

# **State of Alaska FY2024 Governor's Operating Budget**

## **Department of Family and Community Services**

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**Mission**

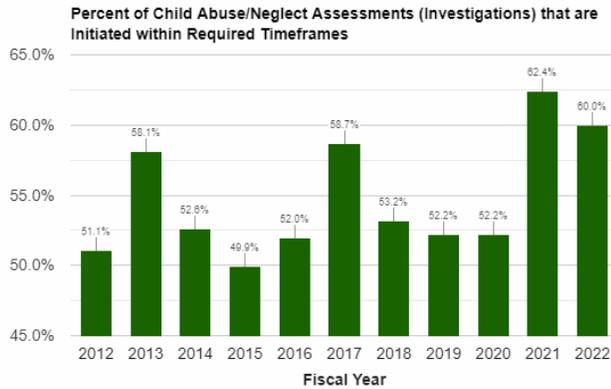
Provide support, safety, and personal well-being for vulnerable Alaskans

	<b>Core Services (in priority order)</b>	<b>UGF</b>	<b>DGF</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Fed</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>PFT</b>	<b>PPT</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>% GF</b>
1	Protect and promote the health of Alaskans	41,595.7	0.0	37,512.8	1,978.3	81,086.8	383.3	0.2	11.9	15.5%
2	Provide quality of life in a safe living environment for Alaskans	46,730.7	8,789.2	22,579.0	22,366.5	100,465.4	359.9	4.3	13.1	20.7%
3	Manage health care coverage for Alaskans in need	9,854.6	4,851.5	11,104.4	777.7	26,588.2	107.3	2.9	6.7	5.5%
4	Facilitate access to affordable health care for Alaskans	581.0	0.0	650.7	169.9	1,401.6	5.8	0.0	0.2	0.2%
5	Strengthen Alaska families	29,878.9	4,018.3	9,065.7	11,341.1	54,304.1	220.4	2.1	7.8	12.7%
6	Protect vulnerable Alaskans	84,623.5	7,595.5	17,007.0	38,400.0	147,626.0	578.7	3.3	16.5	34.4%
7	Promote personal responsibility and accountable decisions by Alaskans	28,765.6	560.0	1,324.0	8,040.0	38,689.6	194.7	0.3	5.7	10.9%
	<b>FY2023 Management Plan</b>	<b>242,030.0</b>	<b>25,814.5</b>	<b>99,243.6</b>	<b>83,073.6</b>	<b>450,161.7</b>	<b>1,850.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>62.0</b>	

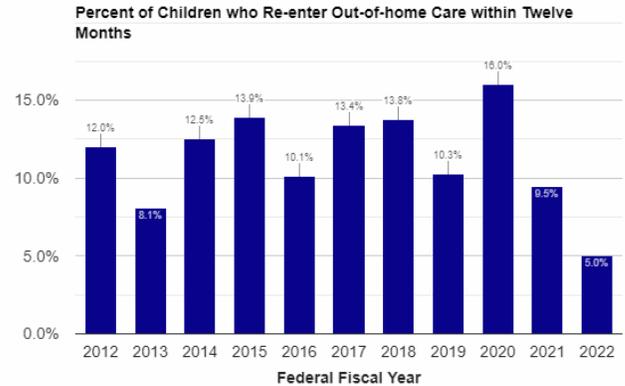
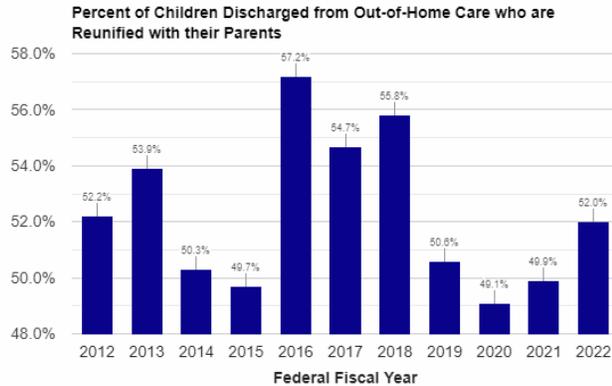
**Measures by Core Service**

(Additional performance information is available on the web at <https://omb.alaska.gov/results>.)

