



2025 Substance Use and Mental Health Legislative Highlights

Amanda Regis, MSW
Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Department of Children and Families

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House Bill 1091 – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Care – Effective July 1, 2025

- Expands mental health crisis services to include the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.
- Repeals the need assessment requirement for licensure of Medication Assisted Treatment programs.
- Establishes enhanced training standards for mental health professionals conducting forensic evaluations, emphasizing competency restoration, evidence-based practices, and placement alternatives to ensure consistent and effective forensic evaluations.



Senate Bill 1620 – Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders – Effective July 1, 2025

- Codified recommendations from the 2025 Commission on Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Annual Interim Report
 - Establishing a comprehensive data infrastructure and utilizing current evidence-based tools and methodologies.
 - Enhancing behavioral health services and infrastructure.
 - Bolstering the behavioral health sector through workforce development and retention efforts.
 - Elevating awareness and multidisciplinary collaboration.



Establishing a Comprehensive Data Infrastructure and Utilizing Current Evidence-based Tools and Methodologies

- Requires providers directly under contract with Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) to utilize the DLA-20 for functional assessments, unless specified in rule to use a different assessment.
- Specifies that assessment tools for children must include the most recent version of the DLA-20, unless a different tool is specified in rule.
- Requires Managing Entities to ensure all providers under contract utilize the DLA-20, unless a different tool is specified in rule.
- Specifies assessment procedures for school-based mental health assistance programs must include the use of the DLA-20, unless the Florida Department of Education specifies a different tool in rule.



Enhancing Behavioral Health Services and Infrastructure

- Requires DCF, in consultation with the Agency for Health Care Administration to conduct biannual reviews to identify the need for new short-term residential treatment facilities and additional beds in existing short-term residential treatment facilities. It also instructs the DCF to submit a legislative budget request if it is determined that additional funding is needed above existing resources.



Enhancing Behavioral Health Services and Infrastructure

- Requires patients released from a receiving facility or treatment facility to receive upon discharge, information on how to obtain prescribed medications including but not limited to, administration of long-acting injectable medications. The discharge plan must address barriers faced by patients to accessing long-acting injectable medications after discharge if such medication is part of the patient's plan.
- Adds a requirement for the administration of long-acting injectable medication before discharge if such medication is available to treat the patients diagnosed behavioral health condition and is clinically appropriate for the patient.



Enhancing Behavioral Health Services and Infrastructure

- Requires the DCF to adopt rules establishing minimum standards for a mobile crisis response service which must include specifying any training or other requirements applicable to a mobile crisis response services available to persons aged 65 and over to enable the service to meet the specialized needs of such persons.



Enhancing Behavioral Health Services and Infrastructure

- Requires the DCF in conjunction with the DOE to perform biannual reviews of school-based behavioral health access in the state through telehealth, with an emphasis on underserved and rural communities. At a minimum, the review shall assess gaps in the provision of school-based behavioral health services, the extent of use of telehealth for school-based behavioral health services, barriers to use and expansion of such telehealth services and recommendations to address barriers and any implementation requirements. The first review must be submitted to the Governor, President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by January 1, 2026.



Enhancing Behavioral Health Services and Infrastructure

- Requires the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute within the University of South Florida to submit a report analyzing substance abuse and mental health services provided in the state through publicly funded programs, including Medicare. At a minimum, the review must identify services covered by such programs, assess quality of care and cost management, and identify services for which additional providers are needed in the state. The review must be submitted to the Governor, President of the Senate and the Speaker of to House of Representatives by June 30, 2026.



Bolstering the Behavioral Health Sector through Workforce Development and Retention Efforts

- Requires the Florida Center for Behavioral Health Workforce to develop and implement projects to support recruitment, development, and retention of behavioral health workers including but not limited to projects to provide additional stipends, compensation, and financial support for clinical supervisors, workers, interns, and students currently working in the behavioral health field. Also allows the Florida Center for Behavioral Health Workforce to request certain information from the Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling regarding counselors licensed in the State of Florida.



Elevating Awareness and Multidisciplinary Collaboration

- Requires the Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Technical Assistance Center at the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute to disseminate and share evidence-based and best practices including but not limited to, the use of person-first language and trauma-responsive care to improve patient experiences and outcomes of individuals with behavioral health conditions and encourage cooperative engagement with such individuals. Person-first language is also defined in this section to mean language used which emphasizes the individual as a person rather than the individual's disability, illness, or condition.



Senate Bill 168 – The Tristan Murphy Act – Effective October 1, 2025

The Tristan Murphy Act creates new diversion pathways for people with mental illness as an alternative to incarceration when feasible:

- Allows counties and municipalities to establish misdemeanor mental health diversion programs and pretrial felony diversion programs.
- Provides sheriffs, courts, and treatment providers a clear process for routing individuals with serious mental illness out of the criminal justice system and into care.
- Expands the Criminal Justice, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant Program to include a new focus on veteran treatment court programs and emergency responder training.
- Creates the Florida Behavioral Health Care Data Repository with the Northwest Regional Data Center.



THANK YOU!

