

2021

# Annual Report

Association of Village Council Presidents





Our annual meeting is fast approaching in September. This past year has been an unprecedented challenge for all the people within our region, including our staff, who had to revert to a different way of working and communicating with our tribal members. Even with the challenges brought upon us by COVID-19, our staff figured out a way to continue providing excellent services to our villages while maintaining safety for everyone involved.

COVID-19 has hard-hit every village within our region and we have lost many friends and family to this disease along the way. Although the infection rate is decreasing, we need to remain diligent since the virus is still present and because of rising variant threats.

Aside from the difficulties of COVID-19, the subsistence needs of the tribal members have been greatly curtailed this year, more so on the Yukon River, including very low runs of king salmon and chums on the Kuskokwim River. Maybe the things we've talked about in the past about our subsistence needs in our area will finally get more attention. These are some of the challenges affecting both rivers, the Yukon and Kuskokwim, and the areas along the coast. We are strong, resilient people who have lived in this region for generations, and we are still here. We will adapt to our current challenges to ensure our future way of life.

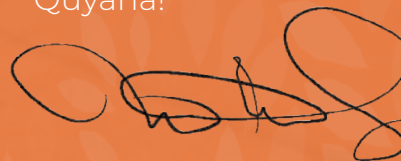
This year we will be electing a 2nd Traditional Chief for our organization. Edward Adams has done an outstanding job since taking his role as our 1st Traditional Chief. Thank you, Edward Adams. Last year, we decided to postpone the selection of our 2nd Chief until this fall, due to the emergence of the novel COVID-19. As a result, you have until our Annual Meeting in September to submit nominations.

Again, this year your Units will be selecting members for AVCP Executive Board, there are four (4) Unit Representatives whose seats are up for election. So, make sure your Units meet before the Annual Convention to select an Executive Board Member if their term is up.

I would like to give a big thanks to our Executive Board Members and our Administration. They have spent many hours this past year, prepping for our Quarterly Meetings and making sure AVCP is still functioning as a whole, despite all the hardships we have been through this past year.

We are looking forward to seeing you physically, electronically, or telephonically at our hybrid Annual Convention this fall.

Quyana!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thaddeus Tikiun, Jr.', with a stylized, looping flourish at the end.

Thaddeus Tikiun, Jr.  
AVCP Chairman/Member at Large.



# OUR MISSION

**Calillgutekluta nunaput kitugiluki, elicariluta,  
ikayuriluta, makut piciryarat aturluki  
picirkiurluta, ellmeggnnek pingnaquralriit,  
qaunqiluki, cali assirikanirluki makut  
nutemllat piciryaraput maani nunamteni.**

AVCP works in partnership to provide community development, education, social services, culturally relevant programs and advocacy for the people and Tribes of the AVCP Region, to promote self-determination, protection and enhancement of our cultural and traditional values.

**Nunaput Umyuallgutkut  
Pinirluteng-Ilu  
Tegganerput Qigcikluki Pirpakluki-Ilu  
Ayagyuaput-Ilu Ciuliqagcimaut  
Yuuyarakun**

Our Tribes are united and strong,  
Our Elders are respected and valued,  
Our Youth are guided by Yuuyaraq

# CONTENT

## Organizational Overview

**05** CEO's Letter

**06** About Us

**07** Executive Board

**09** AVCP Service Delivery Model

## Administration

**10** Administrative Support

**11** Facilities, Fleet, & Safety

**13** Communications

**15** Finance

**16** Grants & Compliance

**17** Human Resources

**18** Information Technology

**21** Legal & Child Advocacy

**22** Office of Self-Governance & Compacting



# Programs Overview

## 23 CPO Report

### Benefits Division

#### 25 Overview

**26** Client Services in the Benefits Division (TANF, LIHEAP, General Assistance, Burial Assistance, Title VI Elders Meal Program)

#### 27 Benefits Division during COVID-19

### Workforce Development Division

#### 28 Overview

**30** Client Services in the Workforce Development Division (Child Care, Vocational Rehabilitation, Tribal Workforce Development)

#### 31 Workforce Development Division during COVID-19

### Family Services Division

#### 34 Overview

**35** Client Services in the Family Services Division (ICWA, Healthy Families, Head Start)

#### 37 Family Services Division during COVID-19

### Community Development Division

#### 40 Overview

**42** Services in the Community Development Division (HIP, TTP, Client/Home Construction and Renovation Program, Economic Development Program)

#### 43 Community Development Division during COVID-19

### Community Services Division

#### 45 Overview

**47** Client Services in the Community Services Division (Tribal Services, Tribal Justice, VPSO)

#### 48 Community Services Division during COVID-19

### Land & Cultural Resources Division

#### 49 Overview

(The Cultural Program, The Natural Resources Program, The Environmental Program, The Realty Services Program)

#### 51 Land & Cultural Resources Division during COVID-19



Dear Tribal Leaders,

My message this year will be a little different. Every year I try and summarize AVCP's accomplishments in the past year and provide encouragement for the next year. This time, I'd like to just share some of the lessons that I have learned about AVCP and how important our organization is to the region. Here are a few short stories that have very big messages that I think the whole region should know.

"Keep going."-Toksook Bay Elder

A couple weeks ago I was approached by an Elder who spoke to me while I was waiting for an appointment. I had my mask on and was surprised when he approached me and asked me if I had time to talk with him. We spoke just a couple minutes, but what he said is what I needed to hear. He told me that the work AVCP is doing in our region is on the right track and is much appreciated. He said, "you are doing good." He thanked me and said, "keep going." I wanted to make sure that this encouragement by the Elders is shared and spread throughout our region.

"This will pass."-Medical Provider

I've been on lots and lots of virtual meetings about Covid-19 since the pandemic started over a year and a half ago on. Last year, AVCP pivoted our services to operate under the pandemic, and we have learned a lot of ways to not only protect our employees but continue to provide the services that our region needs. We have put in place every protection recommended by experts and encourage everyone to get the vaccine and follow guidelines or mandates in every one of our communities. I know it's very hard to hear this now, but in the long run, there will be a time when the pandemic is not with us.

"We need to lean into the pandemic and come out the other end standing up."

This is still my message. In March 2020, I told staff to lean into this crisis, and to come out the other side standing up. That is what we are doing at AVCP. We will continue to look to the horizon-use what we have learned and continue to make improvements no matter what challenges we face.

In closing, I would like to thank the AVCP staff for all the hard work and innovation we have come up with in the past year and a half. We have faced every challenge that our region and AVCP has faced head-on with strength and enthusiasm. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Vivian Korthuis".

Vivian Korthuis, CEO



# About Us

The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) is a regional non-profit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum, and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Southwest Alaska.

## Proudly Serving 56 Tribes since 1964

- |                                    |                   |                  |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Akiachak                        | 14. Chuloonawick  | 28. Kotlik       | 42. Ohogamiut     |
| 2. Akiak                           | 15. Crooked Creek | 29. Kwethluk     | 43. Oscarville    |
| 3. Alakanuk                        | 16. Eek           | 30. Kwigillingok | 44. Paimiut       |
| 4. Algaa'ciq                       | 17. Emmonak       | 31. Lime Village | 45. Pilot Station |
| 5. Andreafski                      | 18. Georgetown    | 32. Marshall     | 46. Pitka's Point |
| 6. Aniak                           | 19. Goodnews Bay  | 33. Mekoryuk     | 47. Platinum      |
| 7. Asa'carsarmiut                  | 20. Hamilton      | 34. Napaimute    | 48. Quinhagak     |
| 8. Atmautluak                      | 21. Hooper Bay    | 35. Napakiak     | 49. Red Devil     |
| 9. Orutsararmiut<br>Native Council | 22. Iqugmiut      | 36. Napaskiak    | 50. Scammon Bay   |
| 10. Bill Moore's Slough            | 23. Lower Kalskag | 37. Newtok       | 51. Sleetmute     |
| 11. Chefnak                        | 24. Upper Kalskag | 38. Nightmute    | 52. Stony River   |
| 12. Chevak                         | 25. Kasigluk      | 39. Nunakauyak   | 53. Tuluksak      |
| 13. Chuathbaluk                    | 26. Kipnuk        | 40. Nunam Iqua   | 54. Tuntutuliak   |
|                                    | 27. Kongiganak    | 41. Nunapitchuk  | 55. Tununak       |
|                                    |                   |                  | 56. Umkumiut      |



**avcp.org**



**907-543-7300**  
**1-800-478-3521**



**@AVCPAlaska**



# Executive Board



**EDWARD J. ADAMS SR.**  
TRADITIONAL CHIEF



**THADDEUS TIKIUN JR.**  
At-Large / CHAIRPERSON

## UNIT 1



**CYRIL OKITKUN**  
Kotlik, Hamilton, Bill  
Moore's Slough

## UNIT 2



**SCOTT HESS, SECRETARY**  
Asa'carsarmiut, Pitka's Point,  
Andreafski, Algaa'ciq

## UNIT 3



**JULIA DORRIS**  
Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek,  
Georgetown, Lime Village, Upper Kalskag,  
Lower Kalskag, Red Devil, Napaimute,  
Sleetmute, Stony River

## UNIT 4



**MARTIN ANDREW**  
Akiachak, Akiak,  
Kwethluk, Tuluksak



**UNIT 5**



**JAMES PAUL VICE-CHAIR**  
Napakiak, Napaskiak, Oscarville

**UNIT 6**



**MARY ALBRITE**  
Atmautluak, Kasigluk, Nunapitchuk

**UNIT 7**



**JOSEPH JOSEPH**  
Kipnuk, Kongiganak,  
Kwigillingok, Tuntutuliak

**UNIT 8**



**JOSEPH ASULUK SR.**  
Chefornak, Mekoryuk, Newtok,  
Nightmute, Toksook Bay,  
Tununak, Umkumiut

**UNIT 9**



**ROY J. ATCHAK, TREASURER**  
Chevak, Hooper Bay, Paimiut,  
Scammon Bay

**UNIT 10**



**HENRY SMALL**  
Eek, Goodnews Bay, Platinum,  
Quinhagak

**UNIT 11**



**ROBERT HOFFMAN**  
Orutsararmiut Native Council

**UNIT 12**



**CHRISTINA CHANGSAK**  
Pilot Station, Marshall,  
Ohogamiut, Iqummiut

**UNIT 13**



**RAYMOND ONEY**  
Alakanuk, Chuloonawick,  
Emmonak, Nunam Iqua



# AVCP Service Delivery Model

The Executive Board of AVCP is made up of representatives from 13 Units in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Region. In 2017, AVCP's Executive Board underwent a comprehensive strategic planning session. They identified seven strategic objectives to guide the work of AVCP. All programs and administrative support functions at AVCP work to fulfill these objectives.

