



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Health

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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March 19, 2024

Dear Tribal Health Leaders,

On behalf of the Department of Health (the department) and in keeping with the responsibility to conduct tribal consultation, I am writing to inform you of a proposed future Medicaid state plan amendment (SPA). This opportunity for consultation runs concurrently with public comment on proposed regulations.

Purpose and content of the proposed amendment:

The department proposes submitting a SPA to modify some prior authorization requirements and service limitations for community behavioral health services and mental health physician clinic providers. The proposed SPA amends state plan sections Attached Sheet to Attachment 3.1-A (pages 3, 3.1, 4c, 6, 7, and 9), Supplement 2 to Attachment 3.1-A (page 5), and Attachment 4.19-B (page 1.2).

Proposed amendments are as follows -

Community Behavioral Health Services Provider

1. Removal of prior authorizations requirements and service limitations for
 - screening and brief intervention services;
 - medical evaluations of a recipient in an opioid use disorder treatment program;
 - methadone or Antabuse administration for medication assisted treatment;
 - behavioral health screening;
 - behavioral health screening services;
 - more than one mental health, substance use, and integrated mental health and substance use assessment; and
 - pharmacological management services – SUD medication assisted treatment.
2. Update medication administration services limitation to one billable service per day.

Community Behavioral Health Providers and Mental Health Physician Clinics

1. Removal of prior authorization and service limitations for
 - any combination individual, group, and family therapy;

- psychiatric assessments;
 - psychological testing;
 - pharmacologic management services; and
 - integrated mental health and substance use intake assessments, and combinations of mental health intake assessment and substance use intake assessment.
2. Update service limitations of short-term crisis intervention services, without prior authorization, to 22 consecutive hours in a single encounter.

Fee Schedule

1. Update the effective date of the licensed behavior analyst provider fee schedule.

Anticipated impact on Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native/American Indian beneficiaries:

The proposed amendments are anticipated to increase access to and reduce the waiting time for some behavioral and mental health services, which will Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native/American Indian beneficiaries.

Anticipated impact on tribal health programs and the Indian Health Service:

With this SPA, the proposed removal or revision of many behavioral and mental health service limitations and prior authorization requirements is anticipated to decrease administrative burden for tribal health programs.

Mechanism and timeline for comment

Written comments or questions regarding the proposed amendment are due no later than the close of business, Thursday, April 30, 2024. If seeking an in-person meeting regarding the proposed changes, please provide a written request within 15 days of the date of this letter. Please direct all written correspondence to Emily Beaulieu, Alaska Department of Health, 3601 C Street, Suite 902, Anchorage, AK 99503, or emily.beaulieu@alaska.gov.

*Comments received in response to this consultation letter are considered for consultation and not comment on the regulations. Comments on the regulations are not considered comments for consultation on the SPA. **You must do so separately if you wish to provide comments for consideration in both the SPA and the regulations processes.** To locate the regulations, please refer to the State of Alaska web page at the "[Public Notices](#)" link.*

Sincerely,

/s/

Emily Beaulieu
Medicaid State Plan Coordinator