Housing Authority  
Nome Joint Utility System  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Petersburg Medical Center  
Sitka Community Hospital  
Special Education Service Agency  
State of Alaska

**If your employer provides domestic partnership benefits, your human resource office should be able to assist you in filing an application. You may be asked to complete an affidavit confirming financial interdependence with your partner. Ideally, there should be clearly written information on your employer's benefits policy, application instructions, and details regarding the tax implications of electing domestic partnership benefits.**

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## B. Public Employers Currently Not Providing Domestic Partnership Benefits

### AK Cities & Boroughs

Bristol Bay Borough  
City of Craig  
City of Ketchikan (not for union employees)  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
City of North Pole  
City of Unalaska  
**City of Whittier**

### Alaska Public School Districts, Colleges, & Universities

Hoonah City School District  
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District  
Southwest Region School District

### State of Alaska and other Publicly-Funded Agencies and Organizations

Aleutian Housing Authority  
Baranof Island Housing Authority  
Bristol Bay Housing Authority  
Copper River Basin Regional Housing Authority  
Interior Regional Housing Authority  
Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority

**If your employer does not provide domestic partnership benefits, they may be in violation of the Equal Protection clause of Alaska's constitution. Contact the ACLU of Alaska for guidance on how to obtain domestic partnership benefits from an employer that refuses to do so.**

## C. Public Employers Who Failed to Complete Our Survey

### AK Cities & Boroughs

City of Akiak  
Aleutians East Borough  
City of Bethel  
City of Bettles  
City of Clark's Point  
City of Deering  
City of Fairbanks  
City of Fort Yukon  
City of Grayling  
City of Gustavus  
City of Klawock  
Kodiak Island Borough  
Lake & Peninsula Borough  
City of Larsen Bay  
City of Saint George  
City of Saint Michael  
City of Savoonga  
City of Saxman  
City of Shageluk

### Alaska Public School Districts, Colleges, & Universities

Bering Strait School District  
Chatham School District  
Denali Borough School District  
Kake City School District  
Kodiak Island Borough School District  
Kuspuk School District  
Nome City School District  
North Slope Borough School District  
Tanana City School District

### State of Alaska and other Publicly-Funded Agencies and Organizations

Bering Straits Coastal Resource Service Area  
North Pacific Rim Housing Authority  
Northwest Inupiat Housing Authority

**Your employer has an obligation to provide you with information regarding the benefits available to you and your same-sex partner. If you work for a public employer that did not respond to our survey, you can help enforce your rights by:**

**1) Requesting that your employer make explicit its status on domestic partnership benefits.**

**2) Providing the ACLU of Alaska with accurate information regarding your employer's domestic partnership benefits policy or lack thereof.**

**If you have any questions, suggestions, or corrections, please contact Tiffany McClain, LGBT Public Policy Coordinator, ACLU of Alaska, 907-258-0044 ext. 101 or [tmcclain@akclu.org](mailto:tmcclain@akclu.org).**