- Be Resilient
- Be the Leading Model
- Ensure our Stability
- Grow Our Own
- Improve Regional Unity
- Strengthen Regional Voice & Programs
- Support Tribal Self-Determination

The tribes of the region have also established three top priorities to be addressed, region-wide. When AVCP delivers services to the region, the focus is on these priorities. Learn more about our priorities on the following page.

1. Public Safety
2. Economic Development
3. Community Wellness

Combined, these strategic objectives and priorities set the course for AVCP's programs and services. We work hard to effectively deliver the resources that improve the quality of life for our people.

AVCP's service delivery model has been developed by us, to fit our region's needs. It works on a framework that is familiar to our tribes and has proven to be effective by directing services to four levels: in the communities, at the sub-regional level in hub communities, through AVCP headquarter locations in Bethel, and beyond the region.



# Administrative Support

The Administrative Support Department supports every function of AVCP to ensure our organization is accessible to clients and the community; our departments can collaborate and communicate efficiently and effectively; and AVCP's voice of the Region is heard. Our Department provides receptionists, facilitates event logistics, books event space, and provides executive support to the Executive Board, Chief Executive Officer, and the Executive Team.

## 2021 Accomplishments

### COVID-19 Support:

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, we have continued ordering personal protective equipment (PPE), including hand sanitizer and face masks, for staff; recorded and distributed notes for AVCP's COVID-19 task force, all-staff meetings, and tribal teleconferences; and assisted in evaluating work spaces and identifying needs to meet social distancing guidelines.

### Convention Planning:

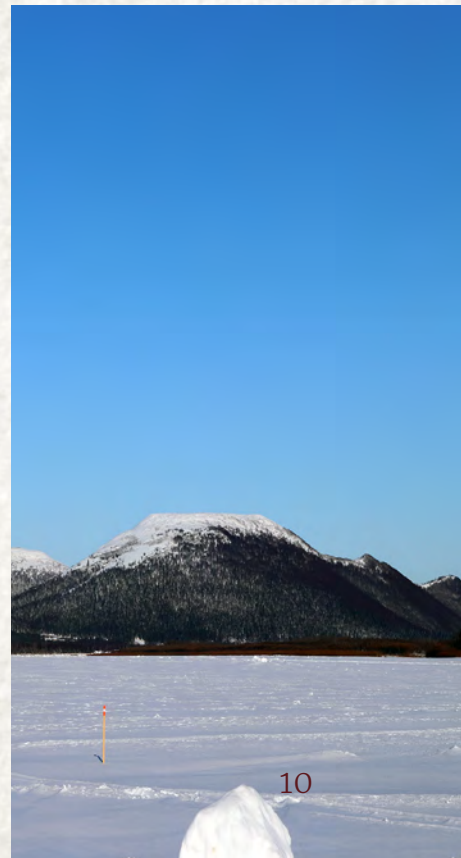
Became the lead for AVCP's Convention Planning Team, which included coordination of COVID-19 mitigation and contingency plans for the 2021 Annual Convention.

### Emergency Call Tree:

Updated emergency call tree based on the new organizational chart.

### Processing Mail:

In response to a need for assistance in Finance and Facilities Management, Admin Support began processing incoming packages and postage for outgoing mail.





# Facilities, Fleet and Safety

## COVID Response

Facilities, Fleet and Safety provided a critical role in the response to COVID 19 at AVCP. From transportation, to cleaning and disinfecting, receiving and distribution, infection response, Facilities Staff have supported Administration and Programs to the greatest extent possible during this pandemic.

### **Some of the most notable actions include but are not limited to:**

- Coordinate with Administration the ordering of materials, masks, hand sanitizer.
- Receive and store materials and supplies from orders and donations.
- Distribute materials and supplies to AVCP employees throughout the region.
- Develop and Utilize Cleaning Checklist Log to document cleaning and disinfection.
- Increase staff capability by attending online seminar and training for Covid specific sanitation.
- Utilize Maintenance Staff for Custodial functions as necessary to maintain cleanliness and disinfection throughout AVCP facilities.
- Hire additional custodial staff to ensure proper cleaning and disinfection is maintained.



# Tuluksak Water Outage

Facilities Staff gathered supplies to include hand sanitizer, cleaning supplies, bottled water, and coordinated a truck delivery to Tuluksak. After communication with the Native Village of Napaimute Ice Road crew, an opportunity of good weather, plowed road, and favorable conditions allowed the delivery of much needed supplies to the community of Tuluksak.



## Lights, Heat, Safety, Comfort

The “regular” job of our Facilities, Fleet, and Safety staff has been quite busy as usual. With our aging facilities and vehicles, come additional maintenance and repair. We have experienced challenges in all aspects of our facilities to which our knowledgeable and experienced staff provide the necessary response. From plumbing and heating, electrical and mechanical, interior and exterior, roof to foundation, our Facilities Staff have performed great work.

### **Some of the more significant projects include but are not limited to:**

- Window Replacement at Bethel Head Start
- Water and Sewer Repairs at Bethel Head Start
- Siding Replacement at Family Services Center, Building B (Benefits)
- Lift Station Pump Repair at Family Services Center
- Sewer Line Repair at Family Services Center
- Partial Roof Replacement at Old Flight School Hanger
- Office Repair and Renovation at Old Flight School Hanger
- Records Project (continued), Destroy Old Records, Organize and Store Records
- Demolish KVNA
- Multiple Office Moves throughout Bethel
- Snow Removal / Slip and Fall Prevention
- Vehicle Maintenance: Batteries, Tires, Maintenance and Supplies



# Communications

The Communications Department focuses on increasing transparency and access to AVCP services through the development of multimedia and dissemination of information across the following platforms: avcp.org, social media, newsletters, and more.

In 2020, Communications also supported AVCP's role in providing information on COVID-19 to the region, and in helping our programs transition to digital delivery of some services.

## Grow Our Own

Communications went through some staff changes, resulting in the lack of a Communications Director for the first half of 2021.

Communications was unable to host any in-person trainings or make any trips for content due to COVID 19 safety precautions. We compensated these setbacks with more virtual services.

## Increased Engagement

### Events

- Tribal Court Master Series Trainings were recorded and are available on our Youtube Channel as a resource
- First Ever Virtual AVCP Annual Convention, the recording of which is available on our youtube for review
- We made a 15 minute "About AVCP" video for the Alaska Federation of Natives 2020 Annual Convention
- A video on Vocational Rehabilitation was created to congratulate the State of Alaska Vocational Rehabilitation Program on 100 years of excellence.



# Multimedia Platforms



## Changes to avcp.org

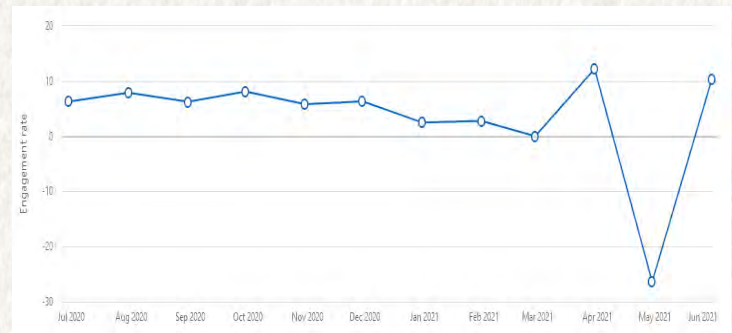
- Changed webhosting from HostMonster to GoDaddy for better security from malware-induced webpage outages.
- Created a COVID 19 Precautionary Measures Listed by Tribe page so travelers could see the public notices from each village
- Increased the security of avcp.org by purchasing an antimalware service via GoDaddy



## Twitter

- Facebook followers: 5026 in 2020 to 5440 in 2021, an 8.24% increase. We may be reaching a plateau for followers, considering the total population of Bethel is 6472
- Our average Reach has halved as compared to last year. Changes in staff resulted in less posts, meaning less engagement. All results are organic, meaning we did not pay to have our content advertised.

### Twitter Impressions



## Twitter

- Above is a chart of the amount of impressions per month last year
- Increased posts made for more impressions, with an outlier of a single tweet that reached over 5 thousand impressions. Increase in quality of posts may make up for lower quantity content.



## LinkedIn

- Above is a chart of our engagement rate. Our Engagement Rate plummeted but is now back on the rise with a new average exceeding 10 engagements per month. The engagement rate is calculated as (Clicks + Likes + Comments + Shares + Follows)/Impressions.
- Our Click rate has increased with more content being posted to this site.



# Finance

The Finance Division supports every program and administrative department of AVCP. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted standard day to day operations of the Finance Division in a substantial way. We experienced a significant decrease in travel and slow internet speeds, which resulted in poor connectivity to servers and accounting systems. Administration made necessary adjustments within the infrastructure to create a blend of remote and in-office support to keep employees safe, while sustaining essential operations.

The Finance team was flexible and able to adapt to the changes, ensuring the necessary services to our employees and community were not interrupted. The electronic processes for employees, vendors, auditors and assistance benefit payments for clients continued to be processed in a timely manner, despite the challenges that we faced during the pandemic. The FY2019 Audit was successfully performed remotely and was closely monitored to ensure an on-time filing.

Over the past year, we have continued to implement Phase II of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), focusing on the delivery, transactions and processes that come through AVCP. As a result of the QIP, we were able to fine tune and advance these focused areas. The Finance team has proven to be resilient and will continue to strive to meet our goals despite any challenges the future may hold.



