



February 9, 2026

The Honorable Forrest Dunbar
Chair, Senate Health & Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building, Room 125
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chair Dunbar:

During the Senate Health and Social Services Committee hearing on January 27, 2026, members requested additional information on several topics. In accordance with that request, please find below a summary of the specific follow-up items identified by each division within the Department of Family and Community Services:

Alaska Pioneer Homes – Provide data on occupancy rates and workforce shortages for each Pioneer Home.

Home	ALA/CNA Vacancy	Nurse Vacancy (LPN/RN1/RN2)	Overall Vacancy	Home Census	Home Capacity	Notes
Anchorage Pioneer Home	9%	0%	7%	91%	177	Admissions delayed due to Coordinator’s extended leave; now returned and actively working waitlist.
Alaska Veterans & Pioneers Home	5%	0%	3%	94%	79	Remaining beds are female-designated; no female veterans on waitlist. Exploring room reassignment for male residents.
Fairbanks Pioneer Home	55%	0%	35%	57%	91	Rooms vacant due to staffing shortages and flooring project. 11 recent passings; admissions slowed by applicant delays and move-in timelines.
Juneau Pioneer Home	17%	20%	13%	98%	49	Expected to reach 100% occupancy this month.
Ketchikan Pioneer Home	8%	0%	7%	91%	45	Expected to reach 100% occupancy this month.
Sitka Pioneer Home	6%	29%	7%	98%	65	Expected to reach 100% occupancy this month.

Alaska Psychiatric Institute – Provide the typical length of stay for patients in the civil unit.

Civil Commitment Discharge Data (FY2026 YTD through January)

Patient Group	Average Length of Stay
Adolescents	27 days
Adults	17 days

Juvenile Justice – Report whether recidivism rates have increased in the Nome area following the closure of the Nome Youth Facility (NYF).

The Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) ceased temporary detention services at the Nome Youth Facility (NYF) in July 2019 after funding was not included in the FY2020 budget. NYF was a unique detention program, and the division recognizes that the impact of its closure on the community or on individual youth and families is not easily quantified.

DJJ tracks recidivism for youth who receive formal probation supervision and/or secure treatment services in accordance with national standards; however, recidivism is not tracked for youth admitted solely for temporary detention. Youth in detention have often not been adjudicated delinquent, and DJJ’s services focus on protecting youths’ legal rights and prioritizing release to the least restrictive setting.

To address the committee’s question, DJJ conducted a specialized analysis of juvenile justice trends in the Nome region following the closure of NYF. We found that law enforcement referrals for youth from the Nome area declined by approximately 57 percent from FY2015 to FY2025, compared to a 42 percent decline statewide over the same period. Several factors have contributed to these reductions, including changes in juvenile behavior and law enforcement prioritization of more serious offenses.

When comparing FY2020–FY2025 to the five years prior, the division found that Nome-area youth were less likely to be detained or receive a formal delinquency adjudication under AS 47.12.120(b)(1) and (b)(3). The division works to minimize these formal interventions by collaborating with local service providers to address youths’ criminogenic needs. For example, since the closure of NYF, referrals of DJJ youth to the Nome Youth Court have nearly doubled.

Office of Children’s Services (OCS) – Confirm whether OCS engages with the *Anchorage Youth Advisory Board*.

There is no board that goes by the name “Anchorage Youth Advisory Board.” If you are referring to the Anchorage Youth Advisory Commission, OCS does not have regular interaction with that group.

Outline current efforts to digitize forms for youth.

OCS can offer fillable forms, however, forms are not currently available in an online digital format.

Provide the current number of licensed foster homes compared to last year.

- 2025: 1,079 foster home licenses; 445 of those homes are child specific
- 2024: 1,069 foster home licenses; 435 of those homes are child specific

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these responses. DFCS remains committed to supporting the Legislature's work and welcome any additional questions or clarification you may need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tracy A. Dompeling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tracy Dompeling
Acting Commissioner

cc: Chrissy Vogeley, Legislative Liaison, DFCS
Jordan Shilling, Legislative Director, Office of the Governor