



The exterior of Bethel Youth Facility.

How Do I Visit?

APPROVED VISITORS

With approval, children under 18 may visit with an adult, and visits from spiritual advisors or clergy can be arranged. Immediate family may visit without prior approval; all others must be pre-approved by staff. Individuals on probation or SIS must have authorization from a Probation Officer or Unit Supervisor to visit.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

You may not bring these items inside our facility. Please ask Staff if you have any questions.

- Weapons or potential weapons
 - Cell phones and mp3 players
 - Recording devices (including smart watches)
 - Cameras
 - Laptops, flash drives, or anything that connects to the Internet
 - Gum, tobacco, marijuana, and vaping products
 - Prescription drugs, unless they are life-sustaining
 - Illegal drugs or paraphernalia
 - Alcohol
 - Money*
 - Food or drinks*
- *unless preapproved

VISITATION DAYS & HOURS

- Tuesdays 7:00 – 8:00 pm
- Saturdays: 2:00 – 3:00 pm

If these times do not work, call ahead to request an alternative visit.

What to Expect During Visiting

All visitors entering the Detention Unit are subject to search by metal detector. This is to ensure the safety and security of all our residents.

Please bring your state issued photo I.D. with you when visiting.

We ask that you do not bring any other personal items with you. Please leave your purse, cell phone, or any other personal items in your car or in the lockers provided.



Bethel Youth Facility

Detention Unit

950 State Hwy
PO Box 1989
Bethel, AK 99559

907-543-5200

Volunteers

The volunteer program invites adults and Elders to share their skills with youth through activities like guitar lessons, cooking, arts and crafts, games, or group discussions. Volunteers offer positive role models and often build lasting connections with residents.

To get involved, call the facility to connect with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Directions to BYF

If you're arriving from out of town via the airport or small boat harbor, several taxi companies are available, with phones on-site to call a cab. Fares range from \$5 to \$7. The Bethel Youth Facility is located at 950 State Highway, between YKDR Hospital and the YK Correctional Center. The front entrance is open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. For access on weekends, holidays, or after hours, use the left side entrance and ring the buzzer for assistance.

Our mission

To hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities, and assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime.

History

At Bethel Youth Facility (BYF), we recognize that every child is unique and deserves individualized support. Our staff use evidence-based, strength-based, and trauma-informed practices to work with at-risk youth and their families. Upon arrival, each resident is paired with a Treatment Team that helps them adjust, provides daily support, and offers weekly updates to parents or guardians.

Family is a vital part of a child's welfare and development, and we understand that having a child placed away from home can be very difficult. We encourage ongoing family contact through calls and visits. Our goal is to partner with families, communities, and victims to ensure a safe, secure environment until their legal issues are resolved so they can return home. We look forward to working with you and your child.

Performance Based Standards (Pbs)

Performance-based Standards (PbS) is a national program that helps juvenile facilities identify, monitor, and improve conditions and rehabilitation services. Bethel Youth Facility joined PbS in 2004 and has since used its standards to strengthen services and support successful youth re-entry into the community.



A youth tends to the garden at Bethel Youth Facility.

Detention

Detention Units are the initial contact point for youth entering a secure facility and serve those awaiting court decisions, bail, or placement. Youth are typically admitted due to new charges, violations of probation, or court conditions. BYF staff will ensure your child attends all scheduled court appearances until release. While in detention, residents participate in school, recreational activities, religious services, substance abuse education, anger management, and life skills programming. If you'd like more information about what residents are doing, please contact the Facility.

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

The Division of Juvenile Justice follows the Federal PREA policy, which has a zero tolerance policy on any sexual contact or sexually inappropriate comments toward anyone being held in custody. BYF works with other state facilities to prevent sexual harassment and assault in juvenile centers. Reporting abuse takes courage, especially when it feels risky. To report abuse or if you experience any kind of retaliation because you reported a crime call 877-765-2212.

Grievance Policy

Residents or family members who feel they have a complaint that they want addressed can file a grievance several ways:

- Verbally express concerns to a Unit Supervisor
- Request and submit a Grievance Form to staff
- Contact the Office of the Ombudsman

The Office of the Ombudsman (800-478-2564) investigates complaints against State Government agencies and employees.

Community Involvement

As a state facility, BYF benefits from community involvement. Since all residents return to the community, public understanding and support are vital to their success. BYF maintains an open-door policy, welcoming individuals and groups to tour the facility or join its volunteer program.

To Contact Your Child

Your child may write to you and vice versa as frequently as you wish. Any correspondence needs to go through the US Postal Service. All incoming mail is opened in the presence of staff to check for contraband but will not be read unless authorized by the Superintendent. Mail from other correctional facilities is only allowed with the Superintendent's approval.

Unless restricted, residents may communicate with immediate family and legal guardians by mail and phone. Personal calls are limited to ten minutes and may not occur during school hours (9:00 am - 3:00 pm, Monday - Friday) or after 8:50 pm. Residents are allowed one initial call to parents, then up to seven incoming and seven outgoing personal calls per week, as long as they don't disrupt the daily routine. Calls to or from attorneys or probation officers are not subject to these limitations. BYF does not accept collect calls.

With approval from the probation officer and JJUS, residents may add others to their list of approved phone contacts.