

Candidate Survey

Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA)

Return survey by **October 9, 2026** to: andvsa@andvsa.org

Complete each answer box and check one response where choices are provided.

Name

Robyn Niayuq Burke Frier

Office/District Representation You Are Seeking

House District 40

Please indicate whether you view domestic violence and sexual assault as an area of primary concern for you.

☐ **Primary concern** ☐ Secondary concern ☐ Not on my radar

Are you familiar with local programs that provide domestic violence and sexual assault services to victims across Alaska?

☐ **Yes** ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

If yes, how often do you interact with the domestic violence/sexual assault shelter or victim services program in your area?

☐ Quarterly ☐ **Annually** ☐ Other

If other, please specify

1. The Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS) found 57.7% of Alaskan women have experienced intimate partner violence (domestic violence), sexual violence, or both. What is your vision for Alaska when it comes to reducing sexual assault and domestic violence? What steps are you prepared to take to get there?

Sexual and domestic violence is a tragic and unacceptable reality for too many women in my district. Women, in any community, should be able to call for help and have access to safe places away from their abuser. Those who perpetrate this abuse need to be held accountable and prosecuted. We must not be afraid to bring these crimes to light.

Addressing this issue should be a summation of resources and policies towards victim resources, public safety, prosecution capacity, and proactive education. I'm prepared to continue to fully fund and expand the VPSO program; support shelter expansion in rural communities; clear the backlog of untested sexual assault kits; improve data sharing between Tribal, state, and federal law enforcement; and support prevention education

in our schools.

2. What responsibilities do you believe the Legislature and other elected officials hold in advancing efforts to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault?

Our legislature holds significant responsibility in reducing, preventing, and responding to domestic violence and sexual assault. The most clear way we can act is in ensuring there's sufficient and accessible public safety. In much of my district, the nearest public safety officer can be a plane ride away. Without a public safety presence, women and children can be exposed to violence and dangerous situations without a clear way out.

Elected officials also hold responsibility to bring this crisis to light. Behind every case, there is a story, and a human being. It's our job as leaders to make sure those stories can be heard, and this problem is not considered obliquely. I've worked to bring attention to this issue in my first term in the legislature, and I will continue to do so if reelected.

What efforts have you made at the local, state, and federal level to address domestic violence and sexual assault?

It starts with public safety. I worked to fully fund and expand the VPSO program, and supported the comprehensive corrections legislation that passed through the legislature. When the VPSO program was under threat in the Northwest Arctic Borough, I worked with the borough government to protect their funding.

I also worked to bring awareness to this issue in the state legislature. On the national day of awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous People's days, I delivered a floor speech regarding this issue and encouraged legislators to join me in solidarity. I also worked alongside the bush caucus to host a formal meeting with legislators on the importance of VPSOs in keeping communities safe.

3. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for victims' services?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

4. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for domestic violence/sexual assault prevention work?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

5. Would you be willing to increase the current level of funding for legal services for victims?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

6. Currently, the domestic violence response is largely a criminal justice response. Do you have ideas for other types of responses? What are they?

The prosecution of abusers is just the start. We also need to be expanding survivor support resources. There should be shelters and safe housing in every community possible, not just hub communities. It's too often the case where survivors don't call for help, because there's nowhere to go.

Further, there's also the education and community intervention aspect. We should be directing resources and energy to dismantling the risk factors that lead to domestic abuse. That includes behavioral health support, early education to break generational cycles, efforts to reduce alcohol and substance abuse.

7. Do you think the penalties for sexual violence crimes in Alaska are:

☐ Too harsh ☐ **Too soft** ☐ Just right

What are your reasons?

This is difficult to quantify, but in regards to how serious and destructive the impacts of sexual violence are, I'm ready to consider any form of deterrence. However, the more serious problem is the administrative backlog that has prevented survivors from seeing justice. We need to address the backlog of sexual assault kits, and ensure that cases are prosecuted in a timely manner.

8. Do you think the penalties for domestic violence crimes in Alaska are:

☐ Too harsh ☐ **Too soft** ☐ Just right

What are your reasons?

The State should increase penalties for these crimes. Many repeat offenders are still cycling through misdemeanor charges and avoiding serious consequences. However, my main priority is in making sure there is someone there to answer the call. We need to make sure there is a public safety presence ready to address instances of domestic violence.

9. Would you support funding through the Department of Corrections to engage individuals who choose to harm their partners/families through batterers intervention programming (BIPs)? Do you think this is the responsibility of the government? Why or why not?

Yes. In small villages, survivors and offenders can share the same store, church, or school. The state is responsible for changing an offender's behavior while it has the chance, or else we're accepting the likelihood of another instance of abuse.

BIPs should be a condition for probation and parole. Further there should be options to implement them remotely, since many rural communities can't host a full program.

What would be your ideas for providing services to people who choose to cause harm to their partners?

BIPs should be fully funded and resourced, and should be a condition for probation and parole. These programs should be implemented in partnership with Tribes to deliver culturally grounded programs.

10. Do you believe abortion access should be legally protected for survivors of rape or incest?

☐ Yes ☐ No

11. The state of Alaska is experiencing a housing shortage statewide. This is impacting domestic and sexual violence survivors' ability to move forward with their lives. What would be your ideas to address this?

In my district, survivors often cannot leave because there isn't any other housing to move into. We should fund shelters and transitional housing in rural communities, and cut red tape so they can operate as easily as possible.

New housing development is a real challenge in my district, as we face some of the highest logistical overhead for materials. I will support state resources for regional housing authorities to build new units; infrastructure investments in the water, sewer, and power infrastructure needed to develop plots; and expanded vocational training so local residents can build and maintain housing.

12. Children are a particularly vulnerable population and may be traumatized by living with an abusive person and witnessing violence perpetrated against a parent or caretaker. What remedies might you suggest to provide protection for these children?

Consideration for children should be at the forefront of our approach to this problem - in direct response, survivor resources, and in community intervention. Law enforcement should be trained to respond to homes with children; there should be funding for counselors and staff in schools; and I support Tribal child welfare compacting, so children can stay safe in their own families and communities when they need to be removed from an abusive home.

13. A sunset review is a mandatory, periodic evaluation of an executive board or commission to determine if its public benefit justifies its continued existence, funding, and legal authority. The Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) in the Department of Public Safety is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2028, and will be reviewed during the next Legislature. Would you support a bill to extend the Council?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

What are your reasons?

CDVSA funds the shelters and victim service programs that survivors across Alaska depend on, including programs like Arctic Women in Crisis. Letting it lapse would put those services at risk. A sunset review is a good chance to look at how CDVSA funds reach rural communities, and I would support adding rural and Tribal representation on the Council.

14. Please explain any solutions you would propose to support victims and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

It starts with public safety. Every community needs a VPSO or other officer who can respond quickly, and the Legislature must fund recruitment, training, and retention so there are no gaps in service. Beyond that:

- Test every sexual assault kit and prosecute cases without years of delay.
- Keep funding MMIP investigators and improve Tribal, state, and federal data sharing.
- Fund shelters and advocates in every region.
- Require batterers intervention for offenders under supervision.
- Invest in prevention education in schools.

Thank you for the work ANDVSA does for survivors across Alaska.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey.