

May 27, 2020

Commissioners,

Alaska's Public Employee Unions invite you to work with us more intentionally to open Alaska safely and transparently for the benefit of our workers and the public they serve.

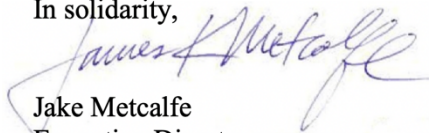
These unprecedented times have highlighted the resilience of the Alaska workforce, and we are grateful for the newfound public recognition for their service. Emergency situations require adaptability from us all to respond appropriately, and we recognize that the pandemic we encountered together was a new experience for all of us.

Thank you to the administration for setting up a weekly teleconference early in the response efforts between the Department of Labor and the Public Employee Unions. A special thanks to Kate Sheehan for her initial hosting of these meetings to provide basic information, finding answers to questions as the response was organizing. Thank you also to Jared Goecker for providing a timely summary via email for these meetings. These summaries may now be used by the administration as a record of the questions asked on these calls. Many of our most pressing questions remain unanswered, and we invite the administration to move forward to a next phase of cooperation. We have provided a summary of questions we are still waiting on answers as well as answered questions that could use additional explanation or fulfillment.

We recently sent a letter to the Unified Command requesting and recommending that Public Employee representatives serve as cooperators in appropriate meetings. Together, we seek not only answers to our questions directly affecting members rights, employment, policies, and implementation; but, also development of workplace mitigation plans and transparent communication with state employed workers. To help move this step forward, we are working on a draft workplace mitigation plan for consideration. It is time to elevate our conversations to an appropriate level with decision makers. Our members deserve answers. They deserve timely information and assurances of safety. It is apparent through these teleconferences that cooperation and open dialogue must occur at a level within the state at which decisions must be made, and answers provided.

We invite an organized approach to such efforts to include parties at the Cabinet and policy levels if Union Leadership is to be engaged meaningfully for the benefit of workers and the Alaskan public. There can be no delay. The people of Alaska and the workers who serve them are counting on us to work together for our families, our future, our economy, and our safety. These matters are in your hands as you respond to our invitation. We have the highest expectations that you will join us in working together for Alaska.

In solidarity,



Jake Metcalfe

Executive Director

Alaska State Employees Association (ASEA)/AFSCME Local 52



Brian Penner

Business Manager

Alaska Public Employees' Association-AFT