

| Bill # | Title | Bill Description | Bill Status |
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| <p>Equity and Inclusion in Mental Health Access and Services</p> <p>Policy Priority: Advocate for policies that ensure equal access to mental health services, particularly for historically underserved or marginalized communities, including racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and disability minorities.</p> <p>Key Focus: Eliminate systemic barriers to care, ensuring that mental health services are accessible, affordable, culturally appropriate, and responsive to the unique needs of diverse communities. This includes prioritizing the lived experiences of individuals from these communities in the development and implementation of mental health policies and systems of care.</p> | | | |
| S.709/H.1135 | An Act for supportive care for serious mental illness | Requires commercial insurers to cover evidence-based care for first-episode psychosis and assertive community treatment, delivered by multidisciplinary teams with round-the-clock support. | The House version was redrafted to H.4896 and is before Health Care Financing. The Senate version was sent to study.* |
| S.1399 | An Act to increase investment in behavioral health care in the Commonwealth | Starting in 2029, health care systems and insurers must increase behavioral health spending by 30% and will be held accountable through the Health Policy Commission’s existing cost growth and performance improvement processes. | Sent to study* |
| S.1403/H.1136 | An Act relative to reducing administrative burden/ An Act improving the health insurance | Improves access to mental health services and medications while reducing administrative burdens. It prevents retrospective denials, | Senate version is before the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The House version |

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| | prior authorization process | revocations, or limits on care. | was redrafted to H.4616 and is before the Joint Committee on Healthcare Financing, and the reporting date has been extended to 6/15/26. |
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Mental Health as Integral to Overall Health, Addressing Social Determinants of Health

Policy Priority: Promote the integration of mental health as a core component of overall health and well-being within healthcare systems, addressing the social, economic, and environmental factors that impact mental health, such as housing, employment, education, and access to healthcare.

Key Focus: Advocate for policies that encourage open discussion of mental health without stigma, support mental health literacy, and address upstream factors like poverty, inequality, and trauma that contribute to mental health disparities. Ensure that care is holistic, preventive, and attuned to the lived experiences of individuals, families, and communities affected by these factors.

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| S.283/H.383 | An Act expanding licensure opportunity for school counselors | Reduces barriers for DESE-credentialed school counselors to become Licensed Mental Health Counselors (LMHC) while maintaining standard licensing requirements. | Senate version was redrafted to S.2706 and is before Senate Ways and Means. The House version has been redrafted to H.4456 and is before House Ways and Means. |
| S.708/H.1128 | An Act preserving access to treatment for patients with | Advances patient equity by eliminating prior authorization, step therapy protocols, and other barriers that | Senate version is before the Senate Committee on Ways and |

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| | serious mental illness | restrict or delay access to medication | Means. House version was redrafted to H.4892 and is now before Health Care Financing. |
| S.1384/H.2221 | An Act relative to student mental health | Includes the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline on all student identification cards. | Senate version is before the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The House version is before the House Committee on Bills in the Third Reading.** |
| S.1394/H.2193 | An Act to ensure efficient and effective implementation for behavioral health reform | Codified the Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform to coordinate and align processes across the state behavioral healthcare system, as well as expand access to treatment in community-based settings and increase transparency with data dashboard. | The Senate version has been sent to study*, and the House version is before the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing. |

Human Rights and Protection Against Discrimination

Policy Priority: Advocate for strong protections against discrimination and human rights violations for individuals with mental health conditions, particularly within healthcare, criminal justice, education, and workplace settings.

Key Focus: Ensure policies are in place to address abuses, hold institutions accountable, and provide accessible mechanisms for reporting and addressing grievances related to mental health violations. Focus on upholding the dignity, autonomy, and rights of individuals living with mental health conditions in all areas of life.

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| H.2199 | An Act ending unnecessary hospitalizations | Prioritizes placing an individual in a community alternative before applying for involuntary detention by a professional or police officer. | Redrafted to H.5276 and is before the House Ways and Means. |
| H.2198 | An Act reducing emergency department boarding | Prevents individuals from being involuntarily held for more than 72 hours by a facility not authorized by DMH to perform evaluations. | Redrafted to H.5275 and is before the House Ways and Means. |
| S.1389/H.2211 | An Act modernizing the 6 fundamental rights | Updates and modernizes the statutory rights of all people receiving mental health services in state hospitals, community mental health centers, and residential programs or inpatient facilities. | The Senate version is before Senate Ways and Means. The House version has been redrafted to H.5229 and is before House Ways and Means. |

Person-Centered Mental Health Support for Individuals and Families

Policy Priority: Support policies that empower individuals and families to actively participate in the mental health care of their loved one, ensuring that services are personalized, inclusive, and responsive to the unique needs of both the individual and their support network.

Key Focus: Advocate for care models that prioritize individual and family involvement, recognizing the impact that mental health conditions have on the entire family and the vital role that families play in mental health recovery and well-being. Mental health services should be flexible, inclusive, and provide resources and support to families, helping them understand and navigate their loved one’s mental health journey.

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| S.1407 | Resolve to ensure delivery of mental health services to adults with | Creates a special commission to study the staffing levels and delivery of services for case managers at DMH | Sitting before Senate Ways and Means. |
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| | serious mental illness | that serve adults with acute mental illness. | |
| S.1164/H.1852 | An Act prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in Family and Juvenile Court proceedings | Judges must make written findings to determine if there is a nexus between a parent's disability and actual harm to the child when making a custody or parenting time decision. | Both versions have been sent to study.* |

Criminal Justice and the Decriminalization of Mental Health

Policy Priority: Advocate for criminal justice reform to decriminalize mental health conditions, diverting individuals from the criminal justice system into appropriate mental health care and community-based support systems.

Key Focus: Support policies that prioritize mental health treatment over incarceration, expand non-carceral responses for individuals in crisis, reduce the criminalization of mental health conditions, and integrate mental health resources into law enforcement and judicial processes, emphasizing restorative approaches to justice that prioritize recovery and healing.

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| S.1386/H.3291/H.3313 | An Act to transfer Bridgewater State Hospital to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) from the Department of Correction (DOC) | Transfers the oversight of Bridgewater State Hospital to DMH from DOC so that patients can receive mental health care that is aligned with DMH practices. | The Senate version is before Senate Ways and Means, and both House versions are before the House Ways and Means. |
| H.2201 | An Act relative to ensuring quality mental health services in state correctional facilities | Allows the Commissioner of DMH to have supervision of mental health services to incarcerated individuals under the custody of DOC. | Sent to study.* |

*Sent to study means that the bill needs to be reviewed further and will not be moving on for rest of the session.

**Bills in the Third Reading is the last stop committee before the bill is heard on the floor and debated, amended, and voted on.

