

Department of Health

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THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

April 17, 2026

Re: Tribal Notice of State Plan Amendment – PASRR Categorical Eligibility and Appendix K Assessment Update

Dear Tribal Health Leaders,

On behalf of the Department of Health (the department) and in keeping with the responsibility to conduct tribal consultation, I am writing to inform you of a proposed future Medicaid state plan amendment (SPA). This opportunity for consultation is concurrent with the public notice period for the proposed SPA.

Purpose and content of the proposed amendment:

The department intends to submit a SPA to change the Section 3.1 – Attachment K and Section 4.39 – Attachment A – Categorical Determination for the Preadmission Screening and Annual Resident Review in Nursing Facilities (PASARR).

Section 3.1 – Attachment K will be updated to remove reference to the Consumer Assessment Tool (CAT) and the Inventory for Client and Agency Planning (ICAP) assessment tools and will broaden the language to allow for the department to transition to new assessment tools.

Section 4.39 – Attachment A will be updated to reflect current categorical determinations, remove outdated, offensive language, and improve readability of how determinations are made in regards to the PASARR.

Anticipated impact on Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native/American Indian beneficiaries:

The proposed amendment is expected to have a positive impact on Medicaid-eligible Alaska Native and American Indian beneficiaries. By broadening the language in Section 3.1 – Attachment K, the department is allowing for a transition to new assessment tools that are better able to assess participant eligibility and service needs.

Changes to Section 4.39 – Attachment A, will create an opportunity for a more thorough

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evaluation to determine whether specialized services are needed, support the implementation of additional resources, and promote continuity of mental health care for individuals residing in nursing homes.

Anticipated impact on tribal health programs and the Indian Health Service:

The proposed amendment is expected to support tribal health programs and the Indian Health Service.

The broadened language in Section 3.1 - Attachment K will allow the department to transition to assessment tools that are more effective at determining program eligibility and service needs for all participants, including Alaska Native and American Indian beneficiaries.

The revisions to Section 4.39 – Attachment A will improve coordination around PASRR evaluations, facilitating earlier identification of individuals who may need specialized services, and strengthening continuity of care for Alaska Native and American Indian beneficiaries transitioning into or residing in nursing facilities. This added clarity and consistency in the assessment process can help tribal providers plan for services more effectively and ensure that beneficiaries receive appropriate supports aligned with their mental health and long-term care needs.

Mechanism and timeline for comment

Written comments or questions regarding the proposed amendment are due no later than the close of business, Wednesday, May 20, 2026. If seeking an in-person meeting regarding the proposed changes, please provide a written request within 15 days of the date of this letter. **Please direct all written correspondence to Eva Venema**, Alaska Department of Health, 3601 C Street, Suite 902, Anchorage, AK 99503, or eva.venema@alaska.gov.

Sincerely,

Christal Hays
Medicaid State Plan Coordinator