

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

15. Department of Health and Social Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39)

It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Health and Social Services submit a report of transfers between appropriations that occurred during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, to the Legislative Finance Division by September 30, 2020.

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) will provide the requested report by the prescribed date.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Comment: Compliance can be determined on September 30, 2020 when the report of FY20 transfers is due.

16. Senior Benefits Payment Program

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39)

It is the intent of the legislature that this appropriation be used for Senior Benefit payments suspended at the end of FY19 due to insufficient funding. It is further the intent of the legislature that funding in this appropriation may not be used for any purpose other than payment of benefits for the Senior Benefit Payment Program.

DHSS is utilizing the appropriation as intended.

17. Medicaid Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39) and Mental Health (CCS SSHB 40)

PARTIAL-COMPLIANCE

It is the intent of the legislature that long-term care facilities be exempt from Medicaid provider rate reductions.

DHSS did not apply the five percent cost containment rate reduction to long-term care facilities. However, a three percent rate reduction was applied to long-term care facilities to keep these facilities under the required federal Upper Payment Limit (UPL) for reimbursement of Medicaid providers.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Comment: Long-term care facilities are experiencing a 3% reduction to their rates. According to the department, it was required to cut rates by 3% for long term care facilities to be compliant with federal Upper Payment Limit (UPL) rules.
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18. Medicaid Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39)

NON-COMPLIANCE

It is the intent of the legislature that Critical Access Hospitals and hospitals with the dual federal designation of Sole Community Hospital and Rural Referral Center be exempt from the five percent Medicaid rate reduction proposed by the Department of Health and Social Services.

DHSS did not apply the five percent cost containment rate reduction to Critical Access Hospitals and primary care providers. However, due to the current financial situation of the State, DHSS did apply the five percent cost containment rate reduction to hospitals with the dual federal designation of sole community hospital and rural referral center.

19. Medicaid Services/ Medicaid Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39) and Mental Health (CCS SSHB 40)

PARTIAL-COMPLIANCE

It is the intent of the legislature that the department work with the statewide professional hospital association to develop strategies and methodologies for implementation of hospital diagnosis related groups, acuity-based skilled nursing facility rates, rate reductions, and timely filing provisions to mitigate unintended consequences.

DHSS continues to communicate and meet with Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association (ASHNHA) leadership, as well as leadership at individual ASHNHA member hospitals. There will be a contract awarded for technical assistance to help with implementation options for diagnosis related groups. That contractor will be required to meet with hospital stakeholders. Additionally, DHSS intends to use the Medical Care Advisory committee to engage with their associations for involvement and input on various Medicaid initiatives.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Comment: Some progress has been made, however, there is concern that meaningful engagement has not occurred between ASHNA and DHSS on most of the issues.

20. Medicaid Services/ Medicaid Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39) and Mental Health (CCS SSHB 40)

The department shall submit quarterly progress reports on cost containment efforts to the co-chairs of the House and Senate Finance Committees and the Legislative Finance Division.

DHSS submitted the second quarter report on January 15, 2020 and will provide remaining quarterly reports as requested.

21. Medicaid Services/ Adult Preventative Dental Medicaid Services

Operating Budget (CCS SSHB 39)

NON-COMPLIANCE

It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Health and Social Services continue to provide Adult Preventative Dental Medicaid Services.

DHSS is working with Federal partners to determine the most efficient manner to cover any federally required dental services.

Legislative Fiscal Analyst Comment: Adult Preventative Dental Services are an optional service which is not federally required. Legislative intent would be unnecessary if the program were federally mandated.
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22. SB 10 EXTEND SUICIDE PREVENTION COUNCIL

Department of Health and Social Services

Behavioral Health/ Suicide Prevention Council

Capital Budget (HCS CSSSSB 19(FIN) am H(brf sup maj fld H))

It is the intent of the legislature that grant funding be divided 50% to rural school districts and 50% to urban school districts. Further, it is the intent of the legislature that the Suicide Prevention Council and the Department of Education and Early Development work together to develop a long-term sustainability plan for suicide prevention training. The plan should include implementation of a "Train the Trainer" model so districts can provide ongoing training. The plan should be submitted to the Presiding Officers of the legislature and the Legislative Finance Division by December 1, 2019.

The Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Postvention (SAPP) grants for FY 2020 were allocated 50% to rural school districts (Bering Strait School District, Petersburg School District, Kenai Peninsula School District and the North Slope Borough School District) and 50% to urban school districts (Anchorage School District, Juneau School District, Fairbanks North Star School District and the Mat-Su School District).

The Statewide Suicide Prevention Council and the Department of Education and Early Development are working together on a report to present recommendations on a long-term sustainability plan for statewide suicide prevention trainings for school district staff. The draft report will be completed in November 2019 for review by DHSS staff prior to submission.