

**CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 258(HSS)**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

**BY THE HOUSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Offered: 2/19/24**

**Referred: Finance**

**Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE STAPP**

**A BILL**

**FOR AN ACT ENTITLED**

1 **"An Act relating to general relief and burial assistance; and providing for an effective**  
2 **date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 **\* Section 1.** AS 43.23.240(b) is amended to read:

5 (b) An individual who is denied medical assistance under 42 U.S.C. 1396 -  
6 1396p (Social Security Act, Title XIX) solely because of the receipt of a permanent  
7 fund dividend by the individual or by a member of the individual's household is  
8 eligible for state-funded medical assistance under AS 47.25.120 - 47.25.300 (general  
9 relief **and burial** assistance program). The individual is entitled to receive, for a  
10 period not to exceed four months, the same level of medical assistance as the  
11 individual would have received under 42 U.S.C. 1396 - 1396p (Social Security Act,  
12 Title XIX) had there been no permanent fund dividend program.

13 **\* Sec. 2.** AS 43.23.240(c) is amended to read:

14 (c) An individual who is denied assistance solely because permanent fund

1 dividends received by the individual or by a member of the individual's household are  
 2 counted as income or resources under federal law or regulation is eligible for cash  
 3 assistance under AS 47.25.120 - 47.25.300 (general relief **and burial** assistance  
 4 program). Notwithstanding the limit in AS 47.25.130, the individual is entitled to  
 5 receive, for a period not to exceed four months, the same amount as the individual  
 6 would have received under other public assistance programs had there been no  
 7 permanent fund dividend program.

8 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 44.29.020(a) is amended to read:

9 (a) The Department of Health shall administer state programs, including

- 10 (1) maternal and child health services;  
 11 (2) preventive medical services;  
 12 (3) public health nursing services;  
 13 (4) nutrition services;  
 14 (5) health education;  
 15 (6) laboratories;  
 16 (7) mental health treatment and diagnosis, except for mental health  
 17 treatment and diagnosis under AS 47.30.660 - 47.30.915;  
 18 (8) medical facilities;  
 19 (9) adult public assistance;  
 20 (10) the Alaska temporary assistance program;  
 21 (11) general relief **and burial assistance**;  
 22 (12) a comprehensive smoking education, tobacco use prevention, and  
 23 tobacco control program; to the maximum extent possible, the department shall  
 24 administer the program required under this paragraph by grant to or contract with one  
 25 or more organizations in the state; the department's program must include
- 26 (A) a community-based tobacco use prevention and cessation  
 27 component addressing the needs of youth and adults that includes use of  
 28 cessation aids such as a nicotine patch or a nicotine gum tobacco substitute;
- 29 (B) youth-based efforts that involve youth in the design and  
 30 implementation of tobacco control efforts;
- 31 (C) anti-tobacco counter-marketing targeting both youth and

1 adult populations designed to communicate messages to help prevent youth  
 2 initiation of tobacco use, promote cessation among tobacco users, and educate  
 3 the public about the lethal effects of exposure to secondhand smoke;

4 (D) tobacco use surveys of youth and adult populations  
 5 concerning knowledge, awareness, attitude, and use of tobacco products; and

6 (E) an enforcement component;

7 (13) licensure and regulation of child care facilities;

8 (14) a comprehensive marijuana use education and treatment program;

9 to the extent possible, the department shall administer the program required under this  
 10 paragraph by grant to or contract with one or more organizations in the state; the  
 11 department's program must include

12 (A) a community-based marijuana misuse prevention  
 13 component; the community-based component must provide for a youth  
 14 services grant program to

15 (i) reduce initiation and promote cessation of marijuana  
 16 use by youth, reduce youth access to marijuana products, and reduce  
 17 exposure of youth to impaired driving dangers related to marijuana use;

18 (ii) provide recreational, educational, and character-  
 19 building programs for youth outside school hours; and

20 (iii) address marijuana use prevention through outcome-  
 21 based curricula, adult and peer mentoring, and opportunities for  
 22 positive, prosocial leisure and recreational activities;

23 (B) marijuana public education designed to communicate  
 24 messages to help prevent youth initiation of marijuana use, educate the public  
 25 about the effects of marijuana use, and educate the public about marijuana  
 26 laws;

27 (C) surveys of

28 (i) youth and adult populations concerning knowledge,  
 29 awareness, attitude, and use of marijuana products;

30 (ii) the need for trained professionals working in  
 31 organizations described in this paragraph;

1 (D) the development of plans to address the need for trained  
 2 professionals and to assist in implementing a training program for those  
 3 professionals;

4 (E) monitoring of population health status related to the  
 5 consequences of marijuana use; and

6 (F) substance abuse screening, brief intervention, and referral  
 7 to treatment.

8 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 47.05.085(a) is amended to read:

9 (a) The commissioner or the commissioner's designee at the director level may  
 10 issue subpoenas to compel the production of books, papers, correspondence,  
 11 memoranda, and other records considered necessary as evidence in connection with an  
 12 investigation under or the administration of AS 47.07 (medical assistance), AS 47.08  
 13 (assistance for catastrophic illnesses and acute or chronic medical conditions),  
 14 AS 47.25 (day care assistance, child care grants, general relief **and burial assistance**,  
 15 adult public assistance, and food stamps), and AS 47.27 (Alaska temporary assistance  
 16 program).

17 \* **Sec. 5.** AS 47.25.260 is amended to read:

18 **Sec. 47.25.260. Recovery and disposition of allowances improperly**  
 19 **granted.** If the department finds that a general relief **and burial assistance** allowance  
 20 has been improperly granted, it shall investigate, and if it appears from the  
 21 investigation that the assistance was improperly granted, the department may cancel  
 22 the allowance and notify the recipient of the cancellation. The state then has a claim  
 23 against the person who received the improper allowance. The claim may be enforced  
 24 by civil action in the name of the state by the attorney general to recover the amount  
 25 paid to the person, with interest, together with the necessary costs of the action.

26 \* **Sec. 6.** AS 47.25.300(1) is amended to read:

27 (1) "assistance" means financial assistance to or on behalf of a needy  
 28 person, **for** [INCLUDING] subsistence (food, [SHELTER,] fuel, **and** clothing [, AND  
 29 UTILITIES]), [AND] transportation, medical needs, **assisted living facility expenses,**  
 30 **funeral and** [(INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, HOSPITALIZATION,  
 31 NURSING, AND CONVALESCENT CARE),] burial **expenses**, and other determined

1 needs;

2 \* **Sec. 7.** AS 47.45.122(a) is amended to read:

3 (a) An individual whose public assistance is denied or reduced solely because  
4 of the receipt of a bonus under AS 47.45.010 - 47.45.160 by the individual or by a  
5 member of the individual's household is eligible for assistance under the general relief  
6 **and burial** assistance program in AS 47.25.120 - 47.25.300. Notwithstanding the limit  
7 in AS 47.25.130, the individual is entitled to receive the same amount as the individual  
8 would have received under other public assistance programs had the individual not  
9 received a longevity bonus.

10 \* **Sec. 8.** This Act takes effect January 1, 2025.