



Proposed Changes on Medicaid Payment Rates Behavioral Health Reform 1115 Waiver Services Public Comment Received July 22, 2024 – September 3, 2024

On July 22, 2024, the Department of Health (DOH) proposed changes to Medicaid Payment Rates Behavioral Health Reform 1115 Waiver Services published via the Alaska Online Public Notice system under [NOTICE OF PROPOSED CHANGES ON MEDICAID PAYMENT RATES BEHAVIORAL HEALTH REFORM 1115 WAIVER SERVICES](#) with an archive date of 9/4/2024. The notice was also published in the Anchorage Daily News. Public comment was available through multiple channels, including:

- The Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) email box at doh.dbh.public.comment@alaska.gov;
- By phone at 907-269-6549, the direct line for William Hurr, Project Coordinator 2, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH); and,
- In writing with the mailing the address State of Alaska, Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, 3601 C Street, Suite 934, Anchorage, AK 99503.

An oral hearing was held on August 27, 2024, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. to allow for oral presentation of comments. No public comment was received during the public hearing. The meeting was attended by four (4) people: Two staff from the Alaska Division of Behavioral Health; and two people representing agencies who stated they were there to listen to public comment received during the meeting.

The public comment period closed at 5:00pm on September 3, 2024. This document contains the Department of Health’s response to the one comment received. When multiple comments are received, identical or substantively similar comments are consolidated for purposes of response.

PUBLIC COMMENT	DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESPONSE
<p><i>Public Comment #1: Support and request for continual monitoring of rates</i></p> <p>Appreciate the State’s attention to the need for regular increases in reimbursement rates; and acknowledges this 4.5% increase as a helpful step. Reimbursement rates that are closer to the actual cost of providing high-quality services matters so that we can hire and retain excellent staff; streamline and improve efficiency; and expand the array of vital services we can provide for Alaskans who need and deserve the best care available. While we’re thankful for this increase, we emphasize the need for continual monitoring of the frequency and amount of rate changes in an ever-changing landscape.</p> <p>[via doh.dbh.public.comments@alaska.gov, 8/9/24, 3:29 p.m.]</p>	<p><i>DOH Response:</i></p> <p>The Department of Health appreciates provider support for the proposed regulation changes to Medicaid Payment Rates for Behavioral Health Reform 1115 Waiver Services.</p> <p>Aligning reimbursement rates more strongly with the cost of services is a key reason for the regulation change. As well, it supports Alaska’s behavioral health infrastructure to ensure quality care for Alaskans.</p> <p>Behavioral Health Reform 1115 Waiver services are part of the Rate Methodology Review. Providers are strongly encouraged to complete the upcoming survey, as part of this process, to help identify current costs to provide these necessary services.</p>