

ANHB UPDATE



July 17, 2026

Inside this issue:

- DOH Releases Updated Medicaid Tribal Billing Manual
- RHTP Updates & July 1 Advisory Council Meeting
- Bulk Fuel Loan Program Increase Takes Effect
- DBH Schedules Training on ASAM 4th Edition
- SAMHSA CCBHC Funding Opportunities
- 1115 Behavioral Health Service Authorizations Expire
- IHS Initiates Tribal Consultation on FY 2026 SDPI Increase
- CMS Proposes Reforms to Medicare Physician Payment and Value-Based Care Programs
- CMS Rescinds “Fast Track” Federal Review Process for Section 1115 Demonstration Extensions
- CMS Announces Changes to Budget Neutrality Scoring for 1115 Demonstration Waivers
- HHS Announces New Funding to Address Mental Illness, Addiction, Homelessness
- IHS July 9, 2026 Dear Tribal Leader Letter
- ANHB Workgroups
- Upcoming Events

STATE UPDATES



DOH Releases Updated Medicaid Tribal Billing Manual

The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) has released an [updated version of the Medicaid Tribal Billing Manual](#). The new manual is a complete revision of previous versions. However, there are no changes to the program. Coverage and enrollment requirements remain the same. DOH welcomes provider feedback on the new manual. Providers should send comments to doh.hcs.operations.info@alaska.gov, with the subject line "Tribal Billing Manual Comments," by September 15, 2026. Feedback will be considered for the next annual review in October.

RHTP Updates & July 1 Advisory Council Meeting

On July 1st, the Alaska Department of Health (DOH) held a meeting of the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) Advisory Council. DOH provided information on the current status of first year funding proposal review, indicating they expect to complete review in late July and have funds go out to applicants in August. The [meeting slides](#) share more details on the review timeline, as well as a summary of the applications that have advanced to the current stage. View a recording of the Advisory Council meeting [here](#). ANHB continues to engage with DOH through the monthly Tribal-State RHTP Workgroup.

Bulk Fuel Loan Program Increase Takes Effect

House Bill (HB) 388, intended to help rural Alaska communities weather this year's fuel crisis, took effect on July 3, 2026. [HB 388](#) doubles the cap on the state's Bulk Fuel Loan Program from \$750,000 to \$1.5 million. The Bulk Fuel Loan Program allows communities with populations under 2,000 to borrow funds to purchase heating oil, propane, and gasoline. With fuel prices this year driven higher by global supply disruptions, the previous \$750,000 cap was far short of what many communities needed.

DBH Schedules Training on ASAM 4th Edition

The Alaska Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) has scheduled a one-day training on the updated Fourth Edition of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Criteria. The training will take place on August 12, 2026, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM and will be virtual. [Register here](#). DBH has indicated that regulations updating ASAM to the Fourth Edition are upcoming as part of the Division's AO 360 regulatory reform plan.

SAMHSA CCBHC Funding Opportunities

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released new Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs). Alaska was recently selected to participate in the CCBHC Medicaid Demonstration. The Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) encourages

2026 Meeting Dates

July 28-29, 2026

IHS Tribal Self-Governance Advisory Committee (TSGAC)
Washington, DC

August 4-6, 2026

ANHB Mega Meeting Anchorage, AK

August 10, 2026

RHTP Regional Planning Meeting
Ketchikan, AK

August 13, 2026

FY 2028-FY 2029 NTBFW Planning and Evaluation Meeting
Washington, DC, and Virtual

August 16-21, 2026

NIHB National Tribal Health Conference
Chandler, AZ

August 19-21, 2026

ANTHC Board of Directors Meeting
Anchorage, AK

August 31, 2026

IHS National Tribal Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Behavioral Health

September 9-10, 2026

CDC/ATSDR Tribal Advisory Committee
Tucson, AZ

September 22, 2026

RHTP Regional Planning Meeting

behavioral health providers exploring implementation or expansion of the CCBHC model to review the following opportunities:

- **CCBHC-PDI:** [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic \(CCBHC\): Planning, Development, and Implementation Grant](#)
- **CCBHC-IA:** [Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Improvement and Advancement](#)

Applications are due to SAMHSA on August 17, 2026. For questions or support related to CCBHC readiness or implementation, please contact DBH's CCBHC Project Director at Anastasia.larion@alaska.gov.

1115 Behavioral Health Service Authorizations Expire

As a reminder, the Alaska Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) provided notice that the administrative flexibility period for 1115 Behavioral Health Service Authorizations (1115 SAs) would end June 30, 2026. Beginning July 1, requests submitted without sufficient documentation to make a determination will be returned to the provider (RTP) for additional information. If the requested information is not received within the timeframe identified in the RTP letter, the request will be administratively closed. Questions can be routed to the DBH MPASS inbox at doh.dbh.mpassunit@alaska.gov.

FEDERAL UPDATES



IHS Initiates Tribal Consultation on FY 2026 SDPI Increase

In a July 13, 2026, Dear Tribal Leader Letter, the Indian Health Service (IHS) initiated Tribal Consultation and Urban Confer on the use of approximately \$70 million in Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) funding, including \$50 million associated with the fiscal year 2026 SDPI funding increase and \$20 million in one-time unobligated SDPI funding. IHS seeks written comments in response to a series of questions regarding use of the funding and the future direction of SDPI. [View the Dear Tribal Leader Letter](#) for more details.

