



Alaska Medicaid Behavioral Health Rate Review *Project Overview*

The Alaska Medicaid Rate Review project is focused on evaluating and improving how the Alaska Medicaid program pays for services. The Behavioral Health project segment specifically looks at payment methods for behavioral health services. This summary outlines the rate review process and its intended goals.

What is the purpose of the Medicaid Behavioral Health Rate Review project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this project is to help the Department of Health (DOH) develop fair and transparent Medicaid payment methodologies for behavioral health services. • It will analyze providers' actual costs and other relevant data to recommend rates that cover necessary expenses and address challenges faced by Alaskan providers. • The recommended rates should promote access to care, support budget sustainability, and allow for regular updates to reflect changing costs and resources in Alaska's health care market. • The project will also ensure that rate recommendations comply with federal standards for efficiency, accessibility, and quality of care.
What information will be considered in the rate review process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOH will analyze cost and wage data from reliable sources including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost and wage surveys submitted by behavioral health providers. ○ Publicly available data from sources like the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Consumer Price Index. ○ Historical Medicaid claims and enrollment data. • DOH will meet regularly with a rate review workgroup, made up of subject matter experts who will provide input throughout the study. • To ensure transparency and gather diverse perspectives, DOH will offer additional opportunities for public inquiries and feedback, facilitating discussions about specific services and insights into service usage.
How will the rate review impact providers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rate review aims to establish fair and transparent payment structures that reflect the true costs of care. For providers, this may lead to adjusted reimbursement rates that better support their operations and improve access to health care, consider Alaska's unique complexities, and support budget sustainability for both providers and the state.
How will the rate review impact Medicaid beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study aims to refine Medicaid payment structures for behavioral health services to improve access to care for beneficiaries. By recommending fair compensation for providers, it will support the delivery of efficient and effective care. Input from beneficiaries will also inform recommendations that address their needs and challenges in accessing healthcare.
How can I get involved in the rate study?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to hear from you! Providers who would like to be included in the rate study and non-providers who would like information about participation opportunities can reach out to AKRateStudy_BH@guidehouse.com for more details.
What are the next steps after the rate recommendation report is released?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOH will evaluate the findings and recommendations. • Recommendations selected for implementation will proceed through the standard Alaska Medicaid budget process, including legislative appropriation. • Once funded, new rates will be communicated to providers and beneficiaries. • New rates will undergo necessary reviews by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, along with tribal consultation and public comment periods. • DOH will implement any required changes based on the approved recommendations. • The effectiveness of the new payment structures will be monitored, and adjustments will be made as needed to meet the evolving needs of Alaskans.