



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of  
Health and Social Services

OFFICE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES  
Director's Office

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Dear Resource Family,

Important message, please read this letter in its entirety. Medicaid is a health insurance program that provides coverage to many Alaskans. This essential health program for children and adults is jointly funded by our state dollars and the federal government through the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which is the federal agency that administers the Medicaid program.

On February 26, 2016, CMS released a letter to the states which broadened the options for pursuing 100% federal funding for health services that American Indian or Alaska Native Medicaid beneficiaries receive "through" a tribal facility. This new authority could provide our State with needed additional federal Medicaid funding that will help ease the burden of our state general fund budget, but we need your help to access these new funds.

To receive additional federal funds, the department must ensure that Alaska Native children placed in state custody are, to the greatest extent possible, connected to a tribal health organization. To help either establish or maintain these connections with a tribal health organization, we ask that when OCS takes a child into custody, you do the following:

- When a foster child is placed in your home, ask the OCS caseworker who the child's primary care physician is. If a foster child has had a long term medical provider, continue to use the same medical provider, if possible.
- When a foster child does not have a primary care physician, utilize a tribal health organization.
- When seeking a new medical provider, choose a provider within a tribal health organization.
- If the child is in need of immediate medical attention, see that the child is taken to a tribal health organization for that care.
- If you are unsure as to what tribal health organization to go to or experience difficulties in getting a timely appointment scheduled, please let us know so we may try to remedy that issue directly.

Since this new door was opened to states, it has and will continue to allow Alaska to capture new federal funding that will ease the burden on our state budget. For questions and to discuss your specific situation and needs, please contact your licensing worker or the child's caseworker. I appreciate your diligence and follow through to ensure we are doing our part to keep costs down while also still meeting our children's individual needs.

Thank you for your cooperation and caring for Alaska's foster children.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Lawton".

Christy Lawton,  
Division Director