# Grants & Compliance

The Grants & Compliance Department is a clear sign of AVCP's growth and progress under the Quality Improvement Process. It was created in 2016 to support AVCP's programs, the audit process and assist AVCP's administrative departments. As the lead for financial reporting of AVCP's many grants, Grants & Compliance supports accuracy and accountability in grant reporting to funders, supports programs with budget to actuals and the budgeting process, supports internal controls procedures and the Finance Department in preparing for annual audits, and assists with required reporting to grantors.

Grants & Compliance contributes to the steps AVCP is taking to meet compliance of our many grants while employees are working remotely.

This department monitors allowable expenses and program deliverables for our many services to clients and to tribes.

Grants & Compliance created tracking codes for COVID-19 related expenses to help AVCP monitor the impact of this pandemic to operations.





# Human Resources

AVCP has between 350-400 employees in the region at any time. Over half of our employee's work and live in our 56 villages, and 97% are Alaska Native. AVCP contributes about \$6 million per year in payroll to the Y-K Delta.

Human Resources (HR) takes very seriously the strategic objective to Grow Our Own, and assists the organization in recruiting, onboarding and retaining skilled and qualified employees to support AVCP in its mission. Our work has three focus areas of Employee Support, Benefits Management, and Staff Development. This past year we've made significant improvements in the following ways:

## Employee Support

- Supporting the Finance Department in accurately reporting on AVCP transactions to prepare for an on-time audit of FY 2020 to conclude by the 2021 Annual Convention
- Working within the Retirement Committee to update the current Retirement Platform.

## Staff Development

- Due to Covid-19, The HR had to work fast to convert all the New Employee Orientation presentations into virtual presentations that could be emailed out to all new employees on the first days of employment. HR has changed our processes to be able to process remotely, all applications, new hires, off boarding, Family Medical Leave Act, as well as workman's comp. We are currently still using the virtual presentations but look forward to going back to in person training as Covid allows.
- We offered an intense virtual training on Mid-Level Management Skills to all staff in supervisory rolls.
- Currently working on a training plan the rest of the year that will allow all employees to be trained in a variety of topics.

## Benefits Management

- We are currently working with our support specialist to utilize the HR module of Automatic Data Processing (ADP), HR Management Software Services.
- We continue to work closely with MetLife our Dental, Vision and Life provider.
- We continue to work closely with Lincoln Financial, our current Retirement provider.



# Information Technology

## New IT Vision and Mission Adopted In 2020

### **Vision Statement - Deliver the best possible Technology for AVCP**

Mission Statement - Working together to meet the Technology and Resource needs of AVCP, while proactively Providing Value through innovative IT solutions. This includes support of day-to-day Operations of AVCP; maintenance and support of software and hardware; standard application(s) and network systems, and other standardized data processing systems.

Our IT team was put to the test, with adoption of additional projects and services due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Six of the nine IT staff continued to work in the office full-time throughout the entire pandemic for IT Support. COVID-19 has affected many IT Services, including new computer delivery, assistance with staff working remotely, and as a result some initiatives were incomplete and pushed out. Our 2020 Strategic Plan was set in place prior to the pandemic and plans were set in place early on 2021 to complete those necessary affected initiatives. We currently are on track(although not on projected due dates) to complete all Strategic items from 2020 and 2021 by the end of 2021, as we all have learned to work around the constraints that the pandemic has brought to light. We continue to adjust and look to improve our IT Services and create efficiencies regarding all IT Service Delivery areas.



# 2020 IT Strategic Initiatives completed October 2020 through Year End

## Governance & Staffing

### Two (2) IT Staff Added - Nine (9) Total

- TIWAHE funding - IT Temp Service Desk to assist with PC Image Deployment due to the COVID Pandemic.
- Funding from Office of Self-Governance allowed for an additional IT Staff member - System Analyst.

## Cloud & Resilient Systems

IT created first detailed 3-5 year Strategic Plan & Hardware refresh schedule.

## COVID-19 Response

Remote Work preparation and completion, allowing AVCP Staff to work remotely.

- Remote Work - Laptop and workstation preparation and additional orders, Network and Virtual Private Network (VPN) Access for remote staff deployment, Documentation instructions, Call Forwarding from Desk phones to cell phones, Remote Desktop Access, AT&T testing in Bethel, Online Conferencing platforms, Remote Management of Network Resources.
- Infrastructure Updates due to COVID-19. New projects were added to address Connectivity concerns.
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) Implementation Project Kickoff to address connectivity slowness to AVCP Resources. Applies to all staff, including Village Based Staff.
- Broadband Infrastructure Requirements: Research to Deploy Broadband connectivity for remote staff where applicable - utilizing extra funds from TIWAHE.
- OKTA Single Sign On: Purchased for Cloud based security and User Efficiency. Configuration and Testing began.



# 2021 High Priority IT Strategic Initiatives Completed January 2021 & Forecasting through September 2021

## Operational Efficiency

Provide strategic-level IT leadership to the Organization, through continual improvement of existing IT Services.

## Infrastructure Enhancements

Meeting >90% of the Business Need: >95% Connectivity to devices on and off the Network. Core systems were maintained by providing necessary upgrades and updates to support AVCP connectivity.

## OKTA - Multifactor Authentication

Implementation and phased approach for testing was completed. Including one click access to Automatic Data Processing (ADP), Microsoft 365, Concur and Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI).

## Remote Work Enhancements (COVID Response continued from 2021)

- VDI Implementation completed. Village and Remote users access verified to RiteTrack, MIP and Microix. Go Live scheduled for July 1, 2021.
- OKTA (an identity and access management company) Implementation: VDI Integration for ease of use. Testing through Quarter 2 for full system readiness. Go Live scheduled for July 2021.

## Governance & Staffing

Becoming a Proactive IT Department through implementation of the new IT Organizational Chart, IT Staff development, incorporating ITIL Standards where applicable.

## Cloud & Resilient Systems

Ensure the IT Department, Systems and Infrastructure are Administered and Managed effectively, while planning for the future of IT and the organization.

- VMWare Hosts: Upgrades of current Production Servers for faster processing and data response times. Current Production Servers will be re-deployed as Disaster Recovery Backup.
- Server Room Enhancements: Server Room environment and systems are protected against power failures and environmental hazards. Now working with Facilities for optimal environment Air Conditioning systems.



# Legal & Child Advocacy

The Legal Department supports AVCP's six divisions, all administrative departments, and the Executive Board through contracting and negotiations; program and legal compliance; and advocacy initiatives. The Child Advocacy Department represents the best interest of 2/3rds of YK-Delta children in State child welfare proceedings.

In 2021, the Legal Team continued to support AVCP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by providing legal advice and counsel on the reopening process; Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) information and guidance; and contingency planning to divisions for implementing projects during COVID.

Other 2021 highlights included supporting AVCP's participation in federal tribal consultations and Alaska State Legislature testimony; representing AVCP in Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) negotiations; and piloting the new Legal Governance, Risk, and Compliance program.

Through a contract with the Alaska Office of Public Advocacy, our two Guardians ad Litem continue to represent approximately 175 tribal children in the custody of the State of Alaska's Office of Children's Services through court hearings, treatment team meetings, and by visiting children and families.





# Office of Self Governance & Compacting

The Office of Self-Governance (OSG) provides funding for essential operations of Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) programs that tribes elect to compact under the Self Governance agreement with the United States of America and AVCP. The OSG Compact provides AVCP with enhanced flexibility and control to negotiate the provisions and terms that aim to improve service delivery to member tribes. This agreement provides the authority to consolidate and redesign programs and reallocate funds between programs.

The tribes in the AVCP region can also elect to contract for these programs directly with the BIA under P.L. 93-638 or tribes may elect to have select programs provided by the BIA directly. Some tribes currently provide services, or partial services, through a contract with the BIA. Contract support costs are provided to the entity responsible for providing the service for administrative costs associated with operations of the program.

This Compact enables AVCP working through and with participating Tribes to redesign programs, activities, functions, or services according to Tribal priorities to enhance the effectiveness and long-term financial stability of tribal governments. The Compact enables AVCP to plan, conduct, consolidate, and administer Compact Programs or portions thereof, administered by the Department of Interior other than through BIA to the extent as provided in the annual funding agreement applicable to Non-BIA Compact Programs.

## Child Welfare Compact with the State of Alaska

The Child Welfare Compact with the State of Alaska continues to be defined and designed to allow Tribes and Tribal Organizations to provide certain OCS services directly to Tribal members through the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) department. Negotiations for the Child Welfare Compact with the State of Alaska were held May 12 and 13, 2021 with plans to further negotiate with the State in August.

AVCP sponsored a resolution of Continued Support for the Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact at the AFN Annual Convention, which passed. AVCP continues to be an active member of the Child Welfare Tribal Caucus, with representatives serving on both the Legal, Data and Services workgroups.

### **The Compact's available scopes of work including:**

- Initial and ongoing diligent relative search
- Family contact, and
- Licensing assistance
- Safety walk throughs

**AVCP compacts for four services which we provide to our ICWA Compact tribes.**



# Programs Overview – CPO Report

## Thriving during the Pandemic

For over 50 years AVCP has provided vital client services to every community in the region. For the past 5 years under the Quality Improvement Process, AVCP has focused intensely on improving the quality and reach of those programs, and every year those client services have grown and strengthened. This past year has presented all of us with so many challenges both personally and professionally, and yet AVCP's client services found new and creative ways to continue to serve our people and communities throughout the region.

The pandemic changed our normal service delivery model and some program services were paused, but with every door we had to close we found a window to climb through. After 18 long months, during which time we have emerged from our homes and resumed some of those paused services, we remain ever mindful of the constantly shifting pandemic environment. We have learned many lessons from this past year. As we move forward, we are proceeding mindfully, incorporating the changes that have improved our client services. In the pages that follow you will read about some of the challenges AVCP's services have faced, and about all the ways we have worked to overcome those challenges. This is above all else, a story of success and resilience.

## Division Development

Despite the challenges of this past year, AVCP did not stop the important work of the Quality Improvement Process. It is with great pride that we report during this past year AVCP was able to complete the initial development stage for all six of our program divisions. The purpose of the new division structure is to combine like programs and services to improve the overall quality. Through this effort AVCP will:

- Improve client access to services;
- Increase service efficiency; and
- Expand current services and develop new ones.

