



State of Alaska Open Data Portal

Title: State of Alaska Open Data Portal

Category: Digital Services: Government to Citizen

State: Alaska

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Project Link: <https://data.alaska.gov/>



State of Alaska Open Data Portal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In support of the Governor's commitments to increase transparency in government and provide more information and better service to Alaska's citizens, the State's Enterprise Analytics team partnered with TylerTech to launch Alaska's Open Data Portal using the Socrata platform.

While there is state data available through multiple internet pages across department websites, users must know the data is available and what pages to find it on for the data to be accessible.

The centralized open data portal intends to bring these desired data sets into one location for "one-stop shopping" for users of the data. This will not only make it easier for current users to find the data they have come accustomed to accessing, but also open the door for a new segment of the population looking for the easiest and most efficient means for locating and exploring state information.



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THE ROADMAP

In mid-June of 2020, the Chief Data Officer went to the Commissioner of the Department of Administration with an idea. To help with government transparency and to help facilitate data sharing across agencies and with the public, the state should follow the path of many other states and launch an open data portal. The Commissioner agreed this was a good idea, stated there were funds available and told the Chief Data Officer to “make it happen”.

Two weeks later, funding was approved, dotted lines were signed, and the process to partner with TylerTech and stand up Alaska’s open data portal on the Socrata platform had begun. Over the next three months, Alaska’s Enterprise Analytics team partnered with TylerTech team members to design and create the open data portal and establish governance that would guide the operation of the portal.

In less than three months, the joint team of State of Alaska and TylerTech designed and created the State of Alaska’s open data portal and added the first fifteen data sets. The portal was officially launched and available to the public on October 12th, 2020.



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THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

Some state data has been available to the public for some time on various Alaska websites if one knows where to find it. However, the COVID-19 pandemic set the backdrop for a need to communicate data to the public more efficiently and effectively. The Department of Health and Social Services launched its COVID-19 Hub early on during the pandemic and this resource provided up to date visualizations to assist the public in understanding the pandemic in Alaska. In addition to the visualizations, downloadable data tables are available which is particularly important to users needing data for nationwide and locality reporting. The data formats available for download from the COVID-19 Hub are limited. By offering the available data on the State's open data portal, the number of available formats has been doubled and not only can data be more easily searched, but COVID-19 data is specifically highlighted on the open data portal's home page.

Welcome to Alaska's Open Data Portal

Explore Alaska's Data

Search



Request Data

What data would you like added?



COVID



Opioids & Other
Drugs



Business &
Economy



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IMPACT

The State of Alaska open data portal has only been available for seven months and the Enterprise Analytics team continues to work on getting links to the portal on prominent state web pages including the main State of Alaska web page. Still, in the short time the portal has been available and strictly through limited exposure thus far, the following activity has been observed:

- ✓ Four separate data requests have come through the “Request a Data Set” feature on the portal’s main page.
- ✓ The COVID-19 Geographical Distribution of Tests data set has been downloaded by users over 10,000 times.
- ✓ The 25 pages (including data sets and stories) currently available on the portal have been viewed a total of 16,600 times.
- ✓ The 10 COVID-19 data tables available on the portal have been viewed over 6,000 times.



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WHAT'S NEXT

The State of Alaska team has five main goals for the upcoming year of the portal's existence.

- ✓ GET THE WORD OUT and get more Alaskan citizens using the open data portal and requesting data sets they would like to see the state make available to the public.
- ✓ Encourage state agencies to use the portal to share unrestricted data between agencies.
- ✓ Introduce state agencies to the Secure Connected Government Cloud, offering state agencies the means to share restricted data between agencies.
- ✓ Convince state agencies to identify "Data Stewards" that would be responsible for increasing content for their respective departments to quickly increase available content.
- ✓ Increase content on the portal with information which is typically requested requiring a manual process and expended labor hours to provide the information. This will increase the ease of access to this type of information and redirect labor costs to more beneficial work of the state.