

Adam Crum
Commissioner

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Department of Health
and Social Services

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Work begins to restructure the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

March 21, 2022 ANCHORAGE – Now that Executive Order 121 (EO 121) has become law, the Alaska Department and Health and Social Services (DHSS) will be focused on the ongoing organizational work needed to create two separate departments by the implementation date of July 1, 2022.

Restructuring DHSS will allow for a stronger alignment of missions across divisions and programs within the two departments, and the time and space for each department to work with beneficiaries, providers and partners to improve the system of care.

On July 1, 2022, the two departments will be two separate legal entities.

“This has been a long, deliberate process to get to this point, and I appreciate all of the stakeholders who engaged with us and helped shape this process,” said DHSS Commissioner Adam Crum. “I’d like to thank the Legislature for their thoughtful review of the Executive Order. This process has spanned two legislative sessions and the end result is stronger because of the legislative review process.”

EO 121 was proposed by Governor Dunleavy at the start of this legislative session under the constitutional authority in Article 3 Section 23, which also grants the legislature a period of 60 days to evaluate executive orders and vote to disprove them in a joint session. Absent legislative action, executive orders become law.

“This is only the beginning,” Crum added. “Over the next few months, we will continue to engage with stakeholders to make sure the transition plan covers what it needs do. Post-implementation we will be conducting regular reviews of the process to ensure Alaskans continue to be served by these smaller, more nimble departments.”

EO 121 restructures the state’s department with the largest budget and number of employees into two departments aligned by key functions. The restructuring was designed to ensure continuity of services to beneficiaries and timely payments to providers. Services to the public were kept intact so operations could continue uninterrupted.

While both departments serve Alaskans, they have different focus areas and missions:

Department of Family and Community Services (DFCS)

Mission Statement: *To provide support, safety and personal well-being for vulnerable Alaskans.*

DFCS aligns the facility-based divisions and around the clock community work of the Office of Children’s Services. DFCS will focus on providing direct care services to Alaskans.

Includes these divisions:

- Division of Juvenile Justice
- Alaska Psychiatric Institute
- Alaska Pioneer Homes
- Office of Children’s Services

Department of Health (DOH)

Mission Statement: *Promoting the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of Alaskans.*

DOH oversight includes program eligibility, public health, and the Medicaid program. DOH’s alignment of payment, processes and programs will provide time and space for necessary stakeholder conversations and negotiations for future innovations within Medicaid and Public Health, improving health outcomes for all Alaskans.

Includes these divisions:

- Division of Public Health
- Division of Public Assistance
- Division of Behavioral Health
- Division of Health Care Services
- Division of Senior and Disabilities Services

Individuals with questions regarding the reorganization may send them via email to dhssreorg@alaska.gov.

For more information, visit reorg.dhss.alaska.gov.

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