

1. I think a reasonable solution to this problem requires a two-pronged approach. Yes, ensuring the application process isn't unduly burdensome is important, but also, your initial statement outlines a problem (understaffing) which contributes to the State's ability to respond to these requests.

I've worked as an active paramedic in Alaska since 2010 and referred numerous vulnerable adults to social services for follow-up and it's been frustrating to see them unable to receive the assistance they need and continue to use emergency resources in place of ongoing care, even for assistance using the restroom at times. Several of our patients died before they were considered "eligible" for assistance. So, while I'm not expert on the subject, I'm very aware that we may not be funneling people into assistance programs and responding at the necessary speeds.

The second issue I plan to address is the under-staffing you mentioned. I have a relatively strong belief that much of the employee turnover is related to competitive wages and specifically the retirement program PERS members are enrolled in currently. I'm PERS Tier III myself but have watched the impact that Tier IV has had on employee turnover and retention, and I want to change that if elected.

2. Growing up in Delta Junction, becoming the first female firefighter ever hired at Fairbanks Fire Department, and creating a life I love in the Fairbanks community, I value personal freedoms and privacy highly. As Alaskans, most of us are independence-minded and don't like to be told what to do or unduly regulated.

Because of this, I'd tend to support initiatives that maintain people's rights and freedoms and avoid unnecessary restrictions or limits on individuals. Like I tell my patients when they don't want to go to the hospital, "I'm not in the business of kidnapping anyone. I can give you my best advice, but you're the boss" (if they're oriented and safe).

3. I don't know enough about this topic to have a plan for solving this issue, and I try to avoid suggesting solutions until I've heard from not only subject matter experts but also those most affected by any changes. I think the needs of those receiving benefits should be the driving force behind any program modifications. What services do they need most often? What are the most critical? Do we have adequate handicap-accessible housing for those unable to live on their own? Do they all need the same level of care from a guardian or would a LifeAlert create enough safety net for some of them? As far as targeting potential guardians, perhaps those exiting a nursing career would be interested. I recognize that some of the care is likely specialized, but probably not all of it. Would some of the guardianship recipients be ok to be paired with someone receiving unemployment benefits? If the relationship worked out, this could be a win-win and help both develop community connection.

4. This is a tough one, and I've seen the impact of this issue firsthand. During COVID, I worked as a paramedic in Fairbanks Memorial Hospital ER, mostly as a tech, starting IV's and facilitating care. Occasionally, I spelled a tech assigned to monitor a pediatric psych patient and saw the very real impacts that holding them long-term in the ER had on them. Sometimes they were housed there up to a week with interrupted sleep, noise that would

make anyone anxious, and nurses that are oriented to care for emergencies, not long-term psych care. Until the ER was able to find placement for long-term admittance, these high-risk patients were under that additional stress, and when they were moved to a facility, it created stress for families with associated travel, work, and school logistics.

Fairbanks Memorial specifically is working towards a pediatric psych unit, and I'd love to ensure that kids going through crisis or working through conditions can stay in their own community during treatment. Working as I do in emergency services, I can see a huge lack of outpatient mental health services in the community as well. I engage personally in a healthy lifestyle with practices designed to ward off darkness-related conditions, and encourage my subordinates to get outside, supplement as necessary, eat healthy meals, and avoid alcohol. I'm using two hashtags for this campaign, #getoutandplayalaska and #strongbodyhealthymind. I hope to create and support legislation that encourages healthy minds and bodies.

5. Although I attended a private Christian school for all but one of my K-12 years, I've participated in schooling in the following ways:
  - a. I became a guardian for my two teen brothers to enroll them in public school, taking on all parental responsibilities during that time. I was a full-time college student with two jobs and we were still eligible for benefits and truly needed them to survive.
  - b. When the school district advertised it was short substitute teachers, I worked briefly to help ensure coverage in local classrooms.
  - c. When my boyfriend's kids were failing in public school, I homeschooled them with their mother's support, helped them create better habits, and got them caught up so they could go back to school.

I bring this up because I'm a firm believer in parental choice when it comes to schooling. Parents know their children best, and there are times when homeschool may be right for the child and other times where programs or assistance is the best choice. But forcing people into a one-size-fits-all solution isn't the answer. Public schools are currently the best way to enroll a kid into specialized learning programs or assistance, and my goal is to fund public schools to a level that those types of programs aren't at risk of being cut.

One issue I'm hoping to tackle is the teacher retirement system, and hopefully this will help with retention. Experienced teachers are so important when faced with challenging students, and we just don't have enough incentive for them to stay.

As far as raising awareness of the rights of students, I'm more familiar with the college students I supervise at the Fire Department, but if they feel wronged, aren't being prioritized, or have complaints, I both advocate for them myself and refer them to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, Title IX office, police department, or whatever resource is appropriate. I'm a 20-year union member and want people to feel confident speaking up when they're being treated unfairly.