



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Health  
and Social Services

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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March 22, 2022

The Honorable Liz Snyder  
The Honorable Tiffany Zulkosky  
Co-Chairs, House Health and Social Services Committee  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representatives:

This letter presents responses to the House Health and Social Services Committee member questions received by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) at the Thursday, March 17, 2022, hearing on HB 172 Mental Health Facilities & Meds.

**Question Rep. Kurka:**

How many individuals are served on a Title 47 ex parte hold or commitment?

**DHSS Response:**

This question is more accurately answered by the Alaska Court System; however, Nancy Meade did provide the following: The count of the number of petitions filed for CYs 2018-2020 is roughly between 2100 and 2700 each of those three years; that number includes the 3-day, the 30-day, the 90-day, and the 180-day. The largest category by far is the three-day petition. The Alaska Court System will be available for questions during the March 22 hearing.

**Question Rep. McCarty:**

Will lab work be available to these facilities to determine if medications are effective and being taken?

**DHSS Response:**

Lab work would be available for centers to send labs out on a voluntary basis. Blood work cannot be forced for an involuntary patient. Medication services provided through a crisis stabilization center or crisis residential and stabilization services includes medication prescription, review of medication, medication administration, and medication management. There are no restrictions preventing either service type from utilizing lab work to determine the effectiveness of medication.

**Question Rep. Snyder:**

How frequently are crisis medications having to be utilized in crisis stabilization centers and crisis residential centers?

**DHSS Response:**

We reached out to RI International to share statistics from their crisis stabilization center and crisis residential center in Peoria, Arizona. They report that generally less than 40 events per month require the intervention of crisis medication for the 500-550 admissions per month in the facilities. On the high end that is about 8%.

Thank you for the opportunity for the department to provide this information.

Sincerely,



Heather Carpenter  
Health Care Policy Advisor

CC: The Honorable Ivy Spohnholz  
The Honorable Zack Fields  
The Honorable Ken McCarty  
The Honorable Mike Prax  
The Honorable Christopher Kurka  
Ms. Gennifer Moreau-Johnson, Division of Behavioral Health, DHSS  
Mr. Vasilios Gialopsos, Legislative Director, Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy