

FY22 Budget Priorities

The demand for behavioral health, safe housing, and related social services continues to grow, stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our FY22 budget priorities are as follows:



Department of Mental Health (DMH) Rental Subsidy Program (7004-9033): The DMH Rental Subsidy Program provides individuals with housing vouchers, as well as clinical and tenancy support services through community providers.

PRIORITY: Fund the DMH Rental Subsidy Program at \$12.548M, \$2M over the Administration's H.1 budget recommendation, to provide housing to an additional 142 individuals. Stable, affordable housing is critical to helping these individuals engage in treatment and achieve recovery.

Statewide Homelessness Support Services (5046-2000): DMH Statewide Homelessness Support Services address long-term homelessness, for example, through the creation of new, permanent supportive housing options.

PRIORITY: Fund DMH's Statewide Homelessness Support Services at \$24.784M, \$2.046M over the Administration's H.1 budget recommendation, to expand Safe Haven programs across Massachusetts and fund Program Staffing Supports at Pine Street Inn's New Chardon Street, which provides safe housing for women who are homeless living with mental health conditions.

Middlesex County Restoration Commission (4000-0300): The Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission is working to establish a center to provide crisis services and wraparound social supports to prevent arrest, hospitalization, and emergency department boarding of individuals in behavioral health crisis.

PRIORITY: Fund the Middlesex County Restoration Center Commission at \$1.85M in FY22 to launch a pilot program for Restoration Center services.

Criminal Justice Reform (5046-0000): Jail Diversion Programs help to divert individuals with behavioral health conditions from the criminal justice system.

PRIORITY: Include \$2.590M in the DMH Adult Services and Supports line item in FY22 for jail diversion services to continue awarding grants to local municipalities for criminal justice diversion initiatives (e.g., co-responder models).

Geriatric Mental Health Services Program (9110-1640): This line item funds Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams (EMHOTs), which are mobile, multi-disciplinary teams that provide outreach, counseling, and connections to more intensive behavioral health services when needed.

PRIORITY: Fund the Geriatric Mental Health Services Program line item at \$1M, