



Department of Public Safety Hires MMIP Investigator

Investigator Anne Sears returns to DPS to lead MMIP Efforts

April 18, 2022 (Anchorage, AK)— The Alaska Department of Public Safety has hired former Alaska State Trooper Anne Sears to lead the Department's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) Initiative. Investigator Sears will work on unsolved murders and missing persons cases that involve Indigenous persons across the Alaska State Trooper's area of responsibility.

"The State of Alaska is pleased to have Anne Sears lead the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Initiative to address the gap in unsolved cases surrounding Indigenous persons in Alaska," said **Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy**. "With her ample experience in rural areas and background as a State Trooper, we hope to reverse these troubling trends in our rural communities. Public safety is our number one priority – Alaskans deserve to feel safe in our communities, and this new initiative will lead us in the right direction."

Investigator Anne Sears was the first Alaska Native woman hired as an Alaska State Trooper, and she honorably served Alaskans for over 22 years as a law enforcement officer. She retired from the Troopers in October 2021 after working in a variety of roles in both urban and rural Alaska including patrol, major crimes investigations, and narcotics interdiction.

"Anne Sears was one of our top Troopers and I am glad that she has agreed to return from retirement to this new position and continue to serve Alaskans," said **Alaska Department of Public Safety Commissioner James Cockrell**. "This new MMIP Investigator combined with the six new major crimes investigators based in Western Alaska will ensure that all Alaskans receive the world class law enforcement service that the Alaska State Troopers provide regardless of their zip code, race, gender, or ethnicity."

The new MMIP Investigator position is the Department's latest investment in Governor Dunleavy's People First Initiative announced in December 2021. Investigator Sears will also serve on the Governor's Council on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons as the Commissioner of Public Safety's designee.

"Over my career as an Alaska State Trooper I enjoyed my time in rural Alaska and the impact that quality law enforcement can have on Alaska's small vibrant rural communities," said **MMIP Investigator Anne Sears**. "For too long Alaska Natives have faced disproportionately high rates of violence, and I look forward to contributing to reversing those trends."

Investigator Sear's first day was April 4, 2022; her position is based out of DPS Headquarters in Anchorage. This position was funded through the US Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods.

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