

State of Alaska FY2010 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health and Social Services Bureau of Vital Statistics Component Budget Summary

Component: Bureau of Vital Statistics

Contribution to Department's Mission

The department's mission is to promote and protect the health and well-being of Alaskans. The Bureau of Vital Statistics (BVS) contributes to this mission through the registration and safeguarding of vital events records for Alaska. The bureau also publishes annual reports of vital events, produces newsletters, develops web-based reports of public health indicators, and conducts research to provide comprehensive population-based health data to support the evaluation of health outcomes and services. Public Health utilizes data from these reports to monitor and assess the health status of Alaskans.

Core Services

- The Bureau of Vital Statistics is responsible for registering and safeguarding all vital events in Alaska. To ensure that vital records are registered timely and accurately, the bureau manages a statewide training program for local registrars, hospital staff, funeral directors, and court clerks to provide guidance in the use of the BVS information system and the registration of vital events.
- The bureau continually monitors the data quality of each vital record submitted to ensure that the information contained in each record accurately reflects the facts surrounding the vital event.
- Vital records data plays an important role in assessing the health of Alaskans, by providing population-level data on patterns and trends in the health status of Alaskans ranging from prenatal care and pregnancy outcomes to differences in mortality rates among various ethnic groups in Alaska.
- The bureau provides the public with certified copies of vital events as needed for establishing legal identity, applying for driver's licenses or passports, or documenting dependents for health or retirement benefits.
- The bureau produces an annual report of vital events in Alaska, including data on births, fetal and infant deaths, adoptions, marriages and divorces, induced terminations of pregnancy, and deaths. The purpose of this report is to provide reference material and indicators for health and vital events in Alaska.
- The bureau also produces and distributes other statistical reports and information, primarily through a web-based system, to provide population-based health data to support the evaluation of health outcomes and services.
- The bureau continues to work with the Alaska Children's Trust by providing Alaskans the opportunity to obtain Heirloom Birth and Marriage Certificates. These heirloom certificates cost an additional \$25 and \$35, respectively; however these additional fees are dedicated to the Children's Trust, which works to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- BVS also maintains the state's Medical Marijuana Registry.

FY2010 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results

FY2010 Component Budget: \$2,679,200	Personnel:	
	Full time	29
	Part time	0
	Total	29

Key Component Challenges

The Bureau continues to operate on an information system that is more than 20 years old and is based on computer technologies no longer supported by modern operating systems. While funding for a new system was approved in the FY2009 capital budget, it will take at least two years to design, test, and fully implement the new birth and death registration system; it will be a challenge to complete the project on time because of ongoing staffing shortages – Bureau managers often must perform front-office duties to meet customer demand. Because of the old existing system, it is increasingly difficult for hospitals and other providers to run the software necessary for registering

births. If the problem gets worse, providers will have to manually prepare birth certificates on paper forms and mail them to the bureau for processing. This will create significant delays in registering births in Alaska.

The federal Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 addresses the integrity of birth records as an identity document and the physical security of vital record offices. It is anticipated that the regulations will be published soon. Based on a preliminary draft of the regulations, the regulations may significantly impact bureau operations and Alaskans. The draft regulations require the electronic registration of births and deaths, which the bureau's antiquated information system is incapable of doing. There are other anticipated costs related to the regulations, such as physical security requirements for buildings and the data entry of older birth and death records. There could be significant impacts for Alaskans, since the federal government will stop accepting birth records from states that do not conform to the regulations, meaning that Alaskans would be unable to use Alaska-issued birth certificates for obtaining passports or Social Security or Medicaid benefits. Although the federal regulations have been drafted, they were not expected to be released until late in 2008.

The Bureau continues to have difficulties recruiting and retaining staff to work in the Juneau front office. The five positions in the front office are responsible for assisting customers and processing requests for vital records. In 2008, there has only been one permanent employee working in the front office. None of the other employees worked past the six-month probationary period. The vacancy factor has affected the bureau's ability to respond timely to vital record requests and the time spent repeatedly recruiting and training new staff has also limited the time senior staff has available to process requests. In past years the bureau has been able to work around these vacancies by shifting work to other units in the bureau. However, the overall workload has increased to the point that any backlog in work due to front office vacancies can no longer be absorbed by other staff. Due to the problems of recruiting and training staff the Bureau had to change its standard processing time from two to four weeks.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2010

No significant changes in results to be delivered in FY2010.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2008

Bureau staff began the task of entering all deaths into its information system. The "back death" project will allow Bureau staff to search for death records electronically, saving considerable staff time by eliminating the need to manually search paper index files. It will also allow for more extensive electronic searching methods, helping to ensure that the record will be located. Death records from 1898 to 1960 have been entered into the system, leaving only records from 1961 to 1976 to be entered. Completion of this project will ensure the bureau meets the provision of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act that will require the electronic availability of birth and death records.

