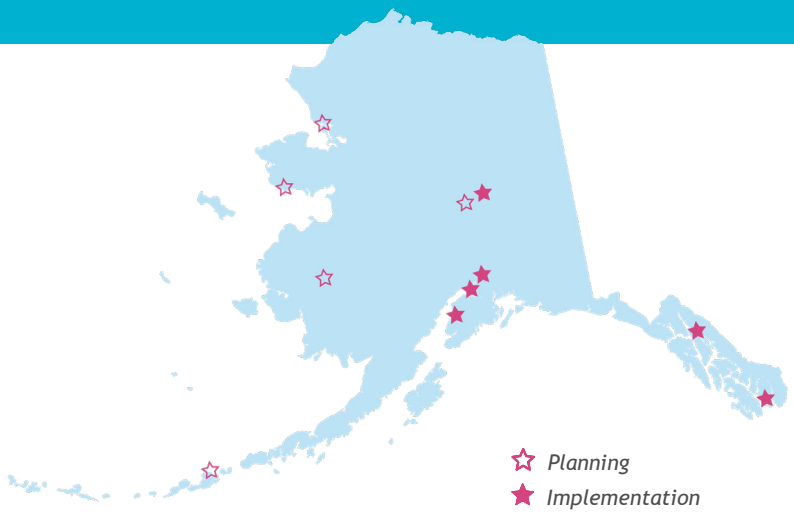
Crisis Now

Implementing a Behavioral Health Crisis System of Care in Alaska

Implementation Update: October 2026

Community Highlights



Anchorage

Anchorage's crisis system is supported by multi agency coordination through the Anchorage Crisis Collaborative (ACC). The ACC works on system flow mapping, improving data availability to measure system outputs and outcomes, and strengthening connections between hospitals, law enforcement, and crisis partners.

Two 23-hour crisis stabilization and short-term stabilization programs are nearing completion. Providence Alaska anticipates opening their programs by the end of 2026, and Southcentral Foundation plans to open in early 2027. Read the Anchorage Daily News article to learn more.

Ketchikan

Work continues to enhance Ketchikan's local capacity building and systems within the Crisis Now framework. The community has had several Mental Health First Aid training opportunities and collaboration on postvention care and community action planning. Ketchikan Indian Community's (KIC) permanent supportive housing opened on September 1st and and KIC began review of applications for potential residents. KIC's S'eenáa Hít Navigation Center is about to enter the construction stage.

Congratulations to the mobile integrated health (MIH) team on its second anniversary this summer. The team is now staffed with two medics and a part time social worker. The team has been asked to present their unique model to others around the state in multiple sectors.

The Ketchikan Wellness Coaltion's Crisis Now Coordinator and Behavioral Health Program Director participated in a ceremony with the Borough Assembly as the Mayor read into record a proclamation recognizing September as suicide prevention month.

Juneau

In May, Alaska was one of ten states selected to participate in a four-year Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Medicaid Demonstration Program. One of the pilot providers includes JAMHI Health & Wellness. CCBHCs are required to provide crisis services, timely access to outpatient care, and a comprehensive range of behavioral health services. Work is underway to explore how JAMHI Health & Wellness' services under the CCBHC requirements will integrate with crisis services provided by Capital City Fire/Rescue and Bartlett Regional Hospital.

Capital City Fire/Rescue began remodeling the Sobering Center in early September 2026. The renovated space will include an intake room for virtual assessments with behavioral health providers for guests who desire to start treatment upon leaving the center.

Kotzebue

Maniilaq Association's prefabricated EmPATH Unit arrived via barge in Kotzebue and groundwork and assembly are underway. When completed, the unit will be attached to the existing Maniilaq Health Center Emergency Department, creating a dedicated space for behavioral health crisis stabilization within the hospital. Agnew::Beck Consulting traveled to Kotzebue in August 2026 to convene law enforcement partners and provide an update about project progress as well as bring together Maniilaq partners involved in EmPATH Unit implementation. Unit opening is anticipated in summer 2027.



