Introduction

These budget blocks are a simple, straightforward way to visualize how Alaska is spending its money and from which funds that money is coming. The size of each block corresponds to the amount allocated to each state agency. The larger the dollar amount, the larger the block. All of the numbers are taken straight from the FY 2021 Enacted Operating Budget agency summaries provided to the public by the Alaska Division of Legislative Finance.

Explanation of Terminology

The operating budget is what covers ongoing operations and expenses for the State of Alaska, or the day-to-day running of the government and state programs. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), it is “annual appropriations covering ongoing operations. Appropriations are typically made for a fiscal year, with funds lapsing at the end of the fiscal year.”

Agency or Department

- Administration (Admin)
- Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (Commerce)
- Corrections
- Education and Early Development
- Environmental Conservation (Env Cons)
- Fish and Game
- Office of the Governor (Gov)
- Health and Social Services
- Judiciary
- Labor and Workforce Development (Labor Dept)
- Law
- Legislature (Leg)
- Military and Veterans’ Affairs (DMVA)
- Natural Resources
- Public Safety
- Department of Revenue
- Transportation and Public Facilities
- University of Alaska
- Debt Service – The state pays back loans or bonds that have been issued for new projects.
- Federal Receipts – Funds received from the federal government.
- Fund Capitalization (Fund Cap) – Money set aside for various funds, such as the Community Assistance Fund and the Alaska Clean Water Fund.
- Other Funds – Money the legislature has limited discretion over; includes “duplicated” funds such as interagency receipts where one state agency pays another.
- Permanent Fund – Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve Account (ERA) appropriations.
- Special Appropriations (Special Appro) – Bonds for tax credit purchases, Alaska comprehensive insurance program, and shared taxes, such as the salmon enhancement tax and the fisheries business tax.
- State Retirement Payments – Deposits to the pension fund for state and school district employee retirement obligations.
- Unrestricted General Fund (UGF) – Money with no statutory restrictions; the legislature has discretion to spend this money however it chooses.

The graphic titled “Agency Totals” depicts budgeted expenses to be paid from the state’s UGF, from Other Funds, from federal receipts, and designated general funds (DGF). The graphic titled “UGF and Other” excludes Federal Receipts from the agency totals. The graphic titled “UGF” includes only unrestricted general funds. The graphic titled “Other Funding” includes only other funds. The graphic titled “Per Capita” depicts all agency budgeted expenditures per capita, based upon Alaska’s population in 2019.
Alaska FY 2021 Enacted Operating Budget — Agency Totals

Health and Social Services $3.45 Billion

- Health and Social Services
- Education and Early Development $1.66 Billion
- University of Alaska $832 Million

Education and Early Development $1.66 Billion

- Education and Early Development
- Retirement Payments $346 Million
- Public Safety $230 Million

Transportation $606 Million

- Transportation
- Permanent Fund $748 Million
- Revenue Dept $374 Million

Permanent Fund $748 Million

- Permanent Fund
- Corrections $392 Million
- University of Alaska $832 Million

Revenue Dept $374 Million

- Revenue Dept
- Fish and Game $203 Million
- Debt Service $156 Million

Corrections $392 Million

- Corrections
- Natural Resources $175 Million
- Law $89 Million

University of Alaska $832 Million

- University of Alaska
- Public Safety $230 Million
- Special Appro $70 Million

Revenue Dept $374 Million

- Revenue Dept
- Commerce $163 Million
- Fund Cap $100 Million

Fish and Game $203 Million

- Fish and Game
- Natural Resources $175 Million
- Special Appro $70 Million

Debt Service $156 Million

- Debt Service
- Law $89 Million
- Env Cons $80 Million

Public Safety $230 Million

- Public Safety
- Legislature $115 Million
- Govt $28 Million

Revenue Dept $374 Million

- Revenue Dept
- Commerce $163 Million
- Fund Cap $100 Million

Natural Resources $175 Million

- Natural Resources
- Legislature $115 Million
- Govt $28 Million

University of Alaska $832 Million

- University of Alaska
- Public Safety $230 Million
- Legislature $115 Million

Source: Alaska Division of Legislative Finance, Agency Operating Budgets, Totals
Alaska FY 2021 Enacted Operating Budget — Unrestricted General Funds (UGF) and Other Only

Education and Early Development $1.39 Billion

Health and Social Services $1.30 Billion

Permanent Fund $680 Million

Transportation $503 Million

 Corrections $365 Million

University of Alaska $360 Million

Retirement Payments $346 Million

Admin $333 Million

Public Safety $193 Million

Law $85 Million

Debt Service $150 Million

Fish and Game $118 Million

Leg $69 Million

Judiciary $113 Million

Law Dept $36 Million

Natural Resources $102 Million

DMVA $33 Million

Governor $28 Million

Revenue Dept $291 Million

Labor Dept $36 Million

Fund Cap $32 Million

Source: Alaska Division of Legislative Finance, Agency Operating Budgets, UGF and "Other" Funding
Alaska FY 2021 Enacted Operating Budget – UGF

- **Education and Early Development**: $1.32 Billion
- **Health and Social Services**: $1.12 Billion
- **Permanent Fund**: $680 Million
- **Retirement Payments**: $346 Million
- **Corrections**: $339 Million
- **University of Alaska**: $277 Million
- **Public Safety**: $180 Million
- **Transportation**: $150 Million
- **Judiciary**: $111 Million
- **Debt Service**: $101 Million
- **Law**: $52 Million
- **Fish and Game**: $51 Million
- **Revenue Dept**: $28 Million
- **Governor**: $24 Million
- **DMVA**: $23 Million
- **DMVA**: $23 Million
- **Labor Dept**: $19 Million
- **Env Cons**: $15M
- **Commerce**: $8M

Source: Alaska Division of Legislative Finance, Agency Operating Budgets, UGF
Alaska FY 2021 Enacted Operating Budget — Agency Totals Per Capita

Health and Social Services $4,717

Education and Early Development $2,265

University of Alaska $1,139

Per Capita

Source: Alaska Division of Legislative Finance and Department of Labor and Workforce
About the Author

Quinn Townsend is the Policy Manager at Alaska Policy Forum. Previously, Quinn worked as the Economic Research Analyst at The Buckeye Institute. She is currently finishing her M.S. in Resource Economics and Management at West Virginia University. She also has a B.S. in Economics from Brigham Young University-Idaho. When she’s not working or studying, Quinn enjoys taking her dogs on hikes and convincing her houseplants to stay alive.

About Alaska Policy Forum

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