All programs and client services at AVCP are now housed under one of the six divisions.

### They are:

- Community Service Division
- Community Development Division
- Benefits Division
- Family Services Division
- Workforce Development Division
- Land & Cultural Resources Division



## History of Division Development

In 2015, AVCP realized its programs had grown too numerous for effective management. This realization led the Executive Board to initiate the Quality Improvement Process, a process which continues to this day. In the beginning, the QIP was focused heavily on financial and grant compliance, but in 2017 AVCP began to take a careful look at its overall service delivery model. We discovered that many of our programs offered similar services. For example, many of the same clients would receive both cash assistance and heating fuel assistance services from our TANF and Social Services departments. The process for determining eligibility for both of those benefits is very similar, so duplicating the effort was a waste of resources. Most importantly, it was significantly more work for clients to access both services, having to fill-out two different applications, and work with two different departments at AVCP. Out of the QIP process, the concept of the division structure was developed. It has taken 4 years to get to the place where all 6 divisions have been established, and 6 Division Directors have been hired to oversee the continued development of their divisions. There is still much work to be done, but we have set a very ambitious goal to complete all division development work by the end of 2022, and I am so pleased to report that in every division we are currently on target to meet that goal!

## Braiding Services Across Divisions

In the pages that follow you will see many references to “braiding services.” Each division has areas of specialty, but as we look more holistically at the services we provide at AVCP, we are continuously identifying new ways to work across divisions and provide better service delivery. For example, our Workforce Development Division, with its Tribal Workforce Division (TWD) Navigators in almost 40 villages, provides workforce development services for individuals and families and provides case management services to cash assistance clients in partnership with our Benefits Division. Other examples include our Community Services Division’s VPSO program partnering this past year with our Community Development Division to build a new public safety facility in Napaskiak, and our Tribal Child Welfare program in our Family Service Division working with our Realty program under Lands & Cultural Resource Division to identify more relatives to help keep our Tribal Children in our region.

## RiteTrack

AVCP has been working on the development of client software to connect many of our programs for the past several years. Unfortunately developing software that connects all our client service programs has proven very difficult. During the pandemic, we took the time to carefully reevaluate this project, create a new plan with more realistic development goals, and create a plan for completion of this software by 2022. The development of this software is now tracking the development of our divisions and the combined work will greatly improve AVCP’s overall client service delivery.

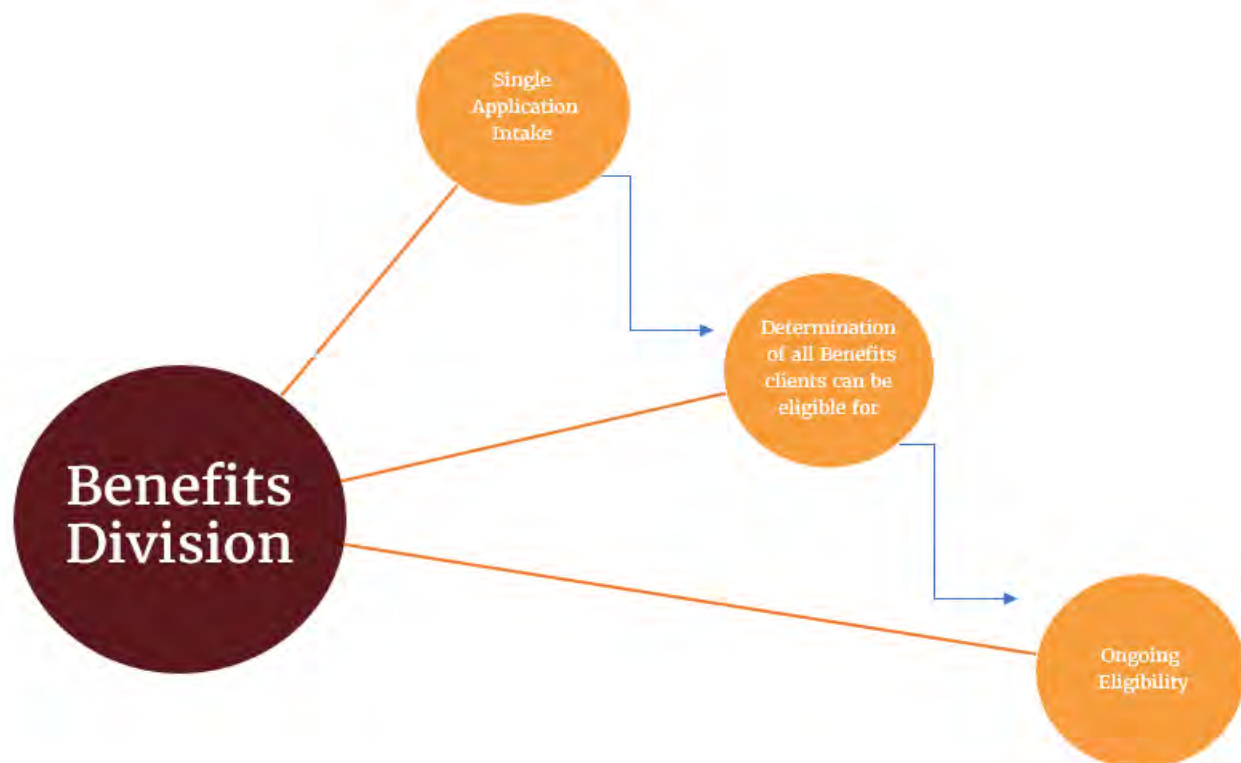


# Benefits Division

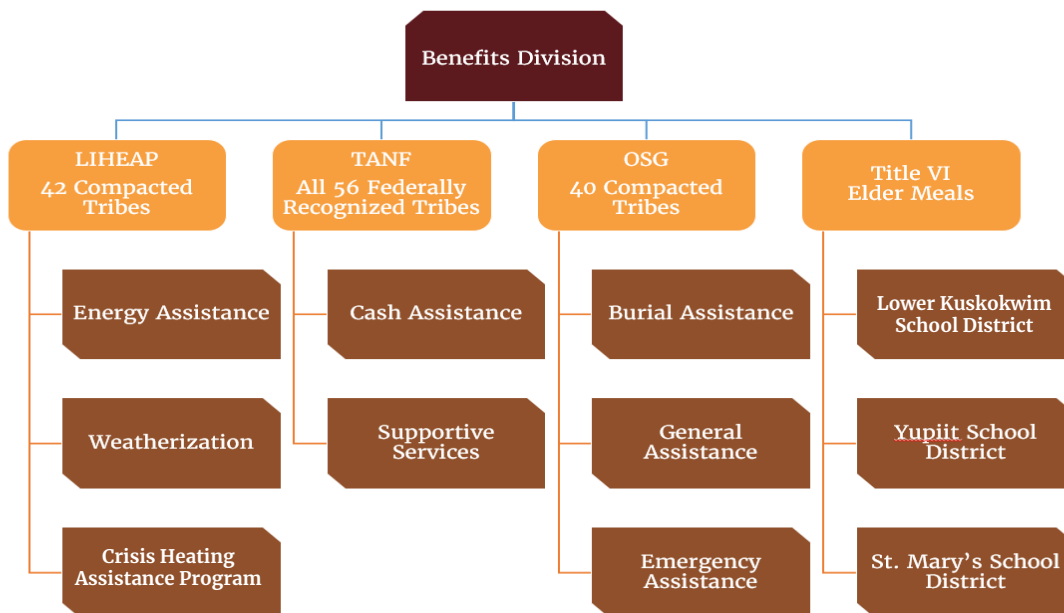
The Benefits Division helps our families meet their basic needs through cash assistance (TANF and Welfare Assistance), Low Income, Home, and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), burial assistance, elder meals, and emergency assistance services.

The Benefits Division combined two former AVCP programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Social Services, into one streamlined division. This process is still underway but is on target to be completed by the end of 2021. This new division structure will:

- Improve Client Services: By creating one-combined benefits application and one point of processing for applications, clients will no longer have to work with multiple programs to get the benefits they need.
- Improve Efficiency: One application for all benefits programs will streamline the internal process and expedite the payment of benefits.
- Expand Services: Through a combined benefit application we are more easily able to identify the full range of benefits available for clients, which will result in more benefits provided overall.







## CLIENT SERVICES IN THE BENEFITS DIVISION

### TANF

AVCP's Benefits Division provides cash assistance and emergency assistance through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), which assists families with dependent children under the age of 18, families with children under the age of 19 but still enrolled in school as full-time students, pregnant women, and children in foster care or relative placements. AVCP provides TANF services to all qualified clients in the AVCP region. The goal of TANF is to assist families in meeting their basic needs, while assisting families in becoming self-sufficient through wrap-around case management services, which are provided in partnership with our Workforce Development Division.

### LIHEAP

AVCP's Benefits Division provides on-going and emergency energy assistance, as well as weatherization services to our compacted Tribes through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) grant. Energy assistance includes heating fuel, electricity, gas/motor oil, or harvested wood benefits paid directly to vendors. The weatherization program helps decrease home energy costs with energy efficiency counseling services, Toyo or wood stoves, and new doors and windows to reduce overall energy costs.

### Title VI Elders Meal Program

AVCP's Benefits Division Elder Meals program serves elders 60 years of age and over, in 12 communities on our region to help alleviate food insecurity. AVCP contracts with the school districts in those communities to provide a daily school lunch to elders.

### General Assistance

AVCP's Benefits Division also provides cash assistance and emergency flood or fire assistance through the Welfare Assistance General Assistance, which serves Tribal Members in region who are not eligible for other cash assistance benefits to meet basic needs.

### Burial Assistance

AVCP's Benefits Division supports families in the immediate aftermath of the loss of a loved one through our Welfare Assistance Burial Assistance program. Eligible Tribal Families may use these funds for mortuary services, freight or charter for the casket, and other funeral expenses. An application will be accepted from the surviving spouse or, in the absence of a surviving spouse, the relative responsible for making the arrangements.





## Benefits Division Service During COVID

The pandemic has presented many challenges for the Benefits Division because staff have to remain onsite in order to provide these essential services. Through careful office planning, masking, testing, quarantining, and cleanliness protocols AVCP is so pleased to report that to date there have been no cases of COVID spread at the office. However, continuing to process these essential benefits required creative ways of eligibility verification, relaxing many established processes, and required many extra hours of work for our staff. Despite these challenges, AVCP not only continued providing its standard benefits, but was able to increase regional benefit services through the development of a variety of one-time payment programs, including:

- All TANF households receiving an additional one-time \$1000 benefit in December 2020.
- Over \$200,000 in one-time \$1500 Welfare Assistance benefits distributed Jan – April 2021 to eligible compacted Tribal Members.
- Provided Elders in St. Mary's with produce boxes through Title VI funding.

Benefits Division: [benefits-division@avcp.org](mailto:benefits-division@avcp.org)  
907-543-8650



# Workforce Development Division

The Workforce Development Division works with Tribal Members across the region to identify and remove employment barriers and gain the skills necessary to be self-sufficient.

## Workforce Development:

- Nurtures individual self-sufficiency and the economic well-being of the AVCP region.
- Assists in eliminating any barriers to employment.
- Serves as a focal point for local and regional workforce development initiatives.
- Prepares locals for the jobs available today.
- Serves as an employment resource in our communities.
- Provides a one-stop shop for our clients to access benefit services in the village.
- Grows our own workforce.
- Provides Child Care support.

The Workforce Development Division is in the process of combining two former programs, our TANF Tribal Workforce Development program and our Employment, Education and Training program into one department: Tribal Workforce Development (TWD) under our new 477 Plan. Together with our Vocational Rehabilitation program, and Child Care program, we are strengthening the economic development of the entire region. Our core services include:

- Higher Education Scholarship and Training Programs;
- Cash Assistance Case Management services;
- GED Tutoring and Testing;
- Employment Assistance;
- Pre-employment Assistance;
- JOM Educational Support;
- Summer Youth Employment Training and Youth Programs;
- Child Care; and
- Employment and Subsistence Assistance for Tribal Members with Disabilities.





|            |              |            |                  |                 |
|------------|--------------|------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Akiachak   | Chefornek    | Kalskag    | Marshall         | Nunapitchuk     |
| Akiak      | Chevak       | Kasigluk   | Mountain Village | Pilot Station   |
| Alakanuk   | Eek          | Kipnuk     | Napakiak         | Quinhagak       |
| Aniak      | Emmonak      | Kongiganak | Napaskiak        | Russian Mission |
| Atmautluak | Goodnews Bay | Kotlik     | Newtok           | Scammon Bay     |
| Bethel     | Hooper Bay   | Kwethluk   | Nightmute        | Tuntutuliak     |
|            |              |            |                  | Tunuk           |

The Workforce Development Division is still evolving but we anticipate being near completion by the end of 2021. The new division structure will:

- Improve Client Services: Through a new application that combines two former scholarship and training program applications into one easy application, and provides one point of contact at AVCP for all scholarship and training needs.
- Improve Efficiency: By internally combining separate scholarship and training processes, as well as all employment services, into one integrated and stream-lined process.
- Expand Services: Through increased case management services for former Education, Employment and Training clients by moving those services to TWD offices throughout the region instead of just in Bethel. Through increased availability for scholarships and trainings allowing AVCP to fund to the needs of the student/client.





# Workforce Development Division

How can WDD help you?



## Client Services in the Workforce Development Division

### Child Care

AVCP's Workforce Development Division provides a unique solution to the challenges of finding and paying for childcare. Through its Child Care program, financial assistance is provided to Tribal Members who require childcare services to work, attend school, or provide for their families through subsistence activities, while at the same time providing an employment opportunity for people in the community interested in becoming childcare providers. Services are available for children up to 12 years of age, and children with special needs are eligible for care up to the age of 19.

### Vocational Rehabilitation

AVCP's Workforce Development Division's Vocational Rehabilitation program assists Tribal Members with disabilities in the AVCP region, to return to the workforce, maintain employment, and actively participate in subsistence activities.

## Tribal Workforce Development (TWD)

AVCP's Workforce Development Division's mission is to reduce individual reliance and future dependence on cash assistance benefits by offering workforce development programs in our region. TWD provides job preparation and job supportive services in 32 communities, designed to help all families in our region. **The local Tribal Workforce Development Navigators strive to:**

- **GUIDE** clients toward the services they need
- **EMPOWER** clients to perform activities to achieve their overall goal of self-sufficiency
- Use a **CLIENT CENTERED APPROACH** that's solution focused, in the short term (rent this month) and long term (education)
- **ASSESS** client's strengths, needs, and aspirations
- Focus on **SKILL BUILDING**
- Provide **CONSISTENT** support



# Workforce Development Division Services During COVID-19

Workforce Development Division delivered core services, including Child Care, TANF case management, scholarships, and training support throughout the pandemic, with most staff working remotely and despite many limitations.

## Vocational Rehabilitation

- 51 active cases with Individual Plans of Employment (IPE)
- 10 applicants are being in process
- 16 successful closures of cases

## TWD

- 107 active GED clients
- 262 TANF clients received case management services.
- 85 Higher Education Scholarships were provided.
- 13 Vocational Training Scholarships were provided.
- 40 Education Housing Assistance Scholarships were provided.

## EET

### (Now part of TWD)

- 279 clients reached educational and training objectives
- 64 received their degrees or certificates
- 433 received supportive services
- 115 employed
- 153 referrals
- Summer Youth Program: 16 tribes awarded with a total of 149 students.
- Child Care provided to 134 families (326 children)



Chandler Joekay and Chase Bavilla of Napaskiak happily receive their AVCP Child Care COVID Health and Safety supplies.

Some services, like the Kids2College program, and GED services were heavily impacted by the pandemic, and the forced closure of many village Tribal Workforce Development Offices limited the ability to provide robust employment services.

However, the division used this time to focus on staff and division development, continuing with the Quality Improvement mindset now ingrained after many years. Additionally, we implemented some services to meet the unique needs during this period.





- TWD partnered with Vocational Rehabilitation to purchase water for the community of Tuluksak during their time of need. TWD Tuluksak Navigator was the main point of contact and distributed the water.
- Vocational Rehabilitation provided care packages to clients to promote COVID prevention that included masks, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizers.
- Child Care also provided numerous care packages during the pandemic to support parents, children, and providers, including many masks, both adult and youth, shipped across the region.
- The Child Care Program provided \$425,813.00 in childcare services to the essential workers we all relied on so heavily during this uncertain time.



*Maintenance and VR staff preparing for water delivery for Tuluksak, via ice road.*





## Contact Info for the Workforce Development Division

|                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Tribal Workforce Development</b> | (907) 543-7440                   |
| <b>Child Care</b>                   | (907) 543-7430                   |
| <b>Vocational Rehabilitation</b>    | (907) 543-7450                   |
| <b>Sam Crow, Division Director</b>  | (907) 543-7448<br>scrow@avcp.org |

*Workforce Development division staff Carol Hunter and Erma Tinker prepare COVID Care Packages for shipping to Tribal Members.*



# Family Services Division

The mission of the AVCP Family Services Division is to provide family wellness services through a culturally relevant and holistic approach to address prevention, healing, and encourage healthy families. This division is still in the middle of its development stage and currently consists of the Indian Child Welfare Act program (ICWA), Healthy Families program, Family Early Intervention and Prevention Unit, and Head Start program. Core services include:

- Pre-K Education and Family Support at established AVCP Head Start sites.
- Culturally based educational and wellness workshops and group sessions with Elders.
- Tribal Child Welfare programming, advocacy, support, and legal representation in state *Child in Need of Aid* (CINA) cases both in Alaska and the 'Lower 48'.
- Prevention and wrap-around case management services for families.



The Family Services Division will house three units offering services in Tribal Child Welfare, Prevention, and Early Childhood. During phase I, the Prevention Unit and Tribal Child Welfare units will be developed and implemented by the end of 2021. During phase II, planning for the Early Childhood Unit will begin at the end of 2021 with implementation work expected to begin by early 2022. Through development and implementation of the Family Services Division, the following goals will be met:

- **Improve Efficiency:** Wellness and prevention services will be easier to access when clients use established points of help such as the Tribal Workforce Development (TWD) Navigators. This point of access helps bring our vision of a 'one stop shop' to life. The Workforce Development, Benefits, and Family Services Divisions will have a streamlined process for TANF recipients, and other referred families to access prevention services and additional support in a timely manner. These services will promote self-sufficiency and family wellness.
- **Expanded Services:** Expanded prevention and intervention services within each unit will ensure that more needs are met for our region's families and youth. New services will encompass our cultural values and elder knowledge.
- **Improve Client Service:** Family Services will continue to support staff through higher education and training opportunities to continue to 'Grow Our Own', which, will improve service delivery at all levels and contribute to positive experiences and outcomes for families and youth that we serve.



# Client Services in the Family Services Division

## Indian Child Welfare (“ICWA”)

The ICWA program works to promote the best interests of Alaska Native children by meeting the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act, with a focus on protecting Tribal rights, keeping children safe, keeping families together, and preserving family connections to their Tribes and culture. The ICWA team consists of village-based Community & Family Support Specialists (formerly known as ‘ICWA Workers’), Sub-regional Supervisors, ICWA Advocates, and Attorneys. Each compacted Tribe receives child welfare advocacy, case management, training, and legal representation.

With the support of TIWAHE, the program has been able to implement a new service delivery model that includes staff oversight at the sub-regional level through sub-regional CFSS III’s. Currently, the sub-regions include St. Mary’s, Aniak, Hooper Bay, Toksook Bay, and Emmonak. While this model is still new, we are looking at more ways to improve the delivery of child welfare services to communities across the region.

The ICWA program also provides prevention services to families through our Family Early Intervention & Prevention Unit (FEIP). Families served by FEIP are either referred by TANF, Office of Children’s Services, or Tribes. Interested families work with experienced staff to assess their strengths and needs, and then are connected to programs such as Healthy Families, Tribal Workforce Development, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Another important part of ICWA’s work is providing services through the Tribal Child Welfare Compact. Currently, ICWA is providing services under four of five areas of the compact: initial and on-going diligent relative searches, safety evaluation walk-throughs, and assistance with the foster care licensing process. AVCP legal, administrative, and program staff continue to participate in ongoing negotiations with the State of Alaska for additional funds to expand our capacity and take on additional work under this compact.

