

## 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.**

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### 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 state reimburses local providers for services provided to low-income or uninsured people. 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:

- **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 programs involving about \$16 million in new funding.
- **2013-2014:** The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee carried out the House Joint Resolution 16 study, which as passed required a study of state institutions. The committee focused its attention 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, to carry out the requirements of HB 423.
- **2007-2008:** The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee contracted with a private company to carry out 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

- [HB 422 Study of Children's Mental Health Outcomes](#), Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee, 2015-2016  
The study website contains briefing papers and other materials presented during the interim study, including:
  - [Final Report on the HB 422 Study](#), September 2016
- [SB 418 Study of Legislative Mental Health Investments](#), Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee, 2015-2016  
The study website contains briefing papers and other materials presented during the interim study, including:
  - [Final Report on the SB 418 Study](#), September 2016
- [HJR 16 Study of State Institutions](#), Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee, 2013-2014  
The study website contains briefing papers and other materials presented during the interim study, including:
  - [Final Report on the HJR 16 Study](#), September 2014 (Pages 3-18)
- [Diverting the Mentally Ill from the Criminal Justice System and Providing Involuntary Commitment Alternatives](#), Final Report of the Law and Justice Interim Committee, January 2009

## Other Materials:

- House Bill 589 Reports: Children's Mental Health Outcomes
  - [2019 Summary](#), DPHHS, October 2020
  - [2018 Summary](#), DPHHS, August 2019
  - [2017 Summary](#), DPHHS, June 2018
- [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" means the bill was passed by the Legislature and approved by the governor.

### 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.

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### 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; 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

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