

Alaska Native people in Minnesota

This brief is about Alaska Native peoples who live, work, study, and use services in Minnesota. Alaska Native is not one of the eleven Minnesota nations, and not a culture sticker on an Ojibwe file.

Standing deference

This program defers to the Office of Indian Affairs and to the Department of Human Services offices that handle Tribal relations and consultation for anything concerning Native American individuals, communities, or Tribal Nations. That deference is standing, not a brief under construction — this program does not complete or expand this content on its own. For anything substantive, contact the Office of Indian Affairs or the Department of Human Services offices that handle Tribal relations and consultation directly.

History and place

Origins and the Founding of a People

Alaska Native peoples are older than the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and older than this department. Distinct languages, territories, and legal histories.

Named peoples

Iñupiaq of the north; Yup'ik and Cup'ik of the west; Unangax̂ of the Aleutian Islands; Alutiiq / Sugpiaq of Kodiak and the Gulf of Alaska; Athabascan interior peoples; Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian of the southeast. They are not one people.

Legal history

Russian colonial period, U.S. purchase (1867), territorial status, statehood (1959), and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (1971) are legal history. ANCSA created regional and village corporations. Corporations are not nations by another name. Nations remain.

What people brought

Nationhood, language, kinship, land and water relationship, subsistence as structure in home communities. What they meet in Minnesota: an English form and a checkbox that already had eleven nations on it.

History is literacy for the meeting. It is not a speech you give the family.

Geography

Homelands remain in Alaska. Minnesota is where some citizens live now — Twin Cities, Rochester, military and health corridors, university towns, ordinary counties. There is not a reservation of theirs in this

state.

Name the nation

Distance to home is how the work actually runs — airfare, time zones, who can sit with an elder in Bethel or Nome while a form is in St. Paul. Nationhood is not a Minnesota ZIP code.

Regions are not interchangeable

Southeast (Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian) is not North Slope Iñupiaq. Yup'ik villages are not Anchorage by default. Ask.

Migration and Foundational Events

People move for school, work, military service, and health care — including Minnesota specialty care — and remain of their nations. Nationhood was not left behind in Alaska.

Boarding schools

Boarding schools in Alaska and in the Lower 48 are part of this history. If you only know a Minnesota powwow, you will misfile this household.

ANCSA, 1971

If the Great Migration is Black America's foundational demographic event and 1862 is Dakota Minnesota's, ANCSA and boarding school are literacy here. Corporations and cash settlements did not end nationhood.

Why Minnesota

Mayo, universities, military, and ordinary jobs. Ask how they got here. Do not assume they are “from the eleven.”

Civil Rights Memory

Boarding schools. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Federal Indian law. Not “in the past.”

A badge is not automatically help

A DHS badge is not automatically help. Follow the law that applies. Still see this family.

Culture and everyday life

People, place, and perspective

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Who this is

Iñupiaq, Yup'ik, Cup'ik, Unangax0" „ÆWWB'Â ÇWF— ò 7Vw – Â F† & 66 â V÷ ÆW2 †–æ6ÇVF–æer ww–6%&–â a others), Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian are distinct. Some people from those nations live in Minnesota. Sovereignty still belongs to their nations. ANCSA corporations are not the same object as Bois Forte or Lower Sioux.

Community portrait: attorneys, physicians, scientists, teachers, military families, Mayo and university students, people who work for tribally run and corporate programs, artists, and elders. Not one socioeconomic slice. Not a subsistence cartoon copied onto a St. Paul lobby.

There is no Compass cultural-community count for Alaska Native Minnesota on this page. That absence is a finding. Date a Minnesota-specific number when a controlling source exists. Do not invent a population from the eleven.

Who this is not

This is not the eleven Minnesota nations. Filing this household under “Native” next to Leech Lake closes the meeting with a polite label. Other U.S. tribal citizens living here are not this page by default.

How to read this

Read it as an orientation. Ask which nation. Always defer to this family. Population in this state may be small. Culture is not. A small Minnesota count is not permission to write a brochure.

The facts that follow are meant to help you meet people well. History is here so the meeting is clearer, not so you deliver a lecture.

Family

Kinship systems vary by nation. Who cares for the child may not match a nuclear English form. Ask who should be in the room.

ICWA

ICWA still applies to Indian children as defined in federal law — including Alaska Native children. That is statute. Follow it. Still see a family. Do not copy a Leech Lake script onto the wrong nation without asking which law applies.

Who decides

You do not decide who is Alaska Native. The nation does.

Minnesota

People live, work, and use services here. The Office of Indian Policy and the eleven are not automatic doors for Alaska Native households.

Partners they name

Partners they name. Pay. Report back. Urban Indian organizations some people use — including the Indian Health Board of Minneapolis. Ask. Copying Leech Lake and stopping is not notice.

Staff in the building

Staff who are Alaska Native are colleagues, not unpaid liaisons. Identity is not a staffing plan.

Count

Date a Minnesota-specific count when you have it. Pattern now. A missing cell is a finding.

Heart of the People

Nationhood first. Language, land, kinship, subsistence as structure in home communities.

Not a copy of another page

This is not the Eleven Nations page with a different map. It is not a Somali or African American sentence because the checkbox was “other.”

The group is not the person

Iñupiaq is not Tlingit. A scientist in Rochester and a hunter at home can be the same family.