The Bureau began working with a contractor to image most of the 1 million vital records contained in the Juneau vault. The project is designed to help preserve older records (some dating to the 1890s) and to allow the issuing of certified copies from the image. Issuing from the image will save staff time (3-5 minutes per request) and allow bureau staff in Anchorage and Fairbanks to process requests for these records. Currently these requests must be sent to Juneau for processing, adding at least a week to the processing time.

The Bureau received capital budget funding in FY2009 to replace its currently outdated information system. Although it may take up to five years to complete the entire project (the birth and death registration phase of the project will take two years), the bureau has taken steps to ensure it will be able to keep operating until the older system is completely replaced. Bureau staffers were able to replace the 25-year-old Wang server with a new server and use emulation software to keep the old information system running. The bureau also secured a maintenance agreement for the current electronic birth registration system (EBRS) that hospitals use to send birth information to the bureau. The EBRS is an old DOS-based software program that does not run well on current operating systems.

The Bureau continued adding to the number of public health statistics reports that are published on the BVS website. Detailed information on injury deaths, leading causes of death, chronic disease deaths, infant mortality, birth rates, causes of death, and health profiles is readily available at: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/bvs/data/default.htm>.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 18.05.010 - 070 Administration of Public Health and Related Laws
AS 18.50.010 - 990 Vital Statistics Act
AS 25.05.071 - 391 Alaska Marriage Code
AS 25.20.050(b) Parent and Child
AS 25.20.055 Parent and Child
AS 25.23.160 - 170 Adoption
AS 44.29.020 Department of Health and Social Services
AS 09.55.060 Special Actions and Proceedings
AS 17.37.030 Medical Use of Marijuana
7 AAC 05.110 - 990 Vital Records
7 AAC 05.976 Heirloom Marriage Certificates

Contact Information

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**Bureau of Vital Statistics
Component Financial Summary**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2008 Actuals	FY2009 Management Plan	FY2010 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	1,497.7	1,726.2	1,851.2
72000 Travel	38.4	35.0	35.0
73000 Services	739.8	727.5	735.8
74000 Commodities	60.4	57.2	57.2
75000 Capital Outlay	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	2,336.3	2,545.9	2,679.2
Funding Sources:			
1002 Federal Receipts	252.7	312.8	327.3
1004 General Fund Receipts	0.0	87.6	89.0
1007 Inter-Agency Receipts	184.8	230.7	241.0
1156 Receipt Supported Services	1,898.8	1,914.8	2,021.9
Funding Totals	2,336.3	2,545.9	2,679.2

Estimated Revenue Collections

Description	Master Revenue Account	FY2008 Actuals	FY2009 Management Plan	FY2010 Governor
Unrestricted Revenues				
None.		0.0	0.0	0.0
Unrestricted Total		0.0	0.0	0.0
Restricted Revenues				
Federal Receipts	51010	252.7	312.8	327.3
Interagency Receipts	51015	184.8	230.7	241.0
Receipt Supported Services	51073	1,898.8	1,914.8	2,021.9
Restricted Total		2,336.3	2,458.3	2,590.2
Total Estimated Revenues		2,336.3	2,458.3	2,590.2

**Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2009 Management Plan to FY2010 Governor**

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2009 Management Plan	87.6	312.8	2,145.5	2,545.9
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Transfer Administrative positions/funding from DSS/Administrative Support Services	0.0	13.6	66.3	79.9
-FY2010 Wage and Health Insurance Increases for Bargaining Units with Existing Agreements	1.4	0.9	51.1	53.4
FY2010 Governor	89.0	327.3	2,262.9	2,679.2

**Bureau of Vital Statistics
Personal Services Information**

Authorized Positions			Personal Services Costs	
	FY2009 Management Plan	FY2010 Governor		
Full-time	28	29	Annual Salaries	1,124,645
Part-time	0	0	COLA	46,223
Nonpermanent	0	0	Premium Pay	12,485
			Annual Benefits	731,612
			<i>Less 3.33% Vacancy Factor</i>	<i>(63,765)</i>
			Lump Sum Premium Pay	0
Totals	28	29	Total Personal Services	1,851,200

Position Classification Summary

Job Class Title	Anchorage	Fairbanks	Juneau	Others	Total
Administrative Assistant II	0	0	1	0	1
Administrative Clerk II	0	0	3	0	3
Administrative Clerk III	3	2	10	0	15
Administrative Supervisor	1	0	3	0	4
Chf Health Res & Vital Stat	0	0	1	0	1
Project Asst	0	0	1	0	1
Research Analyst I	0	0	1	0	1
Research Analyst III	0	0	1	0	1
Research Analyst IV	0	0	1	0	1
Statistical Technician I	0	0	1	0	1
Totals	4	2	23	0	29