

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2024 Legislative Session

Bill Version:	HB 126
Fiscal Note Number:	6
(H) Publish Date:	3/6/2024

Identifier: HB126-DOH-BHA-02-05-24
 Title: ASSOCIATE AND PROFESSIONAL
 COUNSELORS
 Sponsor: WRIGHT
 Requester: (H) FIN

Department: Department of Health
 Appropriation: Behavioral Health
 Allocation: Behavioral Health Administration
 OMB Component Number: 2665

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2025	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates				
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2025 Request	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2025	FY 2025					
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants & Benefits							
Miscellaneous							
Total Operating	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Positions

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Change in Revenues

None							
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2024) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2025) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? Yes
 If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? 07/01/25

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

N/A, initial note

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 Agency: Department of Health

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FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**Analysis**

This bill directs the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors to stipulate, through regulations, the criteria for associate counselor licensure; the types of associate counselor programs that are authorized for licensure; and the criteria for supervisor certification.

This legislation is expected to have an impact on Medicaid provider enrollment and compliance functions. The additional licenses are expected to increase volume and the level of effort to process new enrollment applications, revalidations, and background checks. In addition, Health Care Services anticipates an increased number of new applicants in out years due to this new license type. Post-payment review of services to ensure compliance with state and federal rules will need to be conducted; including establishing new review strategies within the Surveillance and Utilization Review (SUR) unit and working with current data-analytics vendors to develop compliance strategies and peer group comparison algorithms.

This bill removes the ability of the board to allow telephonic or electronic supervision of licensed professional counselors or associate counselors due to the remote location of the counselor.

Removing the ability of licensed professional counselors and associate counselors to receive telephonic or electronic supervision due to remote locations may decrease the number of licensed professional counselors and associate counselors who can become licensed and who reside and work in remote areas of the state.

In addition, the availability of licensed, credentialed supervisors who can offer supervision to licensed professional counselor candidates in remote/rural areas is limited. The removal of this provision will disproportionately impact rural areas of the state who are more likely to utilize distance supervision opportunities.

Should this bill pass, the Division of Behavioral Health and Health Care Services will need to amend regulations to add a new professional provider type.