



**Responses to the House Health & Social Services Committee Questions on HB 185:  
Medical Assistance Eligibility for Family Planning Services**

Below are responses to questions asked by committee members on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

**What are Family Planning Services?**

7 Alaska Administrative Code (AAC) 110.230(f) defines "family planning services" as: "Services and materials provided with the purpose of postponing, avoiding, or terminating pregnancy; includes the dispensing of birth control drugs and devices for males and females, and the performance of vasectomies, sterilizations, and abortions for the purpose of avoiding or terminating pregnancy."

State Planning Amendments (SPA) are narrow branches of Medicaid that provide specific services. In the case of the Family Planning (FP) SPA, HB 185 would **not** include abortion services. As stated on page 2, lines 10 and 11 of the bill, these services would be for "individuals of child-bearing age who are not pregnant."

**Are there examples of other SPAs in other states?**

According to a [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) (KFF) report, thirty states have a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) waiver or SPA to cover FP services. Alaska has expanded Medicaid with SPAs, with the passage of HCS SB 58 in 2023, a bill sponsored by Governor Dunleavy, regarding Medicaid eligibility for postpartum mothers.

**More information about Preterm Births**

In a 2025 study conducted by Dr. Micah Hahn from UAA's Institute of Circumpolar Health, there are a myriad of factors that contribute to preterm births:

- Pre-pregnancy diabetes
- Hypertension
- Tobacco during pregnancy
- Less than eleven prenatal care visits
- Travelling for birth
- Inadequate prenatal care



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#### **More information regarding Congenital Syphilis in Alaska**

Based on information provided in a State of Alaska Epidemiology Bulletin (which is provided in this packet), "Congenital Syphilis (CS) is a form of syphilis passed from the mother to the developing fetus." CS has serious health risks, which include: "neurologic or musculoskeletal disabilities or death of the fetus." According to former Department of Health Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anne Zink, CS is "A completely preventable condition." Access to prenatal care covered by an FP SPA could help decrease the rates of CS in Alaska.