



IRBNet Project #: 2286829

Impacts of the current federal administration on social service agencies in Alaska

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Introduction: Health and social service agencies rely significantly on federal funding and assistance to provide their services.¹ In Alaska, with vast remote regions without a county government, the reliance on the state government and its partners, like nonprofits is crucial. Nonprofits cover the gap, providing essential services like fire and electric to thousands of Alaskans and contributing significantly to the economy.² Additionally, 66.7% of the data represented in this study is from nonprofits, with the second highest (18.5%) being from government agencies. Therefore, exploring the gap in understanding of the impacts Alaskan social service agencies, including nonprofits, experience as a result of the federal administration's actions is pertinent to Alaska and Alaskans.

How does this study apply to the social work students entering the profession as well as existing professionals?

Methods: A mixed-methods exploratory study in the form of a 30-question survey (n=27) and 7-question interview (n=4) utilizing purposive and snowball sampling for adults over the age 18 employed at social service agencies across Alaska was completed. The interviews were scheduled flexibly according to participant availability.

Survey Results: Overall, respondents reported that the primary impacts they have experienced are (1) accessibility, (2) funding, and (3) quality of care. For impacts that have already been experienced, funding takes the lead, however, in future perceived impacts quality of care leads.

Interview Results: Overall, interviewee responses were categorized thematically based on common responses across interviews: (1) culture & environment, (2) financial impacts, (3) changes in service delivery, (4) navigating new challenges, and (5) strategies to mitigate impacts.

Major Finding: The most significant impact experienced as a result of the federal administration's policies and actions is the **fear and culture established** and agencies' commitment to providing the same quality of care as they had pre-administration.

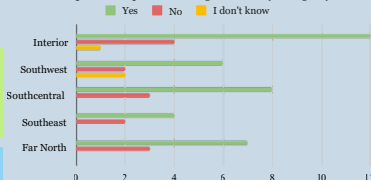
"It was not the executive orders directly - it was the culture they have established."



"One additional impact we are seeing is the growing strain placed on already-limited community resources. As federal policies tighten eligibility or slow funding pathways, more clients are turning to local nonprofits, crisis teams, and behavioral-health providers for support that used to be met through basic public benefits. This creates a bottleneck across the entire system longer waitlists, fewer immediate openings, and more clients stuck in survival mode while they wait for help. Even when our agency adapts, the broader network we rely on is stretched thinner, which ultimately affects the consistency and timeliness of care for the individuals we serve."

- Desired Outcomes:**
- Creating awareness of impacts of the administration on organizations across Alaska
 - Creating a dialogue with social work professionals and students entering the field on how these national changes are impacting our work and ability to provide services

Have any of the current administration's executive orders and policies impacted funding sources at your agency?



Summary: Alaskan social service agencies have been impacted by the current administration's policies and actions. This is primarily felt in the fear and culture established, accessibility of their agency's services, funding, and ability to provide quality care. Agencies believe that these impacts will continue to be felt in the future. Limitations for this project include it being independent with no funding and a small sample size. Future research could include a larger sample size and nationwide impacts.

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¹The Foraker Group. (2021, December). Alaska's Nonprofit Sector: Generating Economic Impact. The Alaska State Legislature.
²Institute of Medicine (US) Committee for the Study of the Future of Public Health. The Future of Public Health. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 1988. Appendix A. Summary of the Public Health System in the United States. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK13232/>