CMS Proposes Reforms to Medicare Physician Payment and Value-Based Care Programs

On July 14, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a [proposed rule](#) that would reform Medicare's value-based care and physician payment programs. CMS indicates these reforms will include significant improvements to the Medicare Shared Savings Program, the nation's largest value-based payment program. CMS proposes to sunset traditional Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) reporting in 2029 and transition toward more clinically meaningful specialty-focused MIPS Value Pathways (MVPs). CMS also plans to make updates that will modernize the Physician Fee Schedule (PFS). Read the CMS [press release on the proposed rule](#) and [fact sheet on the Physician Fee Schedule changes](#).

Anchorage, AK

September 22-24, 2026

HHS STAC Meeting
San Diego, CA

October 29, 2026

Medicaid Task
Force
Anchorage, AK

November 2, 2026

IHS National Tribal
Advisory Committee
(NTAC) on
Behavioral Health
Virtual

November 18-20, 2026

ANTHC Board of
Directors Meeting
Anchorage, AK

December 2, 2026

ANTHC Annual
Meeting
Anchorage, AK

December 8-9, 2026

HHS STAC Meeting
Washington, DC

December 8-10, 2026

ANHB Annual
Meeting & IHS
Budget Formulation
Anchorage, AK

2027 Meeting Dates

March 23-24, 2027

ATHC Pre-
Negotiations
Anchorage, AK

May 10-14, 2027

ATHC Final
Negotiations
Anchorage, AK

CMS Rescinds “Fast Track” Federal Review Process for Section 1115 Demonstration Extensions

On July 7, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [rescinded](#) previous, 2015 guidance establishing an expedited review process for certain Section 1115 Medicaid and CHIP demonstration extensions. The change follows new statutory requirements that require the CMS Chief Actuary to certify the budget neutrality of all Section 1115 demonstrations. As a result, waiver extensions that previously qualified for expedited review will now undergo the standard federal review process. CMS states that the current fast-track extension process could make it difficult for CMS to evaluate 1115 renewal applications consistent with the new budget neutrality requirements.

CMS Announces Changes to Budget Neutrality Scoring for 1115 Demonstration Waivers

On June 11, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a [Dear State Medicaid Director letter](#) announcing plans to strengthen budget neutrality standards for Medicaid section 1115 demonstrations. Beginning January 1, 2027, the CMS Chief Actuary must certify that Medicaid section 1115 demonstration proposals are budget neutral. There will be changes to the analyses and documentation states will need to submit to CMS for the Chief Actuary's review. CMS states that the forthcoming rule will establish a more rigorous and transparent framework for evaluating demonstration project proposals while preserving state flexibility.

HHS Announces New Funding to Address Mental Illness, Addiction, Homelessness

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. recently announced over \$700 million in funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The funding includes a \$96 million opportunity for the Safety Through Recovery, Engagement, and Evidence-based Treatment and Support (STREETs) program, along with \$612 million in funding opportunities for additional behavioral health programs. [View the SAMHSA announcement](#) for more information.

IHS July 9, 2026 Dear Tribal Leader Letter

In a July 9, 2026, [Dear Tribal Leader Letter](#), the Indian Health Service (IHS) Chief of Staff writes to request assistance in identifying priority professions for inclusion into categories eligible for the IHS Scholarship Program in academic year 2027-2028 and the IHS Loan Repayment Program (LRP) in fiscal year (FY) 2027.

- [Enclosure 1:](#) Academic Year 2027-2028 Priority Chart - Scholarship Program Survey
- [Enclosure 2:](#) Fiscal Year 2027 Priority Chart - Loan Repayment Program Survey

OTHER UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS



ANHB Workgroups

ANHB encourages participation in its workgroups. Please see below a list of current ANHB workgroups. If you would like yourself or someone from your team added to any of these workgroups, please let us know by emailing anhb@anhb.org. If you have questions about workgroup focus or time commitment, please reach out to us as well.

- **Medicaid Task Force (MTF):** Convenes in May and October with the Alaska Department of Health (DOH) to address Medicaid issues and the Medicaid Open Items list.
- **Medicaid Eligibility Workgroup:** Monthly workgroup with the Alaska Department of Health to address the Medicaid application backlog, Division of Public Assistance (DPA) modernization, and related areas of concern.
- **Medicaid Travel Policy Workgroup:** Quarterly or ad-hoc workgroup with the Alaska Department of Health focused on Medicaid travel issues at the policy level.
- **Tribal CFO Workgroup:** Monthly or quarterly workgroup of Tribal CFOs and policy analysts regarding common issues including Appendix A.
- **Legislative Committee:** Develops ANHB's State and Federal policy priorities annually in fall and winter. Meets weekly during State Legislative Session to formulate ANHB advocacy strategies and build consensus on state and federal engagement.
- **Rural Health Transformation Program Workgroup:** Ad-hoc Tribal workgroup focused on shared concerns around the Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP).
- **Village Built Clinic Workgroup:** Ad-hoc workgroup with the Indian Health Service (IHS) on funding for Village Built Clinics (VBCs).
- **HR 1 Workgroup:** Bi-weekly workgroup to share knowledge and build consensus around Tribal priorities related to the implementation of H.R. 1 and engage with the Alaska Department of Health.
- **Traditional Healing Workgroup:** Joint workgroup with the Alaska Department of Health on amendment of Alaska's 1115 waiver to allow for Traditional Healing services.

The Voice of Alaska Tribal Health Since 1968

Alaska Native Health Board | 4000 Ambassador Drive, Suite 101, Anchorage, AK 99508

907-729-7510 | www.anhb.org | anhb@anhb.org

Please reply 'Unsubscribe' if you no longer wish to receive ANHB Updates.