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## **State temporarily closes Fairbanks detox program**

*State Division of Behavioral Health and Fairbanks Native Association working to reopen program*

(Anchorage, AK) — The state Division of Behavioral Health notified Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) Friday that the agency does not have approval to provide detoxification services as of today, when a required medical staff position became vacant. The division will work with the association to reinstate services as soon as possible.

The advanced nurse practitioner providing medical oversight for FNA's Gateway to Recovery Enhanced Detoxification Center resigned effective today.

"Detoxification services are a crucial part of the prevention, treatment and recovery spectrum," said Behavioral Health Division Director Melissa Witzler Stone. "While we had to temporarily close this program because we and our grantees are bound by strict standards for client safety, we are committed to providing technical assistance to help our valued grantee partners meet these standards."

Fairbanks Memorial Hospital has agreed to accept referrals of patients needing detoxification services on a short term basis.

This week the division will review the Gateway to Recovery program and work with FNA to re-start detoxification services as soon as possible.

"We and our partners in Fairbanks have worked for years to develop an enhanced detoxification program that can treat people with co-occurring substance abuse detox and mental health needs," Stone said. "We remain committed to making high quality detoxification services available there."

For background alcohol abuse statistics, see the "Substance Abuse" category of the Department's "Alaska Scorecard," developed in cooperation with the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority: <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/healthplanning/scorecard/assets/scorecard.pdf>

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