Core Concepts

These concepts recur. They express differently by nation and family. They are hypotheses — not a script for the person in front of you.

Named nations

Ask which nation. The names on this page are not flavor.

Subsistence

Structure in home communities — and it may still sit in a Minnesota household as food, money, kinship, and seasonal travel.

ANCSA

A legal fact, not a personality. Corporations are not nations by another name.

Language and ceremony

Language. Ceremony as nationhood, not a module. Blood quantum and enrollment are nation business. Two-spirit people exist. Urban life in Minnesota is not assimilation by default.

Religion and Healing

Traditional practice and Christianity both live here — Russian Orthodox in some regions, other churches, and traditional practice.

This family, this nation

Ceremony is not department programming. Hmong txiv neeb is not this page. Dakota lodge is not this page.

Follow this family and this nation. Clergy are the case plan when they asked.

Greetings

Follow this room. A protocol invented from a Minnesota training slide is not a greeting. Do not force a hand.

Elders

Elders. Listen longer than the form wants.

Not borrowed from another brief

The Black nod is African American intelligence. A Somali greeting is Somali intelligence. They are not this page.

Naming

Ask how to say it. English names and nation names may both sit on one person.

Enrollment is not a quiz

You do not decide who is Alaska Native. The nation does. A name is not a quiz.

Dates and Calendar

Nation calendars and subsistence seasons in home communities. Ordinary Minnesota school calendars here.

ANCSA anniversary

Literacy, not a flyer.

A date is not consultation

A calendar date is literacy. It is not consultation.

Etiquette

You are a guest. Do not photograph ceremony. Hospitality is not consent to extract.

Time

Keep medical and legal time. Distance to an elder in Alaska is still time.

Communication

Many languages. English is common in Minnesota. Book what they ask. A word you learned is not expertise.

Silence and directness

Directness is not rudeness. Silence can be thought.

Interpreters

If they name a language, book it. Do not assume an Ojibwe or Dakota interpreter covers this household.

LGBTQ

LGBTQ and two-spirit Alaska Native people exist. Use the name.

Privacy

Outing someone to family is not culture.

Hair and Dress

Hair can be spiritual, personal, or neither. Do not touch. Hair is not a professionalism test.

Same person, different days

A lab coat and regalia can be the same person on different days.

Music

Drum, song, contemporary work — named by nation, not a mash.

Not engagement

A playlist is not engagement.

Sports

Ordinary school sport here. Home-community sport is not a personality. The kid may not play.

Not the only excellence

Sport is not the only excellence.

Literature

Oral literature and written work. This is not a people without letters.

In the lobby

You do not need to quote in the lobby. Population in Minnesota is not culture size.

Art

Named by nation. You are a guest. Pay.

Not a logo

A design is not a logo for the department. A festival is not consultation.

Diaspora and Adjacent

Not the eleven. Not a culture sticker on Ojibwe. Other U.S. tribal citizens are not this page by default.

Never one Native module

Never one Native module. Open the Eleven Nations brief for Minnesota nations. Open this for Alaska Native households.

Services, opportunity, and participation

Education

Boarding-school history is structure. English-only forms are a gate even when speech is strong. A parent who needs a language is not illiterate.

Community portrait

University students, researchers, teachers, and physicians from these nations live in Minnesota. Community portrait is not a dropout cartoon. Population here is not culture size.

Other Considerations

Enrollment versus community is nation business. Data sovereignty. Two-spirit people exist. Follow law. Do not out anyone. Still see a family.

Filing

Do not file under the eleven. A small Minnesota count is not permission to thin the people.

Health

Do not invent a Minnesota rate. Indian Health Service and tribal health in Alaska are not a county clinic here. Ask where they get care. Believe reported pain. Date a rate when you have it.

Community portrait

A physician who is Iñupiaq and a patient using Mayo are both this page.

Urban Indian health

Some people use urban Indian organizations in the Twin Cities, including the Indian Health Board of Minneapolis. Ask. That door is not automatic, and it is not the eleven.

Business and Work

ANCSA corporations are not the eleven. Professionals, trades, students, military, health workers in Minnesota.

Colleagues

Staff are colleagues, not unpaid liaisons. Scientists and attorneys exist. So do waiver households. Community portrait means both.

Healthcare Encounters

Ask where they get care. Alaska systems and Minnesota systems are not one door. Believe pain. Book the language they ask for.

Law that still applies

Mandated reporting still exists. ICWA may still apply. Ask.

Statistics

No Compass Alaska Native Minnesota count on this page. Pattern now. Date a number when a controlling source exists.

A missing cell is a finding

Do not invent a population. A small count is not a thin culture.

Resources

The nation they name. Urban Indian organizations some people use — including the Indian Health Board of Minneapolis. Ask.

Government-to-government

The Office of Indian Policy is not automatic government-to-government for the eleven in this household's case. ANCSA is public record.

Learn on your own time. Pay partners. Report back.

Connections to human services

Workplace culture and service delivery are both candidates.

Do not file this household under the eleven. Book the language they ask for. Ask where they get care. OIP is not automatic.

If you skip the nation because you “already did Native training,” this failed.

Continue the connection

- **Equity Analysis Toolkit** — program page </learn/equity-toolkit>
- **Community engagement and connections** — program page </learn/community-connections>
- **Learning and resources** — program page </learn>