

Heidi Hedberg
Commissioner

health.alaska.gov



Department of Health

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mirna Estrada (907) 312-8254 mirna.estrada@alaska.gov

Alaska Department of Health Announces Completion of Rural Health Transformation Program Year 1 Funding Cycle

Nearly \$249 million awarded to 254 projects across Alaska as grant agreements are executed and work begins

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — October 22, 2026 — The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) today announced the completion of the Year 1 funding cycle for the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). DOH has awarded just under \$249 million to 254 projects in communities across Alaska. The final Notices of Intent to Award for the first funding cycle were issued on October 9, 2026. The remaining award balance supports administration, evaluation and oversight of the RHTP program. RHTP is part of a \$50 billion, five-year national initiative authorized by Congress in 2025 to strengthen rural health systems. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) awarded Alaska more than \$272 million for Year 1, the highest per-capita award in the nation and the second-highest overall award amount.

Year 1 awards were distributed in alignment with Alaska's six RHTP initiatives: Healthy Beginnings, supporting maternal and child health; Healthy Communities, focused on prevention and community well-being; Health Care Access, expanding care closer to home; Strengthen Workforce, building and retaining Alaskan's health care workforce; Spark Technology, advancing digital and technology solutions; and Pay for Value, shifting toward payment models that reward quality and outcomes. Together, the Year 1 projects form a statewide portfolio that reflects the diverse needs and priorities of communities across the state. A [full list of Year 1 projects](#) is available on the DOH website.

These investments are already advancing transformative work while setting the course for four more years of strategy to stabilize, transform, and sustain Alaska's health care landscape. This multi-year effort is aimed to deliver lasting changes, so that access to health care in Alaska is not defined by where you live.

Here are a few examples of year one projects that have been awarded, highlighting the transformative potential of RHTP funding across the state.

- **Healthy Beginnings:** Tanana Chiefs Conference (“Healthy Beginnings: Comprehensive Prenatal & Postpartum Care for Alaska Native Families”) will link village clinics, Community Health Aides, doulas, lactation-certified nurses, and telehealth into one maternal-infant care network across 32 communities, supporting families from pregnancy through a child's first year.
- **Healthy Communities:** The City of Nenana (“Nenana Healthcare Alliance”) will renovate existing space into a year-round community health and wellness hub, including recovery and behavioral health programming and adding showers and a water filling station for residents without running water.
- **Health Care Access:** Maniilaq Association (“Portable X-Ray Units for Rural Arctic Village Clinics”) will place portable X-ray units in Northwest Arctic village clinics so Community Health Aides, working with hospital providers by telehealth, can diagnose faster and quickly decide whether an evacuation is needed.
- **Strengthen Workforce:** The Southeast Region EMS Council (“Southeast Alaska EMS Academy Network”) will connect three regional training hubs with rural communities to share instructors, simulation equipment, and leadership support. Travel assistance will help volunteer responders complete training and return to serve their communities.
- **Spark Technology and Innovation:** Norton Sound Health Corporation (“Direct Patient Monitoring for High-Risk Patients”) will use cellular-enabled remote monitoring and daily health check-ins to track high-risk patients with complex chronic conditions in Nome and 15 village clinics, so care teams are alerted and can take action before a manageable condition becomes an emergency.
- **Pay for Value:** Alaska Primary Care Association (“Community Health Led Medicaid Value Initiative”) will help community health centers integrate Medicaid claims with clinical data and build team-based workflows, laying the foundation to pay for outcomes rather than volume.

These projects are just a few examples of the work that is now happening around the state. See more [examples](#).

“The Trump Administration’s Rural Health Transformation Program has a simple formula for success: state innovation backed by federal funds equals lasting improvements for rural communities,” said CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz. “Investing in locally driven solutions is an important step toward achieving that vision for rural Alaskans and CMS is excited to partner with states to build stronger, more resilient rural health systems.”

“I’m grateful to everyone across Alaska whose dedication and collaboration made year one possible,” said Alaska Department of Health Commissioner Heidi Hedberg. “Our health care system is built on the commitment of people who work every day to serve their communities. Now, we have an opportunity to build on that foundation, strengthen access to care and shape a system that better serves every Alaskan, no matter where they live. This funding gives us the tools to help turn that vision into reality.”

The department remains committed to responsible stewardship of federal funding and plans to publish a dashboard that allows Alaskans to explore the full portfolio of investments by the end of the calendar year. The dashboard will be a living repository of information with continual updates added as new information becomes available.

Looking Ahead to Year 2

The Year 2 fall funding cycle opened September 30, and applications are due Wednesday, October 28, at 11:59 pm. Updated application guidance on budget development and workforce-related requirements and the finalized evaluation matrix is available on the RHTP website. DOH anticipates notifying applicants of outcomes as early as December 2026, with Year 2 subawards beginning in early 2027. A second Year 2 funding cycle is anticipated to open in spring 2027.

For more information about the Rural Health Transformation Program, including resources for applicants and a breakdown of funding across initiatives so far, visit the [RHTP web page](#).

###

This project is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$272,174,855.72 with 100 percent funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.