## Healthy Families

With guidance and support from our Elders, the Healthy Families program provides culturally appropriate services to the AVCP region, to promote and support ‘whole health’ through the sharing, teaching and practice of our traditional values. The program creates a culturally appropriate time and place for people to come together, through our workshops or at community gatherings, to learn from Elders and group participants through the sharing of stories and traditional knowledge. The Healthy Families workshops are for our AVCP Region’s Tribal Members. The workshops advance the vision of Elluarluteng Ilakutellriit; a whole health framework that illustrates traditional practices, values, and beliefs through the human lifecycle as told by Elders from around the region, and the late Peter Jacobs. The workshops are also a resource for first responders and law enforcement in our villages, as well as Tribal Court judges and staff.





# Head Start

**The mission of the AVCP Head Start program is to promote school readiness of our Tribal children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development, through pre-kindergarten classroom and home-based teaching.**

AVCP operates both center-based and home-based services to enrolled children and their families. AVCP Head Start recognizes that parents are the first and most important teachers in their child's lives, and our children are more successful when parents/families are actively engaged in their child's education.

We encourage volunteering in the classrooms and offer a variety of activities for parents to become more engaged in their child's education. In addition to the children's educational and cognitive development services, we also offer a variety of support services to parents and families including health, nutrition, social, and other services as determined through a Family Needs Assessment. AVCP Head Start is funded to serve up to 221 children and their families in the following communities: Akiachak, Bethel, Chefnak, Kotlik, Kipnuk, Quinhagak, Scammon Bay, Russian Mission, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, and Tununak, and welcomes any interested family to stop by our centers or call the main office in Bethel for enrollment information.

Additionally, one of AVCP's core missions is to grow our own staff through support and training. The Head Start program employs 52 full time and approximately 20-25 part-time positions, and encourages our staff to continue their education and become more academically prepared to teach our children and work with families. We work year-round with the KuC Campus-UAF and AVCP Workforce Development Department to guide our staff in higher education.

As of June 2021, the AVCP Head Start staff consisted of: Two teachers with Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials and nine teachers enrolled in the CDA program; five staff with Associates Degrees and two teachers working on their Associate or Bachelor's degree; one teacher with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education; four staff with Family Advocate Training Certificates; and one teacher and one staff member working on their Rural Human Services Certificates.



# Family Services Division during COVID-19

In Tribal Child Welfare, the pandemic challenged all face-to-face services with families and children, and overall child welfare services were greatly impacted. However, CFSSI's and Advocates continued to check in with families and Tribes over the phone while village-based staff delivered support items and continued to work with OCS to complete child safety assessments, facilitate family contact, and get children safely to family members. The ICWA program was able to successfully transfer an out of State case to the appropriate Tribe and two children returned to their community to live with family members. We were also able to help find relatives for children to be placed with to prevent OCS from removing them from their communities. Cell phones and talk and text vouchers were provided to youth to keep them connected to family, friends, and services.

Within Healthy Families, pre COVID-19 pandemic, all services were provided in person for three-and-a-half-days with Elders and Facilitators. Post-COVID 19 pandemic, all services pivoted to virtual delivery over Skype, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. Workshops were adjusted to three days for three and a half hours per day which later increased to seven hours per day. This virtual service has continued into 2021 and provided new experiences for Healthy Families staff to develop and implement a

new service called Healthy Families 'Mini-Sessions'. Topics for each Mini-Session vary and stem from the Qasgiq Elder sessions. The goal of each Mini-Session is to share knowledge from our Elders and provide gentle reminders about traditional practices, values, and beliefs in greater detail. These opportunities will occur once a month and are open to all families within the AVCP region. Qasgiq Elders that met in person pre-COVID and then every other month virtually, paved the way for Healthy Families services to continue and improve.

## In 2020 Healthy Families:

- Hosted two in-person Healthy Families Workshops in Bethel (21 in-person participants)
- Facilitated 12 virtual Healthy Families Workshops (45 virtual participants).
- Hosted six Virtual Qasgiq sessions from September 2020 through June 2021.
- Hosted 14 of 17 Elders participating in virtual Qasgiq Sessions
- Continued outreach and partnership through presentations for various organizations and programs.
- Successfully transitioned to delivering all services remotely during COVID-19 pandemic.





During the COVID-19 pandemic, Head Start was faced with many challenges but by working together, we established plans for Remote Educational and Meal Services and Hybrid Educational and Meal Services to continue serving our students and families.

It was our goal during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide all services to the best of our ability and to remain compliant with the Head Start Performance Standards. Education is important for our children, and we encourage our children to be active learners in our program. This year with COVID-19, we provided meals and remote services to our children and families. The Head Start staff is working together with our families to improve attendance at our center-based sites. Due to COVID-19 and the State mandated closures of all educational facilities, our Centers closed March 16, 2020. AVCP Head Start Home Base and Center Base continued to provide remote educational services to our children and families.

## Headstart during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Worked with local Tribes and school districts to determine safe operations for students.
- Implemented YKHC and AVCP health guidelines and mitigation strategies for the health and safety of our employees, children, and families.
- Provided weekly meals and food boxes for our children and their families during lockdowns and quarantining periods.
- Provided additional education and sanitizing supplies to students and their families.
- Completed child assessments and parent conferences over the phone.
- Purchased laptops and printers for teachers to continue providing remote educational services.
- Purchased Hatch tablets as a supplemental learning device for our students during remote learning.
- Purchased new laptop computers and printers for Center Base lead teachers for remote services.
- Purchased new laptops for Home Base teachers.
- Purchased new iPads for each site and site supervisors for observations and child assessments.
- Contracted with Bethel Family Clinic to provide well-child examinations for students.
- Completed about 85% of child assessments, parent conferences, and transitions.
- Successfully completed virtual financial and program reviews for the CACFP state grant and federal Head Start grant.





On April 12, 2021 most of our students were able to safely return to the classroom for in-person learning on a hybrid schedule. Head Start staff followed all CDC, YKHC, AVCP, and Office of Head Start safety mitigation strategies and the school year ended without any incidents of widespread COVID-19 infections.

As we come out of the pandemic ‘standing up’, we have learned many new things about ourselves, our organization, and the direction in which we are moving. Within Family Services we are looking at new and innovative ways to provide services through virtual platforms, streamlining existing services, and braiding both existing and new services across divisions and programs to provide a more valuable experience to each person, family, Tribe, and community receiving services from AVCP. We want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding throughout the past year and extend our sincere condolences to all who have experienced the loss of a loved one during such a difficult time. Please continue to take care extra care of yourselves and each other.

## CONTACT INFO

Tribal Child Welfare (ICWA)

907-543-8690

[ICWAadvocates@avcp.org](mailto:ICWAadvocates@avcp.org)

Head Start

907-543-7410 or 7411

[SLeary@avcp.org](mailto:SLeary@avcp.org)

Healthy Families

907-543-8680

[HealthyFamilies@avcp.org](mailto:HealthyFamilies@avcp.org)



# Community Development Division

The mission of the Community Development Division is to help develop safe and healthy communities by providing economic development opportunities, community planning, and infrastructure development. The division consists of the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP), Housing Improvement Program (HIP), Economic Development (ED), and our new Home/Client Construction and Renovation program. Our current focus is developing a community-wide housing/infrastructure/economic development assessment tool to assess our Region's needs one village at a time, while at the same time connecting eligible clients to the range of possible housing improvement services available through this division. This division is still in development with anticipated completion mid-year 2022.

## Services provided include:

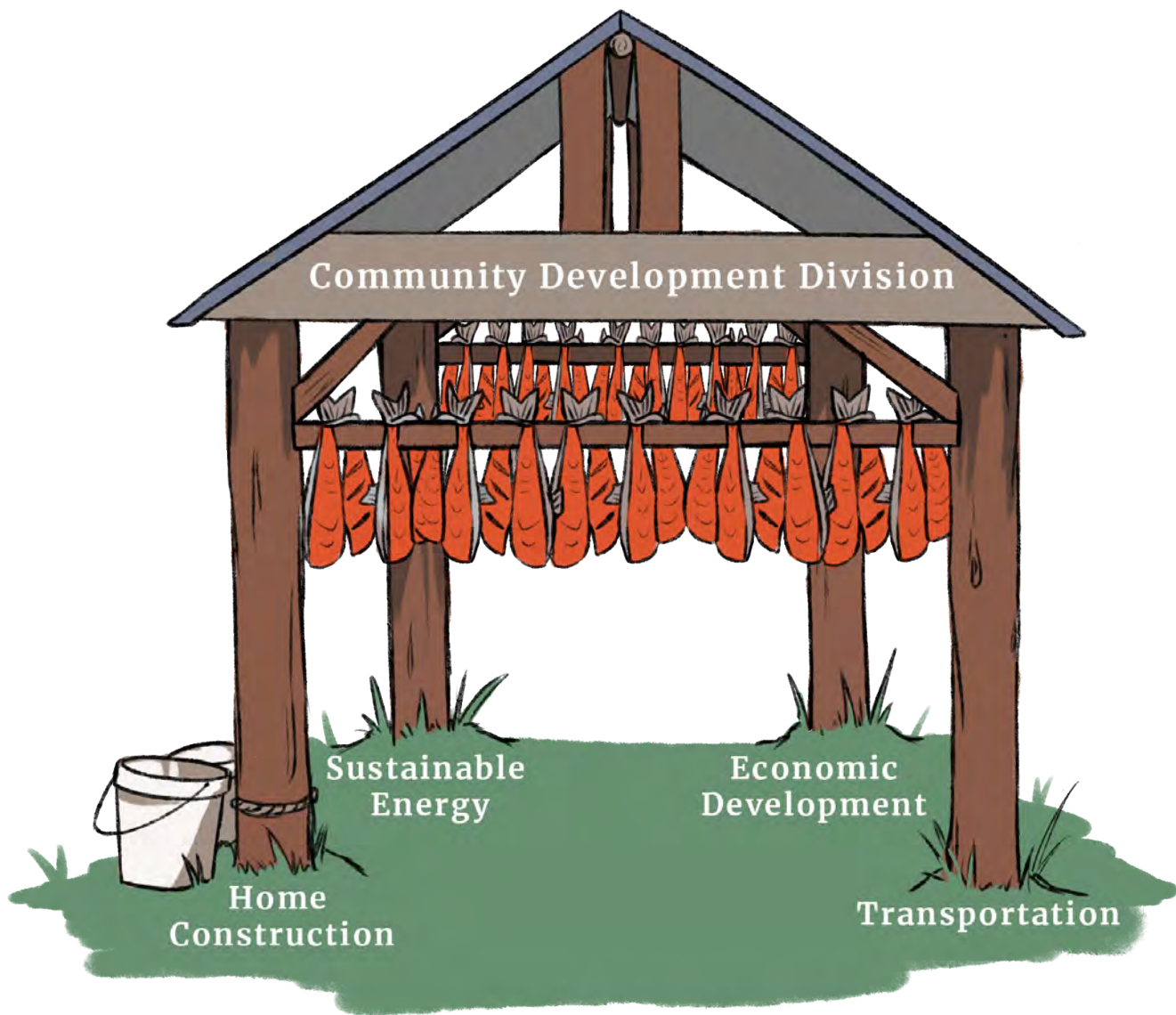
- Road/Board road infrastructure projects and maintenance;
- Safety program projects;
- Home construction, weatherization, and renovation projects;
- Planning and implementing the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) for and with our regional partner organizations; and
- Carrying out economic development project and activities developed through the CEDS.

