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Press Release

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Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Issues \$75,000 Fine to Eye to Eye ALH *Assisted living home had inadequate workplace violence protections*

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development has issued two citations against Eye to Eye ALH and fined the company \$75,000 for its willful failure to provide a workplace free of recognized hazards and for failing to notify the department of a workplace fatality.

On November 6, 2015, Ms. Glenna Wyllie (57) was working alone as a caregiver at Eye to Eye ALH when she was beaten and strangled to death by one of the five residents of the home.

The investigation revealed the employer's basic failure to provide a safe workplace for employees. Among other allegations, the willful citation asserts that, although Eye to Eye ALH specialized in providing assisted living care for adults with behavioral disturbances, developmental disabilities, and mental illnesses, the company failed to ensure employees were adequately trained to recognize and minimize workplace violence hazards. Documents collected through the course of the investigation demonstrated that the employer knew about the violent tendencies of residents and still required Ms. Wyllie to work alone in violation of the company's own standards of care. Upon becoming aware of the incident, the employer failed to notify the Alaska Occupational Safety and Health office within eight hours, which resulted in an additional alleged violation.

"I send my deepest condolences to the family, friends, and coworkers of Ms. Wyllie," said Labor Commissioner Heidi Drygas. "Employers whose business involves known risks of violence to employees need to ensure workers are properly trained and protected. Incidents like this can be avoided with adequate training and staffing."

The willful violation carries a penalty of \$70,000, which is the maximum allowed by law. Willful violations are characterized by an employer's recognition of a hazard coupled with a "plain indifference" toward protecting employees from the hazard. The failure to report violation carries a penalty of \$5,000. The employer has the right to formally contest each of the alleged violations outlined in the citations.

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