August 2026 visit

Central Kenai

Staff from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, the State of Alaska Office of Emergency Medical Services, and Agnew::Beck Consulting visited Central Peninsula Hospital (CPH) in September 2026 to hear firsthand about the successes of, and plans for, the organization's mobile crisis services. The CPH Mobile Crisis Team began responding to behavioral health crisis calls in December 2025. The team is available 9AM-5PM Monday through Friday and is dispatched through the Central Peninsula service area by the region's 911 dispatch center.



September 2026 visit



*The Trust recently released a 2026 video update on how Crisis Now is changing Alaska. You can **watch the video here**.*

Unalaska

Construction is underway on Illiuliuk Family and Health Services' new Behavioral Health Safe Room, supported by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority. Foundation piles have been completed, and modular components are currently being transported for installation. The project is on track for completion in December 2026 with a ribbon cutting ceremony anticipated in January 2027. The new space will support safe, compassionate behavioral health care for the Unalaska community.



IFHS expansion foundation

Mat-Su

In February 2026, the Alaska Department of Health approved Mat-Su Regional Medical Center's (MSRMC) certificate of need for a behavioral health hospital in Palmer. The free-standing facility is anticipated to relocate the 16 beds currently in the MSRMC inpatient unit for a total of 27 inpatient beds for adults and 18 beds for adolescents. Read the news release to learn more.

At the beginning of the year, the Mat-Su Community Care Team reviewed the values and indicators of success established in 2021 for the crisis system in Mat-Su and assessed how the current system is doing based on these standards. This work highlighted progress made and potential next steps for the group. These conversations and assessment of referral data for individuals interacting with the region's behavioral health crisis systems of care continue to demonstrate the complexities faced by individuals in crisis.

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the Crisis Now project management team wishes to thank Melissa Tofflon, who left her role as Mat-Su's Community Coordinator after five years.

The Mat-Su Health Foundation has posted an RFP for a new crisis response coordinator. The deadline for submissions has been extended to Friday, November 13th at 5 pm.

See this link for more details.

Fairbanks

The City of Fairbanks and surrounding region continues extensive cross-sector engagement on behavioral health and housing initiatives for the most vulnerable members of the community. Over 50 partners met to spur planning efforts at the end of June, including the leadership team from Tanana Chiefs Conference and representatives from the offices of Senator Murkowski and Senator Sullivan. The Fairbanks Housing & Homeless Coalition and the North Star Community Foundation, with support from the City, are raising funds for a low-barrier Warming Center which will be co-located in the new peer crisis stabilization location operated by Northern Hope Center. This co-location will allow for a seamless transition for individuals in crisis to receive crisis care and wraparound behavioral health support. The City additionally partnered with Fairbanks Neighborhood Housing Services for two housing grants to assist Emergency Service Patrol and MIH patients with housing support and rental assistance funds. The funds are also available to Fairbanks Youth Advocates to assist with an age group not seen as frequently by these teams.

The City utilized National Opioid Settlement funds in May to create a street outreach team, called HEART, to provide focused outreach to unsheltered members of the community in public spaces and encampments. Initial data shows naloxone kits are heavily requested and utilized within this population. The City also brought on a second Community Paramedic for the Fire Department's MIH program resulting in 7-day coverage.

The mobile crisis team (MCT), operated by Alaska Behavioral Health, saw record breaking call volume this summer and expect to reach 1,850 calls for the calendar year – the equivalent of one month of calls logged with the Fairbanks Police Department (FPD). Liz Sewell, an MCT clinician, provided instruction during FPD's crisis intervention team (CIT) program with FPD CIT Coordinator, Carie Howard as part of ongoing cross training efforts between crisis responders and law enforcement.

