



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community,  
and Economic Development

BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUSELORS

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## ALASKA STATE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS – EMERGENCY ORDER

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Emergency courtesy license during the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Date:** April 23, 2020

**Status:** New

**Organized by:** The Alaska State Board of Professional Counselors

**Adopted by:** The Alaska State Board of Professional Counselors

**PURPOSE:** The Board of Professional Counselors holds the following position statement regarding EMERGENCY COURTESY LICENSE FOR PROVIDING DISTANCE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.

**HISTORY:** On March 11, 2020 Governor Michael J. Dunleavy issued a Declaration of Public Health Disaster Emergency under AS 26.23.020(c) for COVID-19. Since that time Governor Dunleavy has issued several health mandates in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19 and on March 13, 2020 Governor Dunleavy issued a mandate to close all public school statewide until March 30, 2020, which has since been extended until the end of the school year. Subsequent orders since that date have limited public gatherings, closed businesses, mandated 14-day quarantine for travelers, and recommended social distancing. Information and recommendations are ongoing and it is anticipated that these may change regularly. On April 10, 2020 Governor Dunleavy signed SB 241 into law, which loosens the licensure requirements for performing telehealth.

**SUMMARY:** The Alaska Board of Professional Counselors recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in changes to agency practices, most notably the transition to distance professional services. As a response, the Alaska Board of Professional Counselors is issuing a temporary guideline for professional counselors holding a license in another US state or territory who wish to perform telehealth in Alaska. This guideline is expected to dissolve when the COVID-19 crisis resolves and operations can be restored to regular functioning, or after November 15, 2020 when SB 241 expires.

- Based on the provisions of SB 241, during the current COVID-19 emergency, any individual who holds an active, and unencumbered professional counselors license in another US state or territory is qualified to apply for a temporary courtesy license in Alaska for the purpose of being able to perform distance professional services as per 12 AAC 61.400.

*The Alaska Board of Professional Counselor's authority to issue this emergency order is provided in SB 241*