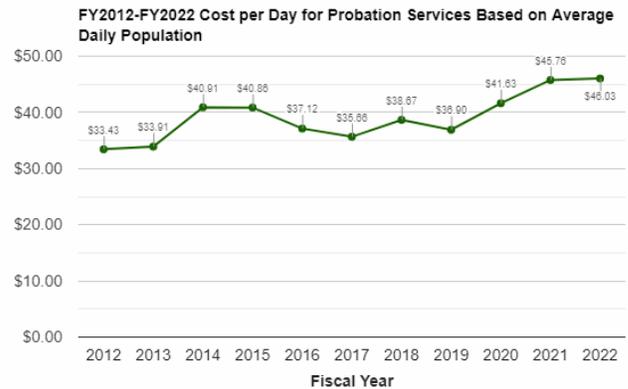
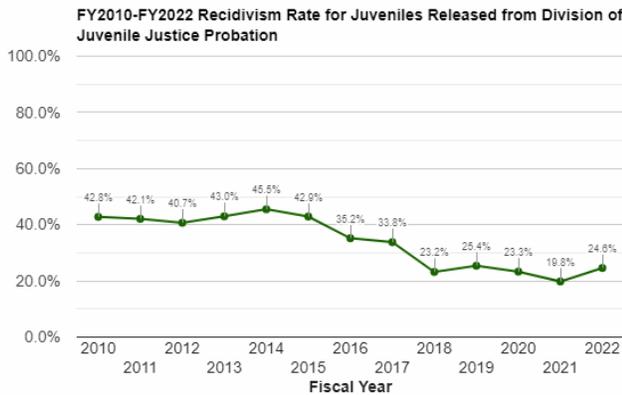
- 1. Protect and promote the health of Alaskans**
- 2. Provide quality of life in a safe living environment for Alaskans**



- 3. Manage health care coverage for Alaskans in need
- 4. Facilitate access to affordable health care for Alaskans
- 5. Strengthen Alaska families
- 6. Protect vulnerable Alaskans



**7. Promote personal responsibility and accountable decisions by Alaskans**



**Major Department Accomplishments in 2022**

- Calendar year 2022 was a busy and monumental year for the former Department of Health and Social Services; significant strategic planning evolved through listening to community and partner engagement to complete a concise approach to split the department into two new agencies. Considerable staff hours, both internally and by sister state agencies, dedicated time to the successful split and ultimate creation of the new Department of Family and Community Services and Department of Health.

Alaska Pioneer Homes

- Completed necessary construction allowing the new Complex Care Neighborhood to open in Anchorage, increasing care of high acuity elders in the home by nine (9).
- Installed resident Wi-Fi in all six (6) Pioneer Homes, giving elders access to meet virtually with family members, stream movies and television shows, and read digital-formatted news articles and documents.
- Increased capacity and usage of the Pioneer Homes pharmacy to support the six (6) homes and the six (6) Juvenile Justice facilities across the state.
- Maintained high census level in the homes throughout the year, end of year census level was at 95 percent in five out of six homes.

Alaska Psychiatric Institute

- The Denali unit was reopened and dedicated to support the increasing needs of Alaskan adults with neurocognitive disabilities including developmental delays, autism, and dementia. With individual behavioral

plans in place, programming focuses on individual and small group activities for complex and hard to place adults. By making this change and moving these special needs patients to a separate unit, workplace violence in the adult population has decreased by 41 percent since January 2021.

- Partnered with the University of Washington to create a clinical rotation for students participating in the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) multi-state medical education program.
- The Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API) established the SHARP student loan incentive program to better compensate and improve retention of API's psychiatric and medical providers.
- Through a partnership with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, API has been able to successfully transition youth turning 18 into productive adults contributing to the community.

#### Division of Juvenile Justice

- In FY2022 the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) was appropriated funding for the renovation of the Fairbanks Youth Facility. This renovation will contribute to one of the core missions of DJJ, the safe restoration of youth offenders.
- Youth with neurobehavioral disorders and the staff supporting their restoration are seeing positive results realized through neurofeedback treatment now being offered in each of the facilities in the state.
- The division partnered with University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center to develop a better tool to assess the areas of risk and needs of the youth served. The result is a tool that supports the unique cultural values of Alaskan youth and anticipated improved outcomes of reduced recidivism.
- The division participates in the semi-annual national continuous improvement program; Performance Based Standards (PbS); the secure facilities always score high and uses these as opportunities for improvement.