## **This division works closely with other divisions to braid our services and provide construction projects and support including:**

- The Benefits Division in the weatherization and LIHEAP window replacement pilot project summer 2021.
- The Community Services Division with the Napaskiak public safety building replacement, summer 2021.
- The Family Services Division to develop a minor renovation program for childcare and foster care providers to launch summer 2022.







## The new Community Development Division structure will:

- Improve Client Service through easier access to and expanded weatherization services.
- Improve Efficiency through greater economies of scale opportunities when procuring materials across all construction programs
- Expanded Services, braiding of services across other divisions to help AVCP programs deliver construction projects through existing funding sources and proven methods.



# Client Services in the Community Development Division

## Housing Improvement Program (HIP)

HIP is a home repair, renovation, replacement, and new housing grant program for eligible American Indian and Alaska Native individuals and families who have no immediate resources for standard housing.

## Tribal Transportation Program (TTP)

The purpose of the TTP is to provide safe and adequate transportation and public road access to and within Indian Reservations, Indian Lands, and Alaska Native Village Communities. The primary objective of the TTP is to contribute to the economic development, self-determination, and employment of Alaska Natives from our region through force account construction, work force development, and serving our Tribes.

## Client/Home Construction and Renovation Program

Client/Home Construction and Renovation program will provide home improvement and weatherization opportunities for eligible clients across a variety of programs.

## Economic Development Program

The vision for the Economic Development program is to assist our Tribes in identifying opportunities to build business and commercial capacity for individual Tribal Members, as well as opportunities to enhance economies. The Economic Development Program also facilitates the development and implementation of the Y-K Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In partnership with our regional sister organizations, tribes, cities, and village corporations, we will develop an economic vision for the region as well as set goals, objectives, and create an action plan.



# Community Development Division During COVID-19

The pandemic had a significant impact on our division as we were not able to carry out the normal construction activities. In response, we created the Community Development Division Contingency Plan and Infectious Disease Safety Control Plan. These served as a guide for the safe operation of CDD programs and projects in the region during COVID-19 and will continue to provide guidance in the future should other natural events threaten our ability to safely perform our jobs.

## Other work highlights during the pandemic year included:

### HIP

- Meeting the HIP program goal of 1200 applications on the 2021 TAPR, which resulted in 4 new housing awards totaling \$1.3 million for FY21.
- Continuing to provide home counseling services.
- Creating alphabetized, chronological, and secure files for HIP applications, and compiling the critical information from the TAPR applications into an electronic tracking spreadsheet for quick reference.
- Developing informational materials for Tribes and Tribal Members on the HIP program.
- Hiring a HIP data specialist to support the eligibility assessment work
- Developed plans for construction of one home in Goodnews Bay in 2022.

### TTP

- Developed and completed the Napakiak Road Extension project, which was a catalyst for their Managed Retreat plan. The project developed a parking lot at the future school site and access to housing lots.
- Delivered gravel to Eek, for the Tribe to perform maintenance on existing routes.
- Provided ongoing updates to the Tribes in the Transportation Consortium on programs and projects.
- The ATV Safety Courses and guidance on the GPS devices trainings were developed originally to be person-to-person, during the pandemic those classes were revamped to be taught via TEAMS or Zoom.
- Developed local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for maintenance support payments
- Hired two new Staff: Planner and Data Specialist.

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Force Account Salaries: | \$ 202,295.87 |
| Local Fuel Purchases:   | \$ 30,293.53  |
| Local Supply Purchases: | \$ 28,354.74  |
| Local Rentals:          | \$ 4,750      |





## ED

- Submitted the 2020 annual CEDS update
- Held the 3rd annual CEDS work session virtually
- Held 4 of 6 focused CEDS working group and follow up meetings

## Home/Client Construction Renovation Program

- The Home/Client Construction Renovation program is itself a pandemic success as we developed this program during the pandemic!

### The program:

- Developed program outline for the childcare/ICWA renovation program, and procured tools and equipment;
- Completed planning and preparation for the new LIHEAP window replacement project, including weatherization assessments on 18 homes in Alakanuk and Emmonak. This work will be completed summer/fall 2021 and will employ 4 local laborers.
- Completed project planning and preparation for VPSO public safety building replacement in Napaskiak. This work will begin fall 2021 and will employ 6 local construction workers.
- Planned home build project in Goodnews Bay, work to begin in 2022.

HIP Contact info:  
Email: [HIP@avcp.org](mailto:HIP@avcp.org)  
Phone: (907) 543-7460

ED Contact info:  
Email: [Economic\\_Development@avcp.org](mailto:Economic_Development@avcp.org)  
Phone: (907) 543-7460

TTP Contact info:  
Email: [Transportation@avcp.org](mailto:Transportation@avcp.org)  
Phone: (907) 543-7460

Client/Home Construction Contact info:  
Phone: (907) 543-7460



# Community Services Division

The vision of the Community Services Division is to support AVCP's 56 member Tribes in exercising tribal sovereignty and to function at their highest capacity. The division consists of the Tribal Services, Tribal Justice, and Village Public Safety Officer Programs.

## The division core services provided are:

- Training & technical assistance to Aid to Tribal Government (ATG) compacted tribes in tribal administration and operations.
- Training & technical assistance in developing and maintaining tribal courts.
- Provide law enforcement and public safety services.

There are five phases identified in our five-year division development plan: planning, implementation planning, implementation phase I, implementation phase II, and implementation phase III.

By the end of 2021, we will have identified the following:

1. Vision Statement for CSD. This statement will have guided division development and service delivery design.
2. Goals to meet the vision.
3. Objectives to meet the goals.
4. Areas to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
5. The Division Structure: right sizing the division to be able to meet the vision, goals, objectives, and address the areas of efficiency and effectiveness.
6. Recruit and hire Implementation Phase I positions.

## When completed new division structure will:

### Expanded Services:

Through increased expertise to include new positions that will help provide the skill for effective training and technical assistance in tribal operations, compliance, and courts.

### Improve Efficiency:

Through focus on four key areas in our service delivery model:

- Training & Technical Assistance
- Tribal policy development
- Administrative functions
- Outreach

The plan includes positions to be modified or added to meet our vision. Each position will have annual targets to meet the areas for efficiency improvement.

### Improve Client Service:

By streamlining training and technical assistance services to Aid to Tribal Government (ATG) compacted tribes, tribal courts, and public safety services to help them operate at their highest capacity and exercise their tribal sovereignty.



# Client Services in the Community Services Division

## Tribal Services

The AVCP Tribal Services Program is dedicated to assisting tribes in developing their operational capacity and ability to function as thriving sovereign governments. This support increases self-determination and our Tribes are able to design, establish, and administer programs, services, and activities that are in the best interest of their own tribal members.

During a normal year, the Tribal Services staff travels regularly upon request to our ATG Tribes, presents on the annual funding agreement, provides face-to-face technical support, conduct best practice/annual assessments and on-site tribal ID services, as well as providing many trainings in Bethel.

## Tribal Justice

AVCP's Tribal Justice Program promotes the sovereignty of our Tribal communities by assisting Tribes to enhance their capacity to exercise their full sovereignty through their Tribal Court. The program works closely with member Tribes to enhance, develop, implement, and re-establish Tribal court systems while maintaining their cultural values. The program also acts as a liaison between member Tribes and the U.S. Department of Justice-Bureau of Justice Assistance and with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Tribal Justice Department hosted 3-4 in-person training seminars annually. Tribal Justice provided travel scholarships to participants to attend the 4-day training seminars in Bethel. Tribal Justice Department staff would also travel to communities by the request of the Tribe to provide one-on-one training with court staff, and strategic action planning surrounding the recommendations given during the tribes Tribal Court Assessment.

## Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program

The VPSO Program began in the AVCP Region in 1979. It is a statewide program, overseen by the Alaska Department of Public Safety, and administered through grants to tribal consortia and one municipal government in rural Alaska. Through this program, AVCP recruits, trains, and employs Village Public Safety Officers. VPSOs are the first responders of Rural Alaska. As dedicated public safety professionals, they provide services such as law enforcement, search and rescue, emergency medical services, and fire protection. When the COVID19 Pandemic occurred, VPSOs had to adjust their protocols including wearing masks, face shields, and protective gear when reporting to work for the protection of themselves and others, but the VPSOs continued to provide their valuable service at their own risk as front-line essential workers.



