

**SENATE BILL NO. 220**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY SENATOR GIESSEL BY REQUEST

Introduced: 1/21/26

Referred: Health & Social Services, Finance

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act establishing a community health worker certification; relating to medical**  
2 **assistance coverage for certified community health worker services; and providing for**  
3 **an effective date."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 \* **Section 1.** AS 18 is amended by adding a new chapter to read:

6 **Chapter 11. Community Health Workers.**

7 **Sec. 18.11.010. Community health worker certification.** (a) The department  
8 shall adopt regulations regarding the certification of community health workers,  
9 including

10 (1) the scope of practice for certified community health workers;

11 (2) the minimum qualifications, including education and training  
12 requirements, for certification;

13 (3) the standards and requirements for education and training programs  
14 established to certify community health workers;

- 1 (4) the continuing education requirements to renew a certificate;
- 2 (5) the minimum qualifications, including education, training, and  
3 experience, that a certified community health worker must meet to provide education,  
4 training, or continuing education to other certified community health workers;
- 5 (6) criteria for denying, suspending, and revoking a certificate when  
6 necessary to protect public health and safety and a process for an individual to appeal  
7 a decision by the department that denies, suspends, or revokes a certificate; and
- 8 (7) a schedule of fees to be paid upon application for an initial  
9 certificate or renewal of a certificate.

10 (b) The department may adopt regulations that allow for reciprocity  
11 agreements with other states that offer community health worker certification.

12 **Sec. 18.11.020. Community health worker certification application;**  
13 **requirements.** (a) An individual may apply to the department for a certificate to  
14 practice as a certified community health worker on a form prescribed by the  
15 department.

16 (b) The department shall issue or renew a certificate to an applicant who meets  
17 the qualifications set out in this chapter and regulations adopted under this chapter and  
18 pays the applicable fees. A certificate is valid for two years.

19 (c) The department shall waive the minimum education and training  
20 requirements for certification for an applicant who has, within the previous three  
21 years, completed at least 960 hours of paid or volunteer experience providing services  
22 within the scope of practice of a certified community health worker in a licensed  
23 health care facility or in the service of a licensed health care provider.

24 (d) An individual may provide services within the scope of practice of a  
25 community health worker and hold out publicly as a community health worker without  
26 obtaining a certificate under this section.

27 **Sec. 18.11.030. Definitions.** In this chapter,

- 28 (1) "certified community health worker" means a community health  
29 worker who holds a valid certificate;
- 30 (2) "community health worker" means an individual who provides  
31 nonmedical services as a liaison between health and community service providers and

1 users of those services, to facilitate access to and coordinate medical and behavioral  
 2 health services and improve the quality of service delivery and medical and behavioral  
 3 health outcomes;

4 (3) "department" means the Department of Health;

5 (4) "health care facility" has the meaning given in AS 18.20.499.

6 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 47.07.030(b) is amended to read:

7 (b) In addition to the mandatory services specified in (a) of this section and the  
 8 services provided under (d) of this section, the department may offer only the  
 9 following optional services: case management services for traumatic or acquired brain  
 10 injury; case management and nutrition services for pregnant women; **certified**  
 11 **community health worker services**; personal care services in a recipient's home;  
 12 emergency hospital services; long-term care noninstitutional services; medical  
 13 supplies and equipment; advanced practice registered nurse services; clinic services;  
 14 rehabilitative services for children eligible for services under AS 47.07.063, substance  
 15 abusers, and emotionally disturbed or chronically mentally ill adults; targeted case  
 16 management services; inpatient psychiatric facility services for individuals 65 years of  
 17 age or older and individuals under 21 years of age; psychologists' services; clinical  
 18 social workers' services; marital and family therapy services; professional counseling  
 19 services; midwife services; prescribed drugs; physical therapy; occupational therapy;  
 20 chiropractic services; low-dose mammography screening, as defined in  
 21 AS 21.42.375(e); hospice care; treatment of speech, hearing, and language disorders;  
 22 adult dental and dental hygiene services; prosthetic devices and eyeglasses;  
 23 optometrists' services; intermediate care facility services, including intermediate care  
 24 facility services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities; skilled  
 25 nursing facility services for individuals under 21 years of age; and reasonable  
 26 transportation to and from the point of medical care.

27 \* **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
 28 read:

29 MEDICAID STATE PLAN; WAIVERS. The Department of Health shall, as  
 30 necessary for federal approval by the United States Department of Health and Human  
 31 Services, submit amendments to the state plan for medical assistance coverage or apply for

1 any waivers necessary to implement sec. 2 of this Act.

2 \* **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
3 read:

4 TRANSITION: INITIAL REGULATIONS. (a) Before adopting the regulations  
5 required under AS 18.11.010, enacted by sec. 1 of this Act, the Department of Health shall  
6 seek recommendations from a statewide or nationally recognized community health worker  
7 organization regarding

8 (1) core competencies required for the certification of community health  
9 workers, including education and training;

10 (2) the type of examination or other means best suited to assess competency  
11 for certification;

12 (3) standards and requirements for education, training, and continuing  
13 education programs for certified community health workers;

14 (4) minimum education and training standards for certified community health  
15 workers who provide education, training, or continuing education to other certified  
16 community health workers;

17 (5) standards of professional conduct for certified community health workers;  
18 and

19 (6) other matters the Department of Health determines are necessary.

20 (b) In this section, "certified community health worker" and "community health  
21 worker" have the meanings given in AS 18.11.030, enacted by sec. 1 of this Act.

22 \* **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
23 read:

24 CONDITIONAL EFFECT; NOTIFICATION. (a) Section 2 of this Act takes effect  
25 only if, on or before July 1, 2031, the United States Department of Health and Human  
26 Services

27 (1) approves waivers or amendments to the state plan submitted under sec. 3  
28 of this Act; or

29 (2) determines that approval of the waivers or amendments to the state plan  
30 for medical assistance coverage submitted in accordance with sec. 3 of this Act is not  
31 necessary.

1           (b) The commissioner of health shall notify the revisor of statutes in writing within 30  
2 days after the United States Department of Health and Human Services approves the waivers  
3 or amendments to the state plan or determines that approval of the waivers or amendments is  
4 not necessary.

5       \* **Sec. 6.** If sec. 2 of this Act takes effect, it takes effect on the day after the date the United  
6 States Department of Health and Human Services approves the waivers or amendments to the  
7 state plan or determines that approval of the waivers or amendments is not necessary.