



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE


Legislative Finance Division

430 Main St.
Juneau, Alaska
(907) 465-3795

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 1, 2023

TO: Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Lyman Hoffman
Senator Donny Olson
Co-Chairs, Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Alexei Painter 
Legislative Fiscal Analyst

SUBJECT: Responses to Committee Question from January 30 Meeting

Thank you for inviting the Legislative Finance Division to present an overview of the State's fiscal situation and the Governor's FY24 budget. Responses to a request for follow-up information from the committee hearing are below.

Senator Olson asked about the number of people affected by tuberculosis and congenital syphilis, and whether those rates have increased or decreased over the past few years.

Congenital syphilis:

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology recently released CY2021 data for Alaskans diagnosed with syphilis. In CY2021, 447 Alaskans were diagnosed with syphilis and 5 of those were classified as congenital cases. The total number of new cases in CY2021 represents a 24% increase over CY2020.

The Section of Epidemiology first identified a syphilis outbreak in Alaska in CY2018, when a total of 114 cases were reported and none were identified as congenital. In CY2019, a total of 242 new cases (none congenital) were reported in Alaska – an increase of 112% over CY2018. In CY2020, 361 new cases (49% increase over CY2019) were identified and 8 of those cases were classified as congenital. While the most recent data point for congenital syphilis is lower than the prior year, the total number of cases continues to rise.

Tuberculosis:

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology recently released the *provisional* tuberculosis (TB) case counts for CY2022, and 96 Alaskans were diagnosed with active TB. The CY2019-CY2021 case counts had remained steady at 58 active

cases per year, so the CY2022 figure represents a 66% increase over the prior three-year period. The Northern and Southwest regions of Alaska have significantly higher rates of incidence than other regions of the state, and the Alaska Native population has consistently borne a disproportionate number of TB cases as a result.

Figure. Tuberculosis Cases, by Year — Alaska, 2012–2022