Alaska Behavioral Health is the second provider in Alaska's four-year Certified CCBHC Medicaid Demonstration Program. Work is underway to explore how Alaska Behavioral Health's services under the CCBHC requirements will integrate with the City's crisis systems of care.

To learn more about community implementation efforts or to get involved, contact:

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Someone to Contact

In May 2025, Careline was the successful bidder through a State of Alaska procurement to provide 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline services. The contract is for one year with four, one-year renewal options at the discretion of the State.

One of the required deliverables of this contract requires technical and operational integration with the statewide health information exchange (HIE) to support care coordination through sharing health data such as referrals or care plans. Careline and healthEconnect – Alaska's designated HIE – have partnered to pilot a referral integration pilot. The pilot plans to create a proof-of-concept demonstration of the referral mechanisms between Careline and the HIE. Careline and healthEconnect are looking for a partner to pilot closed-loop referrals between Careline and a partner organization through HIE. If your organization currently uses the HIE and is open to exploring this project with Careline, please reach out to Careline or healthEconnect.

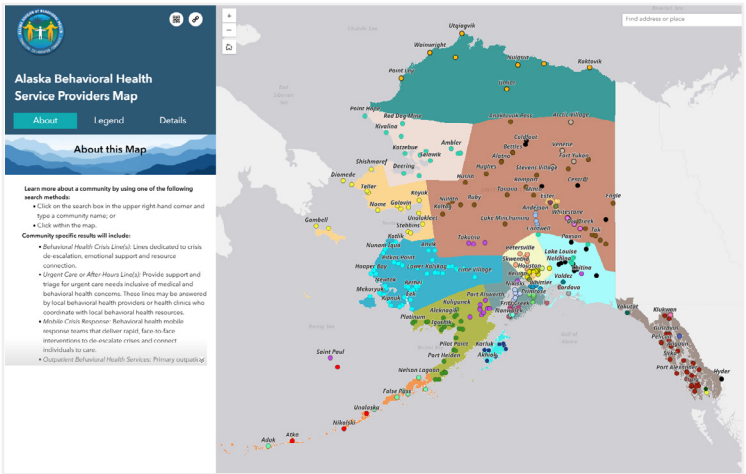
Careline is looking for additional volunteer Board of Directors members. Individuals who are motivated and committed to serving vulnerable Alaskans by providing crisis response and support services can apply here.

988 TURNED 4 IN JULY!

Since launching in 2022, 988 has nationally received 27.8 million contacts, including 18.8 million calls, 5 million texts, and 3.9 million chats.

Resources & News

The Division of Behavioral Health completed a **Community Crisis System Mapping Project** (Crisis Mapping Project) during FY26 to understand regional or community-specific crisis systems in three 1115 Waiver Regions of Alaska. An interactive, online map developed through the project identifies community-specific crisis and outpatient resources. Users can search for or click on a specific community to find contact information for crisis and outpatient providers in that community. The map includes features to toggle between 1115 Waiver Regions, Tribal Health Regions, and Alaska State Trooper Detachments to more easily identify the overlay of different ways the state is segmented. The online map is available here.



Congratulations to the State of Alaska for its acceptance as one of the ten states accepted into the **Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic** (CCBHC) **Medicaid Demonstration program**. CCBHCs must meet robust federal standards for timely access and scope of services including crisis care, timely outpatient services, and access to a comprehensive range of services with care coordination as needed. Click here to learn more.

The Division of Behavioral Health is pleased to invite you to participate in the Alaska Crisis Response Learning Community, a free statewide initiative facilitated by RI International.

The Learning Community brings together crisis response professionals, behavioral health providers, peer support workers, community partners, Tribal organizations, and system leaders to strengthen Alaska's behavioral health crisis continuum. The Learning Community is designed to foster collaboration while recognizing the unique strengths and challenges of Alaska's rural, remote, Tribal, and urban communities. Whether you provide direct services, supervise staff, coordinate community partnerships, or support crisis system development, your experience and perspective are valuable to this statewide effort.