# Community Services Division During COVID-19

The Community Services Division faced some unique challenges in providing public safety, training, and technical assistance to the tribes and communities we served. The majority of the division's services had to be pivoted from in-person to virtual services.

The Tribal Services program staff, both Bethel and Village-based, took on additional work assisting Tribes with the CARES Act funding, and helping the ATG Tribes maintain separate budgets and accounts for those funds. While there were many changes to the way we provided services, we were able to continue providing our services virtually, via phone calls and other means.

Tribal Services provided many innovative ideas and technical assistance to Tribes on how they can handle their day-to-day business. For example, templates for remote work plans for their staff, office closure posters for their offices, appointments to handle paperwork with clients, options for Tribes to hold their monthly meetings through teleconferences, and supporting our Tribes' use of their sovereign powers to create their own travel or local covid public notices, which the Tribal Services department updated regularly on the AVCP website.

Additionally, when the Cares Act was passed, the Tribal Services program worked with 55 out of the 56 Tribes to make sure they applied for these funds to respond, prepare, and prevent Covid 19 for their community. Tribal Services hosted several informational sessions with all Tribes to make sure our Tribes understood how they could spend the Cares Act funding. Finally, Tribal Services hosted a 4-part training series on the Cares Act Single Audit process, and offered single audit preparation services through a contract with a Certified Public Accountant firm to all Tribes who requested that service. Tribal Services has become knowledgeable and provides technical assistance daily on numerous questions regarding US Treasury Cares Act, and now the new American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, including ongoing education on the changing spending guidance.

**\*Tribal Services continued to provide normal business with ATG tribes.**

- Closed out 18/20 FY2019 ATG Tribe MOAs
- Started 19/20 FY2020 MOAs, and 19/20 FY2020 ATG Covid MOA's, with monthly/quarterly financial reimbursements, and annual assessment/best practices were conducted via teleconference.
- Tribal Services was the first department to schedule teleconference interviews with Human Resources, to ensure ATG tribes have adequate AVCP paid Tribal Staff to run their tribal operations.
- 407 tribal IDs were made-despite the challenges brought on by Covid 19
- New tribal ID printer was received by end of the year.
- New tribal ID printer purchased features tactile impression to meet Real ID requirements.



Tribal Justice pivoted from in-person to virtual/telephonic services as well. All technical assistance and strategic action planning sessions were conducted over the Microsoft Teams platform.

In 2020 the Tribal Justice Department successfully hosted 3 virtual training sessions on the Microsoft Teams platform with an average of 30 participants in each session. Technical assistance to tribal courts also continued throughout the pandemic, though everything was over the phone or through MS Teams. The main technical assistance that was provided was code writing, emergency declarations and resolutions, and enforcement of those items without law enforcement. Funding disbursement continued for many tribes for Tribal Court Assessments and PL280 funding. This is on-going.

During the pandemic, Tribal Justice supported and provided technical assistance to tribes in code, ordinance, and resolution drafting. The program also provided technical assistance to tribal courts and tribes in enforcement where no law enforcement was present in the communities.

The recruitment process for VPSOs was one of the most unique challenges for the VPSO program. The ability to travel to conduct PT tests, fingerprinting, etc. was hampered by the pandemic. However, providing law enforcement where VPSOs were present resulted in change on how services were provided. For non-emergency assistance requests, VPSOs were directed to follow up telephonically. For emergency assistance requests, VPSOs used facemasks and gloves to respond to calls.

## CONTACT INFO

### AVCP Tribal Services

907-543-7380  
tsd@avcp.org

### Tribal Justice

907-543-8550  
Tribal-Justice@avcp.org,

### VPSO

907-543-7391  
AJimmie@avcp.org

In Memory of  
**PETER MOORE**  
LATE TRADITIONAL CHIEF





# Land & Cultural Resources Division

The Mission of the Land & Cultural Resources Division is using cultural and traditional values to provide and manage trust services of our lands and cultural resources to enhance services to individuals, communities, and Tribes. The Division consists of the Cultural Program, Environmental Program, Natural Resources Program, and the Realty Services Program. The Division core services are:

- To preserve our cultural and traditional history of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Region.
- To protect our environment through working and caring for our lands, by using our ancestors' traditional lifeways as our mission.
- To protect our unique subsistence way of life through the promotion of self-determination of our tribes and our people.
- To provide trust and probate responsibilities to landowner in the AVCP Region.

## The Cultural Program

Oversees the ANCSA 14(h)1 Historic and Cemetery Sites program, the Yupiit Piciryarait Museum, and evaluates historic properties on federally restricted Native allotments and Townsite lots as a requirement of AVCP Realty transactions.

The AVCP Archaeologist works collaboratively with the BIA Alaska Region Archeology unit, Calista Corporation, and Calista Education and Culture Inc. (CECI), to preserve the material culture and oral history of the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta region on behalf of 56 Tribal governments and ancestral communities.

## The Natural Resources Program

The Natural Resources Programs works to protect and maintain the integrity of our region's natural resources and the unique subsistence way of life, through the promotion of self-determination of our tribes and our people. The vision is the protection of these resources and our way of life for both present and future generations in the face of a changing climate and an evolving and expanding technological society. We strive to provide beneficial services and rights protection to our region's members and landowners. The Natural Resources Program also manages the Forestry and Fire Preparedness trust program.

## The Environmental Program

Oversees the Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP) that collects e-waste throughout the region and is implementing a new program called the Brownfield program that will assist Tribes in identifying contaminated sites within their vicinity and will assist tribes to access funding to remediate those sites, so Tribes will be able to utilize those sites for their use.

## The Realty Services Program

Responsible for providing Trust and probate services within the AVCP Region. The Realty program consists of seven distinct functions: Realty Transactions, Estate Planning and Probate, Rights Protection, Native Allotments, Archeology, and ANCSA 14(h) (1) compliance.

The mission of Department of Realty is to discharge, without limitation, the fiduciary trust responsibility with a high degree of skill, care, and loyalty. To ensure that trust assets and resources are managed in accordance with the legal principles and standards governing the performance of trust functions.



The Land and Cultural Resources Division was implemented in June of 2020, after we started working remotely. Despite the pandemic, the division implementation has continued and should be complete in mid 2022.

## **When completed the new division structure will:**

### **Expanded Services:**

By dividing the Cultural Services program into two separate programs, Cultural and Environmental, we are able to expand our environmental program. The Environmental Program will be launching a new Brownsfield program in 2022, and working together with our Natural Resources program to further develop and expand our climate change advocacy.

### **Improve Efficiency:**

By disengaging the environmental work from the cultural preservation program, the cultural program will be able to more efficiently provide trust compliance work for the reality services program.

### **Improve Client Service:**

By streamlining services between the Realty and Cultural programs, and improving our connection to the database at the BIA office in Anchorage, we are working to increase the speed at which a realty transaction or probate case is completed.



# Land & Cultural Resources Division During COVID-19

During the pandemic, the AVCP Environmental Program was the only environmental program in the state that continued its e-waste operation. The Environmental Program managed to collect e-waste through creativity and determination, despite many villages being on lockdown, and was successful in removing 6 Conex boxes worth of e-waste from the AVCP region, which was shipped to Seattle for recycling.

The AVCP Realty Services Program operated on a hybrid bases, continuing to provide client services and technical assistance by mail and telephonically, and work on transaction and probate cases between home and the office with alternating work schedules.

## The Culture Program

The Cultural Program primarily worked remotely from Bethel and Anchorage. While the fieldwork was on hold, the staff increased participation in “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)” working on national repatriation issues virtually, and working with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Museum of the North to define sites in the Patolik area and to prepare for consultations with Kotik.

## The Natural Resources Program

Despite the pandemic, the Natural Resources program was able to hire and provide a fisheries technician to the Pilot Station Sonar project as planned. Additionally, our program continued supporting the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission until they obtained their independent compact status in March 2021. We maintained continuous contact with our networks, coalition partners, and project steering committee members using web-based meeting platforms, or by phone, and continued with our CQN Working Group Temperature Sensing project as planned. The Natural Resources program spearheaded the AVCP task force on Food Sovereignty and generated a report with recommendations to the Alaska Inuit Circumpolar Conference. Finally, this program has worked tirelessly to assist with any and all emergency, and short term efforts, to provide relief for this summer’s fishing subsistence crisis.

---

The pandemic presented a lot of challenges, but we have learned how we can operate under extreme conditions. We have learned how to function in the new virtual world. The Land & Cultural Resources was able to provide essential services, even though many of our villages were on lockdown, and travel restrictions were in place. We added services during the pandemic, to enhance our service delivery model. We look forward with our return to normalcy, to provide the increased level of services we have implemented during the pandemic.



**New Programs that were implemented during the pandemic are:**

## **Brownfields Program**

Brownfield, which is a program that will assist Tribes in the remediation of contaminated sites, that can be cleaned up into useful spaces. Throughout the region, we have facilities that have been transferred to tribes, facilities such as old BIA facilities or school district sites, old national guard armories that can be remediated for tribes to utilize. These facilities have contaminants that could be cleaned up, so tribes can utilize the facilities for their own uses. The Brownfields program is an EPA grant funded program that can assist tribes in identifying contaminated sites, and once identified, the Brownfields program will assist tribes in applying for EPA grants to clean these sights.

## **SS/SR Program**

Social Science / Subsistence Resources Program is a program that will assist tribes in the advocacy and access to our subsistence resources in our Region. Social Science is a process of utilizing our Elders Traditional and Customary knowledge to advocate for our subsistence needs. The Subsistence Resources Program will assist and advocate for our tribes, at the National, State and Regional levels for our subsistence resources.

## **Vietnam Veterans Allotment Act Program**

Vietnam Veterans Allotment Act Program is a new program within the Realty Services Program. This program assists veterans who were serving in the armed forces during the Vietnam war, and were therefore unable to select lands during the passage of ANCSA. BLM has opened tracks of land throughout the state for veterans to select. If the veteran is deceased, heirs of the deceased veteran can select lands on behalf of the deceased veteran. For assistance, veterans or heirs of veterans can contact Melanie Charles, Realty Services Supervisory Probate Specialist at 543-7366.

**Land & Cultural Resources Division: 907-543-7438**