



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Health

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February 19, 2026

The Honorable Forrest Dunbar
Chair, Senate Health and Social Services Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Capitol Building, Room 205
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Chair Dunbar and Honorable Committee Members,

Please see the following answers to questions posed by the committee during the Department of Health Overview presentation on February 3, 2026.

Was the Gun Safe Storage campaign able to find additional funds or resources to bring information to communities about safe gun storage?

The Department of Health (DOH) has not historically had or currently have an appropriation request for gun safe storage.

Where do we get our behavioral health data?

DOH tracks behavioral health outcome data; the way outcomes are measured varies depending on the data source and the program being evaluated.

At a national level, DOH's comparative behavioral health outcome data is supported by the State's annual federal Medicaid and grant services reporting; the Adult and Youth Core Set measures are the reporting framework for system level analysis of Alaska's Medicaid program activities. The Medicaid Core Set measures are publicly released and allow for state-to-state comparison across standardized access, quality, and follow-up indicators, with a focus on improving healthcare quality for beneficiaries. DOH's overview comments referencing behavioral health outcomes spoke generally to trends observed within this federal reporting framework over the last few fiscal years.

In FY2025, the Divisions of Behavioral Health and Health Care Services identified an opportunity to strengthen the accuracy and usefulness of our outcome data, through standardization of reporting assumptions across all aspects of Alaska's Medicaid program.

This work includes aligning the population and provider definitions used in reporting and reviewing federal measure specifications to justify requests for state-specific adjustments, such as procedure code substitutions, so that reporting outputs more accurately reflect Alaska's delivery system and service array. This work is still underway, but we anticipate these efforts will result in improvements to some behavioral health specific measures in upcoming reporting cycles and will help clarify areas for more concentrated policy focus to reach desired program outcomes.

What are the estimated costs for the SNAP administrative shift?

Effective October 2027, SNAP administrative costs shifted from 50-50 to 75-25. This will increase the annual state costs by an estimated \$10.7 million.

Please note that the FY2027 GovAmend request only reflects three quarters of the annual cost due to misalignments of the state and federal fiscal years.

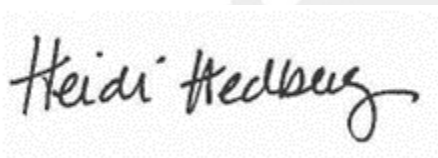
How many people does DOH estimate will lose SNAP benefits due to the changes in HR1?

There are 800 SNAP recipient households who have an able-bodied person impacted by HR 1. We do not currently have data reflecting the number of individuals impacted by elimination of the automatic exemption for veterans, homeless and former foster care youth.

How many people does DOH estimate will lose Medicaid benefits due to the changes in HR1?

Of the 61,169 Medicaid expansion enrollees ages 19 to 64, it is estimated that 18,905 individuals would need to report either compliance with community engagement requirements or qualification for an exemption. Those who do not do so would lose Medicaid coverage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heidi Hedberg". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a white rectangular background.

Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

Enclosures:

cc: Deb Etheridge, Director, Division of Public Assistance
Jordan Shilling, Director, Governor's Legislative Office