#### Office of Children's Services

- Through centralization of administrative and program support functions, front-line caseworkers are now able to focus solely on supporting Alaskan children and families. As a result, positive results in the families served has increased and occupational burnout has decreased.
- The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is prioritizing the safety of its staff, both in the office and in the field, through improved safety and security protocols, training, and updated safety tools and technology.
- Collaboration with the University of Alaska Anchorage has resulted in evidence-based trainings and programs to support incoming and experienced staff.
- The division continues to explore opportunities to grow its workforce internally by providing educational opportunities and pathways for entry-level staff to grow their careers within the division, with the goal of fostering long-term retention.

The Department of Family and Community Services continues to make progress towards the following overall objectives:

- Provide residents, patients, and youth in care the best services and support possible
- Integrate and coordinate services
- Strategically leverage technology
- Implement sound policy
- Practice fiscal responsibility
- Measure and improve performance

### **Key Department Challenges**

Some of the department's challenges include:

- Workforce recruitment and retention continue to be an ongoing challenge nationally; direct service organizations such as the divisions within the Department of Family and Community Services that have the most demanding roles supporting vulnerable, complex, high-acuity individuals, and the continuum of child welfare services to keep children safe, have been hit exceedingly hard.
- The 2021 Cyberattack continues to affect the agency due to ongoing mitigation efforts impacted by limited staffing.
- While the split of the Department of Health and Social Services went into effect on July 1, 2022; several projects remain outstanding. Both the Department of Family and Community Services and the Department of Health will continue to partner together to complete all items. As both departments work through this process,

evaluations will occur to ensure both organizations structures are built to accomplish the goals and missions of each agency.

#### Alaska Pioneer Homes

- Another impact of COVID-19 is the current competitive nature in the medical field, causing increased difficulty in hiring nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nurse aides, and assisted living aides; at the end of fiscal year 2022 these job classes had an average vacancy of 19.6 percent in the Pioneer Homes.
- The Alaska Pioneer Homes are aging and as a result, the deferred maintenance needs of the homes are increasing. With the current market and increasing cost of timber, steel, and other building materials, construction contracts are coming in higher than original engineer estimates or construction bids will go unanswered due to the shortage of contractors throughout the state.

#### Alaska Psychiatric Institute

- Burnout among health care professionals is a growing problem throughout the nation. Alaska is no different and the Alaska Psychiatric Institute is among other hospitals in the state competing for the same candidates. Nursing shortages are leading to persistent job vacancies and the need to use travel nurses.
- The existing provider network within Alaska is insufficient to meet the growing needs of complex individuals. As the only full-service psychiatric facility in state, the Alaska Psychiatric Institute often admits patients who do not meet psychiatric admission criteria because the communities do not have the necessary infrastructure to meet specific population needs.

#### Division of Juvenile Justice

- Recruitment and retention are at the forefront of the challenges facing the Division of Juvenile Justice. At the end of FY2022, two of the juvenile justice facilities consolidated the detention and treatment units due to staffing levels while youth were still receiving the treatment and restoration services. The vacancy rates of these two facilities was 40.6 percent and 23.5 percent, respectively. The other four (4) facilities did not consolidate, their average vacancy for detention and treatment was 14.9 percent.
- Probation Services has seen an increase in acutely mentally ill juveniles and those impacted by severe trauma resulting in longer stay in detention or secure treatment due to lack of adequate placements.

#### Office of Children's Services

- Many exiting Office of Children's Services staff indicate the top reasons for leaving as workload, personal safety, difficult nature of the work, and the lack of competitive salaries. The direct frontline Protective Services ended FY2022 with a vacancy rate of 21.7 percent while Social Services Associates who support the children in care and Protective Services staff had a vacancy of 29 percent.
- The number of Foster Families in Alaska has declined while the influx of new cases has increased.

### **Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2024**

- The State of Alaska is seeing high levels of individuals (youth and adults) requiring placement and services greater than those offered in the existing provider network. The Department of Family and Community Services is committed to meeting the needs of these High-Acuity Alaskans through the creation of a Complex Placement Coordination Unit. With the focus on the needs of the individual, this unit will look at long-term facility development, single point contact within the department for coordination with appropriate levels of placement and data driven results.
- Continued improvements in support of the department's clients, residents, patients, community partners, vendors, and stakeholders due to the new smaller department.
- The Department of Family and Community Services is invested in Alaskans; with this reorganization into a community focused department, we will continue to provide positive results to Alaskans through:
  - Increased two-way communication with stakeholders and community members
  - Focus on customers' needs
  - Better, quicker, and more efficient services
  - Singular emphasis on family and community critical needs and services

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<b>Contact Information</b>
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