

House Bill 311 - Sectional Summary

for CS for HB 311 version M: Extending COVID-19 Disaster Emergency

Section 1 Legislative Findings (page 1-3)

Makes legislative findings related to COVID-19, establishing the need to extend the March 11, 2020, public health disaster declaration.

Section 2 Extension of Public Health Emergency / Disaster (page 3)

Extends the public health disaster emergency until the earlier of Sept. 1, 2020, or the date on which the governor declares the emergency over. If the Department of Health and Social Services commissioner certifies to the governor that there is no longer an outbreak of COVID-19 or a credible threat of an outbreak, the governor shall issue a proclamation declaring the disaster over. The certification must be based on specific information from a state or federal agency, or another source the commissioner decides is reliable.

Section 3 Disaster Financing Plan (page 3-4)

Presents the financing plan for the public health disaster emergency, referencing the appropriations made in several bills passed by the 31st Legislature. Allows the governor to spend up to \$10 million of the disaster relief fund in response to the emergency. Limits emergency spending to the financing plan.

Section 4 Chief Medical Officer Standing Orders (page 4-5)

Allows the Department of Health and Social Services' chief medical officer to issue standing orders related to COVID-19. If the chief medical officer is incapacitated, a designee may issue the orders. Standing orders are effective until retracted or through the duration of the emergency declaration. The chief medical officer and health care providers are not liable for civil damages for issuing or acting under a standing order, except misconduct.

Section 5 Reports to Legislature (page 5-6)

Requires the governor to report monthly the expenditures made in relation to the COVID-19 disaster and the actions taken related to prevention, control and status of COVID-19. Reports begin May 1, 2020, and culminate with a final report 60 days after the end of the emergency or Sept. 1, 2020, whichever comes first.

Section 6 Professional and Occupational Licensing (page 6-7)

During the public health emergency, allows the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing director or a relevant board to grant a license, permit or certificate on an expedited basis to an individual who holds a corresponding license in another jurisdiction. The boards, commissions and director may take additional action as necessary to protect public health, including

temporarily waiving or modifying continuing education requirements; regulating the scope and duration of licenses; and arranging for supervision of licensees. Professionals who come to Alaska to work under one of these licenses must comply with CDC travel guidelines.

Section 7 Telemedicine and Telehealth (page 7-8)

During the emergency declaration and limited to actions related to COVID-19, licensing is waived for health care providers who provide treatment, diagnosis, or prescribe prescriptions (other than controlled substances), and who do not first conduct an in-person exam, for telemedicine and telehealth. Providers must be in good standing in their jurisdiction and practicing within their scope of license. The amount charged for telehealth must be reasonable and customary, and may not exceed 5 percent of the regular fee for the service provided. The Department of Health and Social Services commissioner may waive regulations or laws that would substantially prevent provision of telehealth services.

Section 8 Fingerprinting (page 8)

For professional occupations related to public health that require fingerprinting for licensure, directs the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development to coordinate with the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Public Safety to expedite the fingerprinting process.

Section 9 Division of Elections (page 8-9)

Enables the Lieutenant Governor, after consulting with the Department of Health and Social Services commissioner, to direct the Division of Elections to hold a primary or statewide special election in 2020 by mail.

Section 10 Permanent Fund Dividend Application Deadline (page 9)

Extends the application period for the 2020 Permanent Fund Dividend from March 31, 2020, to April 30, 2020. Applications received after March 31 are exempt from automatic voter registration.

Section 11 Department of Revenue Taxation (page 9)

Extends to July 15, 2020, the filing deadline for certain tax returns, reports or payments to the Department of Revenue. The filing dates for oil and gas taxes and oil and gas property taxes will not be extended. Department of Revenue will not assess penalties or interest to individuals who file under the extension.

Section 12 Shareholder Meetings (page 9-10)

Allows for meetings of shareholders to be held by electronic communication to the extent allowed by the corporation's board, and allows corporations that have or are planning to distribute a proxy statement and notice of annual meetings to re-notice or notice so that it can be held via electronic communication.

Section 13 Repealer (page 10)

Repeals Sections 1-4 and 6-12 on the earlier of Sept. 1, 2020, or the date the governor determines the emergency no longer exists.

Section 14 Repealer (page 10)

Repeals Section 5, Reports, on Nov. 2, 2020.

Section 15 Retroactive clause (page 10)

HB 311 is retroactive to April 10, 2020, if signed into law after that date.

Section 16 Effective date (page 10)

HB 311 takes effect immediately.