Our Work for the people of Alaska

Each year, the Division of Public Assistance provides direct services and benefits to more than 200,000 Alaskans. Offices can receive up to 10,000 initial applications and renewals each month. IN addition, each month Field Offices across the state also receive innumerable reports of change, returned mail, and correspondence from clients and partner agencies correspondence. Under any circumstance this is a monumental body of work.

Historically, we have done an outstanding job managing this staggering volume of work. We also faced periods where we have been confronted large backlogs of work. One challenge many of you may remember was the heavy lifting required years ago to process thousands of DKC applications out of timeframes successfully. We encountered and conquered another enormous challenge when problems with the Heating Assistance System stalled work. Again, just a few short years ago, we were inundated with a surge of applications during the "Great Recession." We overcame all of these trials despite the difficulties and the Division was acknowledged by both the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Systems and the Food and Nutrition Services for outstanding performance. Although there are a host of reasons contributing to our current situation, I am confident that DPA will rise to the challenge and resume our position as one of the best, if not the best, Public Assistance agency in the nation.

Our Research and Analysis team has been working to compile and tabulate information about the backlog of work that can help illustrate both the extent of the challenge and our progress in addressing the backlog. This has not been an easy task. Management information reports were, quite frankly, something of an afterthought when EIS was created. At this point ARIES management reports are still in a development stage. Consequently, a great deal of effort is needed to combine data from both systems into documents that can capture the outstanding body of work. What follows are several representations of the backlog of work.

The following table will be posted as early as next week on the Department's Medicaid Expansion website. It compares current week backlog to the prior week and uses the approximate backlog on December 1, 2014, as a baseline.

2/2/2015 Weekly Workload: Medicaid and All Other Programs
(Includes New and Renewal Applications)

Program	12/1/2014	1/26/2015	2/2/2015	Oldest Application (Days)
Medicaid	6,325	7,193	7,278	397
All Other Programs	3,662	3,529	3,364	382
Total	9,987	10,722	10,642	397

NOTE: EIS applications or cases in "Received" status; ARIES applications in "Complete" or "Received" status.

As you will notice, since 12/1/2014, the backlog has grown. This appears to be the result of at least two factors. First, every day applications yet to be worked reach, and exceed the 30 day standard we have for timely applications. Secondly, as the backlog of work is being processed, aged applications and account transfers are registered and, if the application date is over 30 days in the past, the newly registered application is added to the backlog.

The next two charts provide a bit more granularity to the backlog.

2/2015 Weekly Workload: Medicaid and All Other Programs by Application Type

| | All Other Programs | | | | Medicaid | | | | Total Case Counts | |
| | Applications | | Reviews/Recerts | | Applications | | Reviews/Recerts | | | |
	1/26/15	2/2/2015	1/26/15	2/2/2015	1/26/15	2/2/15	1/26/15	2/2/15	1/26/15	2/2/15
Case Count	2498	2232	1031	1132	7156	7244	37	34	10722	10642
Average Days	48.47	51.28	49.94	50.21	111.27	114.2	70	82.82		
Median Days	47	52	45	46	96	98	55	61		
Oldest Outstanding (Days)	229	373	368	382	390	397	220	369		

NOTE: EIS applications or cases in "Received" status; ARIES applications in "Complete" or "Received" status.
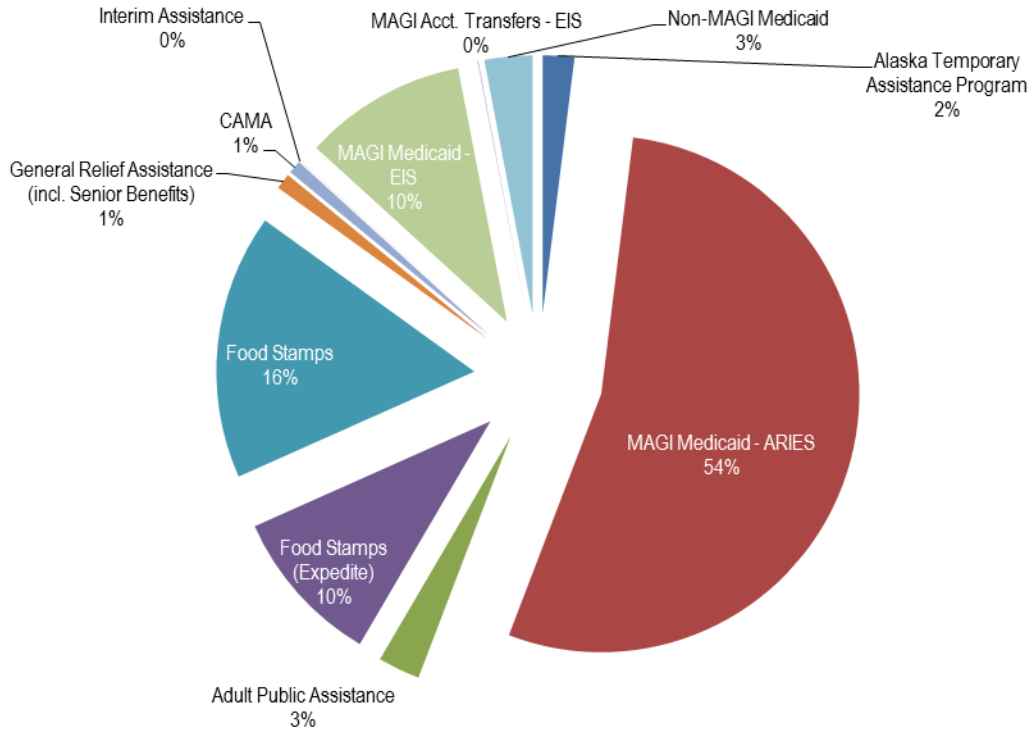
2/2/2015 Weekly Workload by Program

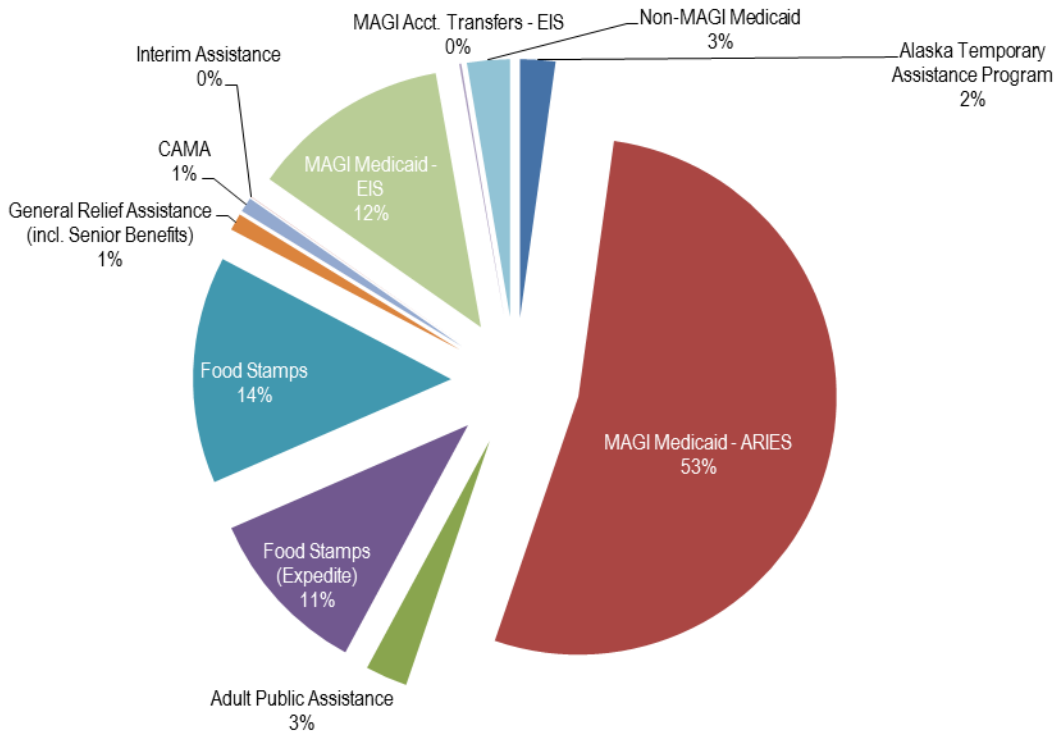| Program | Applications | | | Reviews/Recerts | | | Totals | | |
	1/26/2015	2/2/2015	Percent Change	1/26/2015	2/2/2015	Percent Change	1/26/2015	2/2/2015	Percent Change
Alaska Temporary Assistance Program	191	164	-14.1%	21	31	47.6%	212	195	-8.0%
Adult Public Assistance	246	217	-11.8%	36	50	38.9%	282	267	-5.3%
Food Stamps (Expedites)	1,060	943	-11.0%	-	-	N/A	1,060	943	-11.0%
Food Stamps	813	736	-9.5%	967	1,042	7.8%	1,780	1,778	-0.1%
General Assistance (incl. Senior Benefits)	106	100	-5.7%	-	-	0.0%	106	100	-5.7%
CAMA	81	71	-12.3%	7	9	28.6%	88	80	-9.1%
Interim Assistance	1	1	0.0%	-	-	0.0%	1	1	0.0%
MAGI Med. (ARIES)	5,773	5,914	2.4%	-	-	N/A	5,773	5,914	2.4%
MAGI Med. (EIS)	1,094	1,024	-6.4%	-	-	N/A	1,094	1,024	-6.4%
MAGI Med. Acct. Transfers (EIS)	5	5	0.0%	-	-	N/A	5	5	0.0%
Non-MAGI Med.	284	301	6.0%	37	34	-8.1%	321	335	4.4%
Total	9,654	9,476	-1.8%	1,068	1,166	9.2%	10,722	10,642	-0.7%

