

State of Alaska
FY2024 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Health
Senior and Disabilities Services
Results Delivery Unit Budget Summary

Senior and Disabilities Services Results Delivery Unit

Contribution to Department's Mission

To promote health, well-being and safety for individuals with disabilities, seniors and vulnerable adults by facilitating access to quality services and supports that foster independence, personal choice, and dignity.

Core Services

- Long-term care services
- Home and community-based services
- Quality assurance
- Access
- Long-term care facility and program safety
- Long-term care workforce
- All applicants for services are evaluated for program eligibility.
- Grant services
- Protection of vulnerable adults

Major RDU Accomplishments in 2022

- Senior and Disabilities Services received approval for its spending plan under the federal American Rescue Plan Act enhanced federal medical assistance percentage (ARPA eFMAP) opportunity. This program allows states to draw a higher proportion of federal funds for its home and community-based services if the state uses the accompanying savings to state funds to enhance, expand, or strengthen the state's home and community-based services system. The division's plans, which were assembled through extensive public input, will provide support to home and community-based providers to enhance the recruitment, retention, training, and professionalism of their workforce with the expectation that this will lead to more consistent and capable care for seniors and individuals with disabilities. These projects were well underway by early FY2023.
- The division collaborated with department leadership and the Alaska Legislature to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for long-term services and supports providers by 10 percent effective July 1, 2022. This increase in rates is the first since 2011 (aside from inflationary adjustments) and strengthens the home and community-based system of care.
- Lessons learned during the COVID-19 public health emergency prompted the division to revise regulations to allow for more flexibility in administration of certain services and requirements without jeopardizing beneficiary safety. For example, the "flexibilities made permanent" take better advantage of distance delivery technologies by allowing specific certifications to be obtained online or by allowing particular services to be delivered by distance technology under certain conditions. These regulations will become effective when the federal public health emergency ends.
- The division's community-based grant programs have continued to provide essential, high-quality services to seniors and individuals experiencing disabilities throughout the state despite the increasing needs in the senior population. The estimated number of individuals served in FY2022 is 25,438 (unduplicated).
- In February 2022, the state received approval of certification of the state's electronic visit verification system from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The CMS certification is a critical requirement for state Medicaid agencies to receive reimbursement for implementation and operational costs associated with electronic visit verification.

Key RDU Challenges

- Agencies and individuals providing home and community-based services report that workforce shortages and staffing needs are the most severe they have seen. Care coordinators have steadily decreased in number over the past several years. Agencies employing direct services professionals, who work in assisted living homes, provide personal care services, offer respite to family caregivers, and perform other direct tasks, are

reporting increasing turnover and challenges in recruitment that are leaving many vulnerable Alaskans without these critical supports and ultimately more likely to need higher levels of care.

- Alaska leads the nation in senior population growth and people aged 60 or older are the fastest growing demographic in the state. People are living longer, and many are active; however, the numbers of seniors with dementia, chronic health conditions, and behavioral health needs are also increasing proportionately. This results in the increased need for long-term care services and increased waiting lists for nutrition, transportation, and support services.
- Individuals with disabilities who have concurrent complex behavioral and medical needs frequently are unable to find living arrangements and services that can meet their needs in the long term. As a result, they wind up in institutional settings such as hospitals or out-of-state residential programs longer than they would if Alaska had better continuum of services and supports for these individuals. The division is frequently challenged in helping these beneficiaries and their families find places they can live on a long-term basis while receiving dependable care and community support.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2024

- A Critical Incident Trending and Analysis system that will allow the state to use data-mining techniques to proactively identify unreported and underreported critical incidents and trends in critical incidents (those that jeopardize the health and safety of service recipients) will be implemented in spring 2023. Identifying potential incidents in this way is expected to lead to a more targeted and systemic approach to preventing future incidents from occurring.
- In FY2022 the division received notice that it had been awarded technical assistance from the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems to help build the state’s person-centered vision, planning, and practice to support people with disabilities and older adults with long-term service and support needs. The division anticipates that recommendations from this technical assistance will point the way toward needed changes to better align with the shared vision for individuals with developmental disabilities embedded in Alaska statute in 2018, in which each person directs their own supports, based on their strengths and abilities, toward a meaningful life in their homes, jobs, and communities.
- Local Infant Learning Programs continued to build capacity to work with families who experience significant life stressors and may be involved with the child protection system. A pilot program has been developed with unique strategies to engage these reluctant and overwhelmed families that may have been referred but lacked engagement in the program services. Four programs have been selected to begin in FY2023 with results to be delivered in FY2024-2026.

Contact Information
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**Senior and Disabilities Services
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 None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
SDS Community Based Grants	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11,774.6	951.5	16,376.5	29,102.6	13,022.8	951.5	7,495.4	21,469.7
Early Intervention Learning Prgm	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7,424.5	460.0	1,859.1	9,743.6	7,424.5	460.0	1,859.1	9,743.6
Senior/Disabilities Svcs Admin	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	11,559.8	1,194.1	12,647.9	25,401.8	11,772.0	1,202.9	13,012.9	25,987.8
Genl Relief/Temp Assisted Living	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10,395.0	0.0	0.0	10,395.0	10,395.0	0.0	0.0	10,395.0
Commission on Aging	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	435.1	0.0	435.1	0.0	440.0	0.0	440.0
Governor's Cncl/Disabilities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	75.0	790.6	938.7	1,804.3	29.6	670.9	948.4	1,648.9
Totals	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41,228.9	3,831.3	31,822.2	76,882.4	42,643.9	3,725.3	23,315.8	69,685.0

Senior and Disabilities Services
Summary of RDU Budget Changes by Component
From FY2023 Management Plan to FY2024 Governor

All dollars shown in thousands

	<u>Unrestricted Gen (UGF)</u>	<u>Designated Gen (DGF)</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2023 Management Plan	41,228.9	0.0	3,831.3	31,822.2	76,882.4
One-time items:					
-SDS Community Based Grants	-250.0	0.0	-300.0	-8,881.1	-9,431.1
-Early Intervention Learning Prgm	0.0	0.0	-460.0	0.0	-460.0
-Senior/Disabilities Svcs Admin	-63.0	0.0	-294.8	0.0	-357.8
-Commission on Aging	0.0	0.0	-200.0	0.0	-200.0
-Governor's Cncl/Disabilities	-50.0	0.0	-308.0	0.0	-358.0
Adjustments which continue current level of service:					
-SDS Community Based Grants	0.0	0.0	300.0	0.0	300.0
-Early Intervention Learning Prgm	0.0	0.0	460.0	0.0	460.0
-Senior/Disabilities Svcs Admin	275.2	0.0	303.6	365.0	943.8
-Commission on Aging	0.0	0.0	204.9	0.0	204.9
-Governor's Cncl/Disabilities	4.6	0.0	188.3	9.7	202.6
Proposed budget increases:					
-SDS Community Based Grants	1,498.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,498.2
FY2024 Governor	42,643.9	0.0	3,725.3	23,315.8	69,685.0