



Introduction to Boards and Public Comment Guidance

The Alaska Mental Health Board and the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse are the state agencies charged with planning and coordinating behavioral health services funded by the State of Alaska. The joint mission of the Boards is to advocate for programs and services that promote healthy, independent, productive Alaskans. Our Boards advise the Governor, the Legislature, and State of Alaska agencies on statewide behavioral health services and programs.

Our Boards are comprised of behavioral health consumers, family members, state employees, behavioral health professionals and other dedicated community members and stakeholders.

The purpose for public comment is for Alaskans to provide information and to advise the Board about problems and issues in your community. We will listen to and record your public comment and use the information you provide to guide our outreach, education and advocacy efforts.

Public Comment Guidelines

- The public comment period will not be considered a hearing and cannot be used for that purpose. Organizations are required to request hearings in advance in writing, and when granted by the Board, must be given public notice in accordance with law.
- Public comments will normally be held to a **maximum of 5 minutes** per speaker. Organizations may be represented by no more than three speakers. A waiver to the time limit may be granted by order of the Chairperson or motion adopted by the Board.
- Staff will signal speakers when they have 1 minute left and that out of respect to other speakers and in recognition of tight meeting schedules, speakers should then wrap up their remarks.

- The public comment period is not for criticizing or attacking specific individuals. While the public is encouraged to speak freely, groups or individuals giving testimony are also encouraged to be thoughtful and constructive when offering criticism, especially if the criticism could be perceived as being directed at an individual. People providing testimony should refrain from commenting on individuals by name.
- The Board may not act during the comment period but may take matters under advisement.
- The Board may consider matters identified during the public comment period under new business but may defer such matters to a subsequent meeting to complete the original agenda or to provide notice to the public that the item will be on the Boards' agenda.
- To afford the maximum amount of time to the public, responses or comments by Board members or Board staff during public comment periods will be held to a minimum.