NOTE: EIS applications or cases in "Received" status; ARIES applications in "Complete" or "Received" status.

The following pie charts provide another look at the backlog comparing the current and prior week's activities.
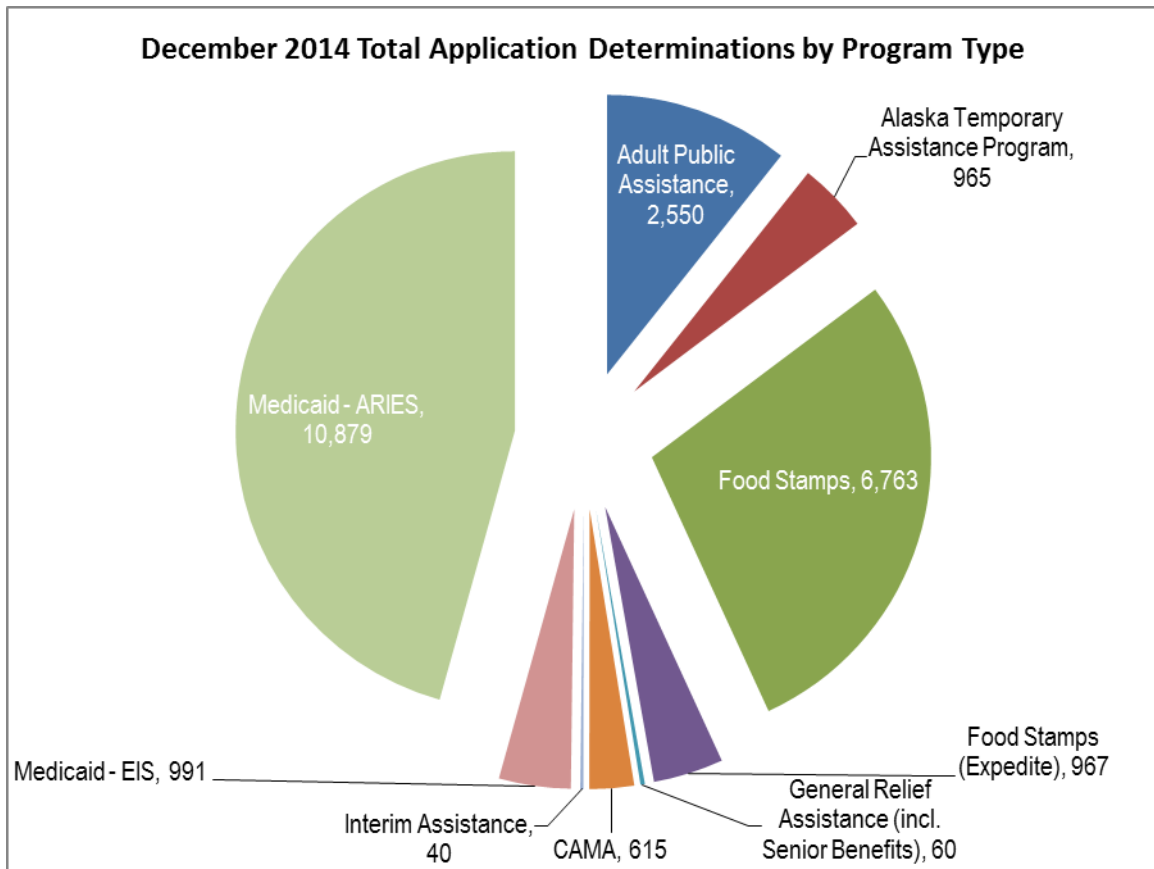
1/26/2015 Weekly Workload Composition

