

Important Homestead Laws for Alaska

1898: Homestead Act of Alaska (30 Stat. 409, May 14, 1898) – first law allowing homesteading in Alaska: allowed homestead claims of up to 80 acres with requirements for residency on the claim and cultivation of a portion of the land similar to requirements for homesteading in the Lower 48 that began in 1862

1903: Amendment to 1898 Act (32 Stat. 1028, March 3, 1903) – allowed up to 320-acre homesteads; placed certain restrictions for homesteads along navigable waters

1912: Three-Year Homestead Act (applied nationwide) (37 Stat. 123, June 6, 1912) – homestead laws amended to require only three years of residence on the land to prove up and receive patent to it if all other requirements were met including cultivation

1916: Homestead Act Amendment for Alaska (39 Stat. 352, July 8, 1916) – decreased maximum homestead size down to 160 acres & allowed new entries for persons with prior entries

1918: Homestead Act Amendment for Alaska (40 Stat. 632, June 28, 1918) – allowed homestead entries on unsurveyed lands; homesteader to get free survey or can pay for survey to get homestead faster

1926: Homestead Survey Act for Alaska (44 Stat. 243, April 13, 1926) – allowed non-rectangular homesteads due to special Alaskan topography

1927: Homestead Act Amendment for Alaska (44 Stat. 1364, March 3, 1927) – created a form of homesteading unique to Alaska that allowed for both small “homesteads” (later called “homesites”) and “headquarter” sites for business purposes, of up to 5 acre in size. No cultivation was required, but similar residency requirements remained as for regular homesteading. Claimants paid minimum application fees but also \$2.50 per acre.

1934: Homestead Act Amendment for Alaska (48 Stat. 809, May 26, 1934) – further clarification of terms stated in the 1927 Amendment

1950: Act for Alaska Regarding Survey Rules on Public Lands (64 Stat. 62, April 29, 1950) – this act was for more than just surveying homestead claims, but was important for changing certain requirement for surveying homestead established in the 1926 Homestead Survey Act for Alaska

1950: Act for Alaska Regarding Recording Notices of Settlement Claims (64 Stat. 94, April 29, 1950) – modified filing and other requirement for homestead claims, as originally set out in the 1903 amendment to the 1898 Homestead Act for Alaska

1956: Homestead Act for Alaska Regarding Surveys (70 Stat. 528, July 11, 1956) – simplified certain requirements for when a homesteader needed to file certain documents required in getting patent to a homestead