

State of Alaska FY2024 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health Public Assistance Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary

Public Assistance Results Delivery Unit

Contribution to Department's Mission

To promote self-sufficiency and provide for basic living expenses to Alaskans in need.

Core Services

- Determine Eligibility
- Issue Benefits
- Monitor Beneficiary and Provider Compliance
- Provide Individual and Family Support Services

Major RDU Accomplishments in 2022

- The Division of Public Assistance served 274,068 unduplicated recipients during FY2022.
- Awarded \$20 million in stabilization grants to licensed child care providers.
- Division eligibility teams and support units issued \$102 million in additional public assistance benefits over the usual program benefit amounts.
 - Manually issued \$2 million in pandemic emergency assistance funds to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families households.
 - Manually issued \$84 million in emergency allotment benefits to households eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
 - Manually issued \$13 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) benefits to eligible households.
 - Manually issued \$16 million in pandemic electronic benefits transfer (EBT) benefits for the Free and Reduced Meal Program for school age children.
- Field staff assumed responsibility for the child care assistance program eligibility determinations for the coastal areas of the state with 30 days' notice when the grantee closed down.

Key RDU Challenges

- Changes in federal program policies and implementation of new programs and policy changes.
- System programming challenges prevent the automation of benefit issuances and require staff to process eligibility and benefit issuances for multiple programs manually.
- Implementation of an online application and renewal and recertification forms are delayed due to information technology resource shortages.
- Staff retention, training, and support.
- Refining recruitment process to attract the right people for the right job.
- Consolidating and streamlining communication across division units.
- The cyberattack on the department caused profound systemic outages and delays to services provided by Child Care Benefits. Systems impacted included the Integrated Child Care Information System, the ability of Division of Public Assistance staff to conduct background checks, and the department's grants management system. The consequences of these affected systems included the delay of benefits and payments to clients and service providers, delays in the issuance of child care licenses and the inability for providers to hire new staff due to the lack of a background check system, and delayed agreements and grant funding to grantees.
- Manually issuing payments to providers for the child care assistance families due to the cyberattack.
- A grantee for the coastal region Child Care Assistance Program closed its doors in November 2021, requiring the division to process all applications and eligibility determinations for the program for that area of the state with only 30 days' notice.
- Identifying the "true need for care" and the roles, responsibilities, and authority of the various provider types. Once the "true need for care" is identified, maintaining a sufficient supply of quality child care programs to support working families.

- Figuring out how to close the gap between the “true cost of care” (what it actually costs a facility to run a high-quality early childhood program for young children) and available financial resources to support the provision of that care.
- Identifying the reasons for the continued decline in the number of families receiving a child care subsidy despite changes previously made that decreased the reporting requirements and frequency of renewal.
- Implementing remaining federal requirements under the November 2014 reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) with limited staff and financial resources.
- Inputting, collecting, tracking, and reporting data via a data system that has not been fully developed to administer all Child Care Program Office programs. The Integrated Child Care Information System is currently used to administer the Child Care Assistance and Child Care Licensing Programs. Additional spreadsheets and alternate mechanisms are used to administer the Child Care Grant Program. Limited program, systems, and information technology staff create barriers in the Integrated Child Care Information System that, if solved, would result in improved efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2024

- Increase consistency and quality of Child Care Assistance Program service delivery that is child focused, family friendly, and fair to providers, grantees, and staff, and in full compliance with federal Child Care and Development Block Grant requirements. Streamline processes that support continuity of care for children while ensuring accountability of funds expended.
- Continue work on transition to an electronic workload, service delivery, and filing system.
- Continue collaboration and alignment of services delivered by the Child Care Program Office with other state agencies, such as Public Assistance Field Services, the Office of Children’s Services, the Alaska background check program, and the Department of Education and Early Development, as well as with federal American Indian and Alaska Native Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) grantees.
- Develop online applications for all public assistance programs that integrate with the electronic document management system.
- System development for Alaska's Resource for Integrated Eligibility Services (ARIES) to include automated renewals.
- Continued development in ARIES to add remaining Medicaid subtypes.

Contact Information
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**Public Assistance
RDU Financial Summary by Component**

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2022 Actuals				FY2023 Management Plan				FY2024 Governor			
	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds	UGF+DGF Funds	Other Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
Formula Expenditures												
ATAP	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,267.5	1,713.6	19,152.1	22,133.2	1,267.5	1,713.6	19,096.2	22,077.3
Adult Public Assistance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	57,646.1	4,410.8	1,730.0	63,786.9	57,646.1	4,410.8	1,730.0	63,786.9
Child Care Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8,988.7	0.0	99,281.5	108,270.2	9,006.2	0.0	55,980.8	64,987.0
General Relief Assistance	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	605.4	0.0	0.0	605.4	605.4	0.0	0.0	605.4
Tribal Assistance Programs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16,912.0	130.0	0.0	17,042.0	16,912.0	130.0	0.0	17,042.0
PFD Hold Harmless	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17,791.5	0.0	17,791.5	0.0	17,791.5	0.0	17,791.5
Energy Assistance Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	26,194.9	26,194.9	0.0	0.0	9,665.0	9,665.0
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Public Assistance Admin	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,401.5	875.8	6,348.7	9,626.0	2,444.5	885.4	5,186.7	8,516.6
Public Assistance Field Svcs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18,586.9	2,521.0	32,028.1	53,136.0	19,102.8	2,551.4	32,796.0	54,450.2
Fraud Investigation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	909.3	0.0	1,497.6	2,406.9	921.5	0.0	1,523.6	2,445.1
Quality Control	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,032.1	0.0	1,536.3	2,568.4	1,049.9	0.0	1,566.5	2,616.4
Work Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	116.2	0.0	11,666.1	11,782.3	116.6	0.0	11,677.6	11,794.2
Women, Infants and Children	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	565.5	3,397.7	19,378.8	23,342.0	566.5	3,397.7	19,409.0	23,373.2
Totals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	109,031.2	30,840.4	218,814.1	358,685.7	109,639.0	30,880.4	158,631.4	299,150.8

Public Assistance
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2023 Management Plan to FY2024 Governor

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated</u> <u>Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2023 Management Plan	108,216.5	814.7	30,840.4	218,814.1	358,685.7
Adjustments which get you to start of year:					
-ATAP	210.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	210.4
-Child Care Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0	25,000.0	25,000.0
-Tribal Assistance Programs	2,807.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,807.4
One-time items:					
-ATAP	0.0	0.0	0.0	-55.9	-55.9
-Child Care Benefits	0.0	0.0	0.0	-68,356.5	-68,356.5
-Energy Assistance Program	0.0	0.0	0.0	-16,529.9	-16,529.9
-Public Assistance Admin	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,210.7	-1,210.7
-Public Assistance Field Svcs	-652.7	0.0	0.0	-679.2	-1,331.9
Adjustments which continue current level of service:					
-Child Care Benefits	17.5	0.0	0.0	55.8	73.3
-Public Assistance Admin	43.0	0.0	9.6	48.7	101.3
-Public Assistance Field Svcs	1,168.6	0.0	30.4	1,447.1	2,646.1
-Fraud Investigation	12.2	0.0	0.0	26.0	38.2
-Quality Control	17.8	0.0	0.0	30.2	48.0
-Work Services	0.4	0.0	0.0	11.5	11.9
-Women, Infants and Children	1.0	0.0	0.0	30.2	31.2
Proposed budget decreases:					
-ATAP	-210.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	-210.4
-Tribal Assistance Programs	-2,807.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	-2,807.4
FY2024 Governor	108,824.3	814.7	30,880.4	158,631.4	299,150.8