- Interim Assistance 0%
- MAGI Acct. Transfers - EIS 0%
- Non-MAGI Medicaid 3%
- Alaska Temporary Assistance Program 2%
- CAMA 1%
- General Relief Assistance (incl. Senior Benefits) 1%
- MAGI Medicaid - EIS 10%
- Food Stamps 16%
- MAGI Medicaid - ARIES 54%
- Food Stamps (Expedite) 10%
- Adult Public Assistance 3%

2/2/2015 Weekly Workload Composition

- Interim Assistance 0%
- MAGI Acct. Transfers - EIS 0%
- Non-MAGI Medicaid 3%
- Alaska Temporary Assistance Program 2%
- CAMA 1%
- General Relief Assistance (incl. Senior Benefits) 1%
- MAGI Medicaid - EIS 12%
- Food Stamps 14%
- MAGI Medicaid - ARIES 53%
- Food Stamps (Expedite) 11%
- Adult Public Assistance 3%

While the backlog represents an enormous volume of work to be done, it is just part of the picture. While we are devoting lots of effort to eliminating the backlog, today's work is still being done today.. The following pie chart shows the extent of the work done in December to process applications.

December 2014 Total Application Determinations by Program Type

- Adult Public Assistance, 2,550
- Alaska Temporary Assistance Program, 965
- Food Stamps, 6,763
- Food Stamps (Expedite), 967
- General Relief Assistance (incl. Senior Benefits), 60
- CAMA, 615
- Interim Assistance, 40
- Medicaid - EIS, 991
- Medicaid - ARIES, 10,879

This diagram illustrates the volume of work done to address today's work today and the ongoing efforts to work through the backlog. It shows that almost 24,000 case actions (i.e., approval, denial, and closures) were completed in December. This is a tremendous volume of work. It does not capture the literally thousands of other actions taken every month in response to reports of change such as (address changes, benefit adjustments, add-a-babies, etc., completed every day by Eligibility Technicians and Office Assistants.

It is proof positive of the excellent work done daily. At every opportunity and in any discussion about our workload, this fact is re-iterated and emphasized. As a result, our collective effort is not going without notice and appreciation at all levels within the Department. In the last few weeks I've also had many opportunities to talk with clients and providers about specific instances of backlogged applications. Without fail, virtually everyone acknowledges the

challenge and the hard work of staff. Your professionalism and compassion are always noted and appreciated.

These tables and charts will be updated and posted weekly along with additional information about strategies and actions to address the current workload and those intended to help reduce the risks of backlog incidents in the future.