

HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 169()
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATORS GIESSEL, French

REPRESENTATIVE Hughes

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing in the Department of Health and Social Services a statewide**
2 **immunization program and the State Vaccine Assessment Council; creating a vaccine**
3 **assessment account; requiring a vaccine assessment from assessable entities and other**
4 **program participants for statewide immunization purchases; repealing the temporary**
5 **child and adult immunization program; and providing for an effective date."**

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

7 *** Section 1.** AS 18.09 is amended by adding new sections to read:

8 **Article 1A. Statewide Immunization Program.**

9 **Sec. 18.09.200. Statewide immunization program established;**
10 **commissioner's duties.** (a) In addition to health promotion and vaccine registration
11 activities of the department, a statewide immunization program is established in the
12 department for the purpose of monitoring, purchasing, and distributing recommended
13 vaccines to providers approved by the department who agree to provide the

1 recommended vaccines to state residents under terms consistent with the program and
2 state and federal law.

3 (b) The commissioner shall

4 (1) establish a procedure to phase in the program over a three-year
5 period that provides for voluntary participation by an assessable entity;

6 (2) maintain a list of recommended vaccines for inclusion in the
7 program;

8 (3) for each recommended vaccine, establish the initial vaccine
9 assessment for the first year of the program and thereafter make annual assessments
10 based on the determinations made by the council established under AS 18.09.210;

11 (4) notify assessable entities and other program participants of the
12 annual vaccine assessment for each vaccine included in the program;

13 (5) devise a method for crediting to assessable entities and other
14 program participants overpayments of vaccine assessments made for reasons related to
15 administrative error, program termination, or lower than anticipated actual usage of
16 the program by covered individuals;

17 (6) coordinate collective purchases of recommended vaccines;

18 (7) establish a procedure for statewide distributions of vaccines
19 purchased under the program; and

20 (8) review vaccine assessment appeals for error.

21 **Sec. 18.09.210. State Vaccine Assessment Council; members; duties.** (a)

22 The State Vaccine Assessment Council is established in the department for the
23 purpose of determining the amount of vaccine assessments made by the commissioner
24 to be paid by assessable entities and other program participants in the state under
25 procedures established by the council.

26 (b) The council consists of eight members appointed by the commissioner as
27 follows:

28 (1) the department's chief medical officer for public health, who shall
29 serve as chair;

30 (2) two health care providers licensed in the state, one of whom must
31 be a pediatrician;

1 (3) three members representing health care insurers licensed in the
2 state under AS 21.54, one of whom must be a plan administrator; each insurer must
3 represent a different organization in the state;

4 (4) a representative of a tribal or public health insurance plan;

5 (5) the director of the division of insurance or the director's designee.

6 (c) A member appointed to the council under (b)(2) - (4) of this section serves
7 without compensation and reimbursement of expenses for a term of three years or until
8 a successor is appointed. A member may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

9 (d) The council shall meet at the call of the chair and conduct business by
10 majority vote.

11 (e) The department shall provide staff and other assistance to the council.

12 (f) The council shall

13 (1) establish and implement a plan of operation to

14 (A) determine the amount of the annual vaccine assessment,
15 subject to review by the commissioner, for each recommended vaccine for
16 each covered individual following the initial vaccine assessment amounts
17 determined by the commissioner;

18 (B) use a method for determining the vaccine assessment
19 amount that attributes to each assessable entity and other program participant
20 the proportionate costs of recommended vaccines for covered individuals;

21 (C) establish procedures for the collection and deposit of the
22 vaccine assessment;

23 (D) establish procedures for collecting and updating data from
24 assessable entities and other program participants as necessary for the
25 operation of the program and the determination of the annual vaccine
26 assessment; the data collected must include the number of covered individuals
27 by each assessable entity and other program participant and the annual vaccine
28 program usage by each covered individual;

29 (E) devise a system for reducing surplus payments made by an
30 assessable entity and other program participant by crediting past overpayments
31 to current year vaccine assessments;

1 (2) submit to the commissioner and to the legislature, not later than
 2 July 1 of each year, an annual financial report, including assessment determinations
 3 and overall costs of the program, in a form acceptable to the commissioner and the
 4 legislature;

5 (3) monitor compliance with the program requirements and vaccine
 6 assessments and submit a periodic noncompliance report to the commissioner and the
 7 director of insurance that lists assessable entities and other program participants that
 8 failed to

9 (A) remit vaccine assessments as determined by the council
 10 and approved by the commissioner; or

11 (B) comply with a reporting or auditing requirement under the
 12 program after notice from the council.

13 **Sec. 18.09.220. Vaccine assessment and reporting requirements.** (a) An
 14 assessable entity and other program participant shall, after being phased into the
 15 program under procedures approved by the commissioner,

16 (1) pay to the department the annual combined vaccine assessments as
 17 determined under the program for the recommended vaccines covered by the
 18 assessable entity or other program participant for each covered individual on a
 19 schedule adopted by the council;

20 (2) provide information requested by the council to determine the
 21 number of covered individuals, actual vaccine usage under the program, and other data
 22 necessary to calculate and monitor compliance with the vaccine assessment; and

23 (3) provide audited financial statements upon request of the council.

