Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act

Group health plans sponsored by State and local governmental employers must generally comply with Federal law requirements in title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act. However, these employers are permitted to elect to exempt a plan from the requirements listed below for any part of the plan that is "self-funded" by the employer, rather than provided through a health insurance policy. The Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits ("DRB") has elected to exempt the AlaskaCare Employee Health Plan ("Plan") from the following requirement:

- Protections against having benefits for mental health and substance use disorders be subject to more restrictions than apply to medical and surgical benefits covered by the plan.

The exemption from these Federal requirements will be in effect for the 2022 plan year beginning January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2022. The exemption election may be renewed for subsequent plan years.

Although DRB has elected to exempt the Plan from federal parity protections for mental health and substance use disorders benefits, this does not necessarily mean that the Plan fails to provide these benefits in compliance with the federal protections. It means that the Plan is not legally required to comply with the federal protections and will not be subject to penalties or other legal consequences for failing to comply with the federal protections.