



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Family and Community Services

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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May 14, 2025

The Honorable Senator Claman
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 429
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Claman,

The Department of Family and Community Services received the following questions during the May 14, 2025, hearing of CSHB 36 in the Senate Judiciary Committee:

What support would the department offer to parents, and what training is available to them?

The Alaska Center for Resource Families contracts with the Department to provide support for all foster parents, and if this legislation were to pass, that same support would be provided.

For treatment foster homes specifically, additional support comes from the agencies that are overseeing the treatment homes. Training for interested families would continue to be provided by those agencies. The legislation would not change how the agency supports the foster family; more it's the support the department gives the agency through a regulatory framework so the agency can recruit more homes and provide more services for children.

How would this interact with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and could parents put their children in care through intake for gender identity dysphoria?

This legislation would not interfere with ICWA, those standards still stay the same. The department would continue to uphold those standards for the purposes of permanency and placement.

Due to the high suicidality of children with gender identity dysphoria, parents do go to these agencies and ask for support when their child has gender identity dysphoria. Agencies who seek reimbursement through Medicaid must follow all Medicaid guidelines.

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How many foster homes do we have currently?

We have 651 non-child specific foster homes (120 of which meet ICWA standards), 466 child-specific foster homes, and 204 of these are certified as therapeutic treatment homes, with 29 ICWA certified therapeutic treatment homes.

Sincerely,

Kim Kovol
Commissioner

cc: Jordan Shilling, Director, Governor's Legislative Office