

State of Alaska Department of Health

Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) Overview of Alaska's Plan

Heidi Hedberg, Commissioner



Rural Health Transformation Program Basics



The RHTP is a five-year, \$50 billion federal initiative to transform rural health care delivery and improve access and health outcomes.



Half of the funds will be distributed across states based on rural health needs, the other half will be split evenly.



Alaska's rural nature positions us well to receive a substantial federal investment in annual allotments.

September 16, 2025
CMS released the
Notice of Funding
Opportunity



November 5, 2025
State applications
due to CMS



November –
December 2025
CMS reviews RHTP
applications



December 2025
CMS award
decisions due

Overarching Goals and Initiatives



Goal 1: Promote Lifelong Health and Wellbeing for Rural, Remote, and Frontier Alaskans

Healthy Beginnings

Health Care Access

Healthy Communities

Goal 2: Build Sustainable Outcomes Driven Health Systems

Pay for Value:
Fiscal Sustainability

Goal 3: Drive Workforce and Technology Innovation

Strengthen Workforce

Spark Technology & Innovation

Target Populations for Alaska's RHTP



Pregnant
and
Postpartum
Women



Underserved
Children and
Youth



Individuals
with
Behavioral
Health and
Substance
Use
Disorders



Adults with
or at Risk for
Chronic
Disease



Seniors with
Dual
Eligibility
(Medicare
and
Medicaid)

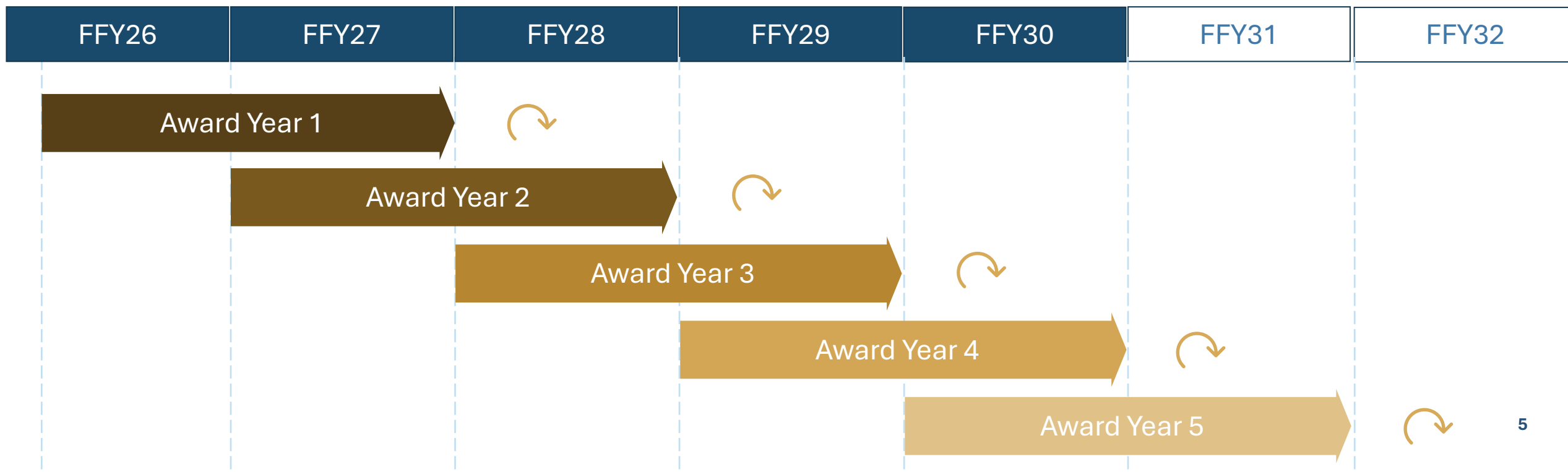


Individuals
with
Complex
Needs

RHTP Funding Timeline



- Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026–2030: States will receive annual awards. States have one year to incur costs (obligate funds) and an additional year to finish spending them.
- Begin March 31, 2028, CMS will start annually redistributing unspent funds. Any final reallocated funds must be spent by the end of FFY 2032.



Healthy Beginnings



Goal: Strengthen maternal and child health as a foundation for healthy families, especially in rural areas.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- Technology-enabled maternal care
- Facility renovations and modernization
- Workforce supports and staffing models
- Home-visiting programs and early intervention
- Youth programming in school-based and community-based settings
- Technical Assistance to support *Healthy Beginnings* projects



Health Care Access



Goal: Expand and sustain access to essential health services across Alaska's communities, both on and off the road system.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- Primary care
- Behavioral health
- Dental services
- Specialist services
- Complex care homes
- Traditional Healing services
- Pharmacy Services
- *(continued on next slide)*



Health Care Access



Goal: Expand and sustain access to essential health services across Alaska's communities, both on and off the road system.

Potential Uses of Funds (continued):

- Intellectual and developmental disabilities services
- EMS and trauma care
- Senior supports
- Home and community-based residential services, skilled nursing/long-term care facilities, and post-acute care transition programs
- Transportation networks
- Provider gap analysis
- Technical Assistance to support *Health Care Access* projects



Healthy Communities



Goal: Address the root causes of poor health at the community level, invest in preventive care, and promote healthy lifestyles.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- Consumer-facing digital tools for chronic disease
- Data infrastructure to support population health
- Integrated primary and preventive care units
- Community health programs, wellness centers
- Community-led regional health care delivery plans
- Home modifications
- Technical Assistance to support *Healthy Communities* projects



Pay for Value



Goal: Build long-term financial stability through payment models that empower rural providers and incentivize investment in innovative care models.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- Provider Technical Assistance to explore value-based care participation
- Back-office solutions for providers
- IT infrastructure for value-based care and alternative payment models
- Regional care coordination models

(continued on next slide)



Pay for Value



Goal: Build long-term financial stability through payment models that empower rural providers and incentivize innovative care models.



Potential Uses of Funds (continued):

- Alternative payment methodologies for hospitals, and prevention and chronic disease management
- Exploration of CMMI's AHEAD model
- Care models for dually-eligible Alaskans
- Planning grants to support value-based payment arrangements and alternative payment models
- Technical Assistance to support *Pay for Value* projects

Strengthen Workforce



Goal: Build a robust and resilient rural health care workforce.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- “Grow our own” certification programs
- Training and workforce development programs, including reskill and upskill
- Expansion of physician residency programs
- Structured incentives for high-need rural providers
- Expanded scopes of practice for certain providers
- Housing and child care recruitment and retention incentives
- Technical Assistance to support *Strengthen Workforce* projects



Spark Technology & Innovation



Goal: Harness data and technology to enable rural providers to deliver secure, efficient, and high-quality care.

Potential Uses of Funds:

- Consumer-facing digital tools
- AI tools for providers
- Community-based system navigation apps
- Health information exchange projects
- Telehealth-enabled specialty care programs
- Emerging technologies pilot projects (e.g., drones)
- Data analytics across multi-payer systems
- IT infrastructure to support value-based care
- Rural health infrastructure fund
- Rural technology catalyst fund

Next Steps



Alaska will open its first application cycle in early 2026.

Organizations can prepare by:

- Talking with partners and local leaders about community needs
- Identifying projects that could strengthen rural or statewide health
- Signing up for email alerts to stay up to date
- Thinking about how your project aligns with:
 - RHTP goals
 - Alaska's initiatives
 - Community impact
 - Long-term sustainability



Stay Informed



For more information, please visit:

<https://health.alaska.gov/en/education/rural-health-transformation-program/>

or email:

DOH.RHTF@alaska.gov

Rural Health Transformation Program

The Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP) is a \$50 billion federal opportunity to improve health care in rural areas across all fifty states.

The Alaska Department of Health (DOH) has submitted an application to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to bring this funding to Alaska.

- \$50 billion will be allocated to participating states over five years, with half of the funds split evenly across all states and half allocated based on rural health needs
- Alaska is expected to receive a larger share due to its rural geography
- Funds may be used for a wide variety of activities to improve rural health care, including technology modernization, workforce development, innovative care models, and prevention measures for chronic disease and substance use disorder

Alaska's Application and Proposed Initiatives

As part of its application, Alaska proposed six statewide initiatives that reflect ideas and feedback from hundreds of organizations and community partners. These initiatives outline how Alaska could use RHTP funds to improve access to care, strengthen the workforce, support healthier communities, and transform Alaska's health care delivery systems.

You can view the program summary and proposed initiatives document here:

[Alaska RHTP Program Summary](#)

[Alaska RHTP Proposed Initiatives](#)

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Thank You

Questions?