



Governor Mike Dunleavy STATE OF ALASKA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 346

I, Mike Dunleavy, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority of Article III, Sections 1 and 24 of the Alaska Constitution issue Administrative Order 346 to establish the Governor's Task Force on Child Care ("Task Force") within the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC).

BACKGROUND

A robust child care system is critical to ensure the healthy development of Alaska's young children and families and to enable parents to participate in the workforce and drive economic growth across all sectors. Over half of young children in Alaska live in households where all parents are employed, underscoring the critical role of child care for young families and the barrier many parents face in participating in the workforce. Sixty-one percent of Alaskans reside in communities considered to be a child care desert, meaning that, in these communities, there is an insufficient number of licensed child care facilities for the number of children who need care. Alaska has lost nearly 10 percent of its licensed child care providers since January 2020, and more licensed facilities are anticipated to close after federal pandemic relief is spent. The Governor's Healthy Families Initiative recognizes that strong families are the foundation for a healthy society and vibrant economy, and it has three pillars: Healthy Beginnings, Health Care Access, and Healthy Communities. The Task Force on Child Care will function within the framework of the Healthy Beginnings pillar to develop policies that recognize that our children are our future, and policies that make Alaska the best place to raise a family.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Task Force is to develop a plan to improve availability and affordability of quality child care throughout Alaska. The Task Force will consult existing resources, including strategic plans and needs assessments on child care, to develop specific policy recommendations for the Governor with the goal of increasing access to high-quality and inclusive child care for Alaskan families. The three major components of a child care system are affordability, accessibility, and quality – none of which can be achieved without a well-compensated child care workforce. It is essential for the state to receive input from employers, nonprofit organizations, child care providers, tribal entities, and elected officials to comprehensively address child care challenges statewide.

MEMBERSHIP

All voting members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from the members. The Governor's Task Force on Child Care will consist of eleven voting members, two ex-officio members, and one advisory member as follows:

Three voting members who are State of Alaska officials:

- Department of Health Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee.
- Department of Education and Early Development Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee.
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development Commissioner, or the Commissioner's designee.

Eight voting members, who are not state officials, as follows:

- One representative of a nonprofit that supports licensed child care programs.
- One representative of a licensed child care program.
- One representative of a faith-based or community-based child care program (including in-home programs).
- One representative of tribal child care program.
- One representative of a military child care program.
- One representative of a statewide organization representing business communities throughout Alaska.
- One representative who is a local government official with experience developing local/community-based solutions to child care issues.
- One representative of the general public who is a parent with experience navigating Alaska's child care system.

Ex-Officio members:

- One member of the Alaska State Senate, appointed by the Senate President, and one member of the Alaska House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House.

Additionally, a representative from the Alaska Child Care Program Office shall serve as an advisor to the Task Force. The Commissioner of Health shall designate the representative from the Child Care Program Office.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Task Force shall deliver an initial report to the Governor by December 31, 2023 and a final report by July 31, 2024 with the following deliverables:

- Identify evidence-based policy solutions to key child care workforce constraints, including recruitment, retention, compensation, and benefits.
- Identify child care regulations that pose barriers to increasing availability of licensed child care slots, without compromising quality and safety.
- Develop solutions to incentivize employer-sponsored child care facilities or benefits.
- Identify opportunities to foster public-private partnerships in addressing child care workforce and affordability challenges.
- Develop framework for a pilot program to offer on-site child care facilities in a State of Alaska office to serve as a model for employer-provided child care benefits.
- Identify any other innovative solutions that the task force recommends to deliver affordable, quality child care to Alaskans.

The Chair of the Task Force shall report regularly to the Office of the Governor on activities conducted and issues that arise under this Order.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The Governor's Task Force on Child Care is assigned to the Department of Health for administrative support purposes.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Task Force members receive no compensation or other remuneration from the state for their service as members of the Task Force; however, members of the Task Force who are not state or federal employees are entitled to per diem and travel expenses in the same manner permitted for members of state boards and commissions under AS 39.20.180. Per diem and travel expenses for members of the Task Force who are a representative of a state or federal agency are the responsibility of that agency.

The Task Force may create advisory-only subcommittees.

The Task Force will meet monthly, at a minimum. Additional meetings may be called by the Chair. The Task Force and its subcommittees will use teleconferencing and other electronic means, to the extent practicable, in order to gain maximum public participation at minimum cost.

At times and locations to be determined by the Chair, the Task Force may convene public meetings to present information and receive comments.

A majority of the members of the Task Force constitutes a quorum for conducting business.

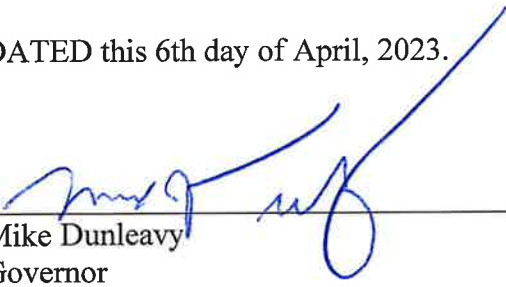
Meetings of the Task Force, or any subcommittees thereof shall be conducted, and notice of meetings provided, in accordance with AS 44.62.310 -- 44.62.319 (Open Meetings Act).

Records of the Task Force and any subcommittee are subject to inspection, copying, and distribution as public records under AS 40.25.100 – 40.25.295 (Alaska Public Records Act).

EFFECTIVE DATE AND DURATION

This Order takes effect immediately. The Governor’s Task Force on Child Care will sunset on December 31, 2024.

DATED this 6th day of April, 2023.



Mike Dunleavy
Governor