24 (b) A vaccine assessment must include a reasonable contribution toward
 25 support of the program and appropriate reserve funds, as determined by the council. A
 26 vaccine assessment may not include a provider fee for the administration of the
 27 vaccine.

28 (c) A vaccine assessment shall be construed as a medical expense of the
 29 assessable entity or other program participant.

30 (d) An assessable entity or other program participant may appeal a
 31 determination of a vaccine assessment made by the council to the commissioner

1 within 10 days after receiving notification of the assessment. The commissioner shall
2 review the appeal and all materials relevant to the assessment that is the subject of the
3 appeal and shall modify the assessment if the commissioner finds substantial evidence
4 of an error.

5 (e) An assessable entity may opt out of the program at any time during the
6 three-year phase-in period under procedures approved by the commissioner.

7 **Sec. 18.09.225. Other program participants.** (a) A health care provider or
8 group of providers may opt into the program if approved by the commissioner under
9 regulations adopted by the department.

10 (b) An assessable entity may not deny a claim for coverage of vaccines based
11 on a decision of a health care provider or group of providers to elect not to participate
12 in the program.

13 **Sec. 18.09.230. Vaccine assessment account; creation.** (a) The vaccine
14 assessment account is created as an account in the general fund. The legislature may
15 appropriate to the account program receipts attributable to vaccine assessments under
16 AS 18.09.220, money from other sources, and interest earned on money in the
17 account. Appropriations to the account do not lapse.

18 (b) The legislature may make appropriations from the vaccine assessment
19 account for the purchase of recommended vaccines for the benefit of state residents in
20 an amount requested by the department and for other purposes of the program.

21 **Sec. 18.09.240. Penalties.** An assessable entity or other program participant
22 that fails to pay a required annual vaccine assessment after notification of the
23 assessment or fails to comply with a request for information necessary for
24 determination of the assessment may be assessed an additional noncompliance fee as
25 determined by the commissioner under regulations adopted by the department.

26 * **Sec. 2.** AS 18.09.990 is amended by adding new paragraphs to read:

27 (3) "assessable entity" means

28 (A) a health care insurer as defined in AS 21.54.500;

29 (B) an entity that provides the state health care plan described
30 in AS 39.30.090 and 39.30.091;

31 (C) a public or private entity that offers a publicly funded plan

1 in the state, to the extent participation in the program is authorized by law; and

2 (D) a third-party administrator as defined in AS 21.97.900;

3 (4) "commissioner" means the commissioner of health and social
4 services;

5 (5) "council" means the State Vaccine Assessment Council;

6 (6) "covered individual" means an adult or child who resides in the
7 state and who is provided insurance coverage for a recommended vaccine by an
8 assessable entity or who is a patient of another program participant;

9 (7) "other program participant" and "another program participant"
10 mean a health care provider or group of providers who have opted into the program
11 under AS 18.09.225 to both purchase vaccines for and administer vaccinations to
12 residents of the state;

13 (8) "program" means the statewide immunization program;

14 (9) "provider" means a person licensed or certified by the state to
15 administer vaccines or provide health care services or a partnership, corporation, or
16 other entity made up of persons licensed or certified to administer vaccines or provide
17 health care services;

18 (10) "recommended vaccine" means a vaccine recommended by the
19 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control
20 and Prevention, United States Department of Health and Human Services, and
21 included on a list maintained by the commissioner for inclusion in the program;

22 (11) "vaccine" means a preparation of killed microorganisms, living
23 attenuated organisms, living fully virulent organisms, or other substances that are
24 administered to humans for the purpose of producing or artificially increasing specific
25 immunity to life-threatening and disabling diseases.

26 * **Sec. 3.** AS 21.09.242 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

27 (b) An assessable entity, as defined in AS 18.09.990, shall provide
28 information and assessments to the Department of Health and Social Services and the
29 State Vaccine Assessment Council established under AS 18.09.210 as necessary for
30 the statewide immunization program established under AS 18.09.200. Payment of an
31 assessment may not be used by an assessable entity as a reason to deny a claim by a

1 health care provider for coverage of vaccines.

2 * **Sec. 4.** AS 37.05.146(c) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

3 (87) the vaccine assessment account under AS 18.09.230.

4 * **Sec. 5.** AS 18.09.200, 18.09.210, 18.09.220, 18.09.225, 18.09.230, 18.09.240,
5 18.09.990(3), 18.09.990(4), 18.09.990(5), 18.09.990(6), 18.09.990(7), 18.09.990(8),
6 18.09.990(9), 18.09.990(10), 18.09.990(11); AS 21.09.242(b); and AS 37.05.146(c)(87) are
7 repealed January 1, 2019.

8 * **Sec. 6.** Chapter 24, SLA 2012, is repealed.

9 * **Sec. 7.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
10 read:

11 **TRANSITION; DEPOSIT OF FUNDS REMAINING FROM CHILD AND ADULT**
12 **IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM.** All unobligated funds remaining in the program established
13 under sec. 2, ch. 24, SLA 2012, shall be deposited into the account created in AS 18.09.230,
14 added by sec. 1 of this Act.

15 * **Sec. 8.** Sections 1 - 5 and 7 of this Act take effect January 1, 2015.