

## STUDYING THE MONTANA MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

### LEGISLATOR NOTICE

The Legislative Services Division is required to offer a brief history on the subject matter of a bill draft request prior to drafting. (5-4-105, MCA; [Chapter 309, Laws of 2017](#)) The history must include related legislation introduced over the last five sessions and hyperlinks to the bill, hearing information, and fiscal notes. The legislation links below open to the page showing the status and history of bills introduced on this topic in the past. The bill text and any related fiscal notes can be accessed through the link at the top of that page.

**Legislation can be complex and this history is not intended to be exhaustive. Please contact the drafter of the requested bill for more information.**

---

### Background Materials and Research

**Topic Summary:** Montana's publicly funded mental health system ranges from an institutional-level of care provided by the state to inpatient, outpatient, and crisis services offered by local mental health providers in communities around Montana. The Department of Public Health (DPHHS) operates the Montana State Hospital, which serves adult psychiatric patients at Warm Springs, and the Montana Mental Health Nursing Care Center, which is located in Lewistown and provides a nursing home level of care to people with mental illness. DPHHS also administers the community programs that are funded with state or federal dollars. The system of services has been the subject of study over the years, with major studies conducted as follows:

- **2021-2022:** The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee carried out three studies passed by the 2021 Legislature, involving the adult mental health system, the children's mental health system, and the involuntary commitment of people with dementia. A Legislative Finance Committee working group also studied suicide prevention efforts.
- **2015-2016:** The Legislature passed House Bill 422, requiring an interim study of children's mental health outcomes, and Senate Bill 418, requiring the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee to monitor how DPHHS implemented mental health initiatives involving about \$16 million in new funding.
- **2013-2014:** The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee carried out a study of state institutions and focused on the need for community services as an alternative to institutionalization.
- **2009-2010:** DPHHS contracted for a study of the children's system of care for high-risk children with multi-agency needs; the study was required by passage of House Bill 423.
- **2007-2008:** The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee contracted with a private company for a study of the state's mental health system, after the 2007 Legislature appropriated \$200,000 for the study. Meanwhile, the Law and Justice Interim Committee studied mental health issues in the criminal justice system.
- **2000-2001:** DPHHS contracted with a private company to review and make recommendations on changes for the mental health system.

## Legislative Services Division Materials

The links below for specific studies provide access to all study materials prepared legislative staff, state agency representatives, and other speakers.

- Children, Families Health, and Human Services Interim Committee
  - [SJR 14 Study: Adult Mental Health System](#) – 2021-2022 Interim
  - [HJR 35 Study: Children's Mental Health System](#) – 2021-2022 Interim
  - [HJR 39 Study: Involuntary Committee of People with Dementia](#) – 2021-2022 Interim
    - [Final Report on the Mental Health Studies: SJR 14, HJR 35, and HJR 39](#)
  - [HB 422 Study: Children's Mental Health Outcomes](#) – 2015-2016 Interim
    - [Final Report on the HB 422 Study](#)
  - [SB 418 Study: Legislative Mental Health Investments](#) – 2015-2016 Interim
    - [Final Report on the SB 418 Study](#)
  - [HJR 16 Study: State Institutions](#) – 2013-2014 Interim
    - [Final Report on the HJR 16 Study](#) (Pages 3-18)
- Law and Justice Interim Committee
  - [HJR 4 Study: Criminal Commitment Process](#) – 2021-2022 Interim
    - [Draft Study Summary](#)
  - SJR 6, HJR 26, and SJR 24 Studies of Justice-Involved Individuals – 2007-2008 Interim
    - Final Report: [Diverting the Mentally Ill from the Criminal Justice System and Providing Involuntary Commitment Alternatives](#), January 2009

## Legislative Fiscal Division Materials

- Legislative Finance Committee, 2021-2022 Interim
  - [Suicide Prevention Materials](#)  
(Click on the Meeting Materials tab and scroll down the page for links to materials presented at three work group meetings in 2022 – June 1, June 30, and July 27 – and at Finance Committee meetings on December 16, 2021, and March 17, 2022)

## Other Materials:

- House Bill 589 Reports: Children's Mental Health Outcomes, Department of Public Health and Human Services
  - [March 2022](#)
  - [September 2021](#)
  - [March 2021](#)
  - [September 2020](#)
  - [2019](#)
  - [2018](#)
  - [2017](#)
- [System of Care Report to the Montana Legislature](#), Open Minds, Aug. 17, 2010
- [Report to the State of Montana: Legislative Mental Health Study](#), DMA Health Strategies, Nov. 18, 2008
- [Improving Montana's Mental Health System](#), Technical Assistance Collaborative, Jan. 15, 2001

## Introduced Legislation

**Note:** A status of "Chapter Number Assigned" for a bill means the bill was passed by the Legislature, approved by the governor, and became law. A status of "Filed with the Secretary of State" for a resolution means it was passed by the Legislature.

### **2021**

[House Joint Resolution No. 4](#) (Filed with the Secretary of State) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE CRIMINAL COMMITMENT PROCESS AND PLACEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

[House Joint Resolution No. 35](#) (Filed with the Secretary of State) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

[House Joint Resolution No. 39](#) (Filed with the Secretary of State) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF THE USE OF INVOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE OR OTHER DEMENTIAS; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

[Senate Joint Resolution No. 14](#) (Filed with the Secretary of State) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF MONTANA'S PUBLICLY FUNDED MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 68TH LEGISLATURE.

### **2019**

[House Joint Resolution No. 63](#) (Tabled in House Committee) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF ACCESS TO AND BEST PRACTICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 67TH LEGISLATURE.

### **2017**

[House Bill No. 589](#) (Chapter Number Assigned) -- AN ACT REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO MONITOR AND REPORT ON FACTORS RELATED TO CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

### **2015**

[House Bill No. 422](#) (Chapter Number Assigned) -- AN ACT CREATING A PILOT PROJECT TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH IN THE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM; REQUIRING AN INTERIM STUDY OF EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES; PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE-BASED OUTCOMES MODELS; REQUIRING COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA; PROVIDING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS FOR PERFORMANCE-BASED REIMBURSEMENT;

## STUDYING THE MONTANA MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE.

[Senate Bill No. 418](#) (Chapter Number Assigned) -- AN ACT AUTHORIZING TRANSFERS AND OTHER NECESSARY MEASURES TO IMPLEMENT THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT; REVISING LAWS GOVERNING STATE EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION; PROVIDING LEGISLATIVE POLICY ON MENTAL HEALTH INVESTMENTS AS SET FORTH IN THE GENERAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE INTENT REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 405; AMENDING SECTIONS 2-18-301, 2-18-303, 2-18-703, 2-18-812, AND 87-1-625, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

### **2013**

[House Bill No. 103](#) (Tabled in House Committee) -- AN ACT CREATING AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COST-BASED RATE REIMBURSEMENT FOR MEDICAID MENTAL HEALTH TARGETED CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES; ESTABLISHING THE DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE; REQUIRING THE COMMITTEE TO SUBMIT REPORTS TO THE LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND TO THE 2015 LEGISLATURE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE.

[House Joint Resolution No. 16](#) (Filed with Secretary of State) -- A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA REQUESTING AN INTERIM STUDY OF STATE-OPERATED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS, INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES, AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY; AND REQUIRING THAT THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY BE REPORTED TO THE 64TH LEGISLATURE.

**2011:** None

### **Prepared by:**

Sue O'Connell, Research Analyst  
Office of Research and Policy Analysis  
September 27, 2022