

Adam Crum
Commissioner

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**Department of Health
and Social Services**

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Clinton Bennett, DHSS, 907-269-4996, clinton.bennett@alaska.gov

**DHSS distributing \$4 million in CARES Act funding to support
residential congregate care facilities**

Nov. 6, 2020 ANCHORAGE — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) has received approval from Governor Dunleavy to begin distributing approximately \$4 million in CARES Act funds to residential congregate care facilities to help address additional expenses incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Assisted living homes, skilled nursing facilities and other residential congregate facilities approved by DHSS, such as mental health and substance use disorder treatment programs, will be eligible to receive a one-time flat rate payment to help offset expenses related to COVID-19.

The funds are intended to provide financial support to these facilities so they can maintain their operations at full capacity and ensure their services continue to be available even as COVID-19 cases increase in Alaska. The facilities are a critical step on the spectrum of care, especially for hospitals that rely on them to provide a safe setting for patients following acute-care hospitalizations.

“We recognize that it’s challenging for residential congregate facilities to provide care for residents with complex needs while also preventing exposure to COVID-19,” said Commissioner Adam Crum. “I’m pleased DHSS is able to provide this additional support so these facilities have the financial resources to provide care to residents with COVID-19 and compensation to employees who must not work while positive for COVID-19. These payments will help ensure a safe environment for staff and all patients under their care.”

The payments can only be used consistent with the CARES Act requirements and are given to providers to:

- Purchase personal protective equipment.
- Make minor environmental modifications.
- Pay the wages of employees who test positive for COVID-19 while they stay home to isolate.
- Pay relief workers to cover for those employees while they are unable to work.

A tiered system will be used to determine the amount of the payment based on the size of the facility. To receive the funds, providers must simply submit a signed statement confirming their interest in participating in the program and that funds will only be used for these specific purposes. More detailed information, including the form to be signed and submitted, will be sent directly to providers through standard electronic means of communications from the DHSS division they regularly work with.

About the CARES Act – The [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security \(CARES\) Act](#) was signed into law March 27, 2020. Under the act, state, local and Tribal governments receive payments through the Coronavirus Relief Fund to help their communities address financial and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Payments from the Coronavirus Relief Fund are required to be used only to cover expenses that:

- Are necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency;
- Were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020 for the state or government; and
- Were incurred between March 1, 2020 and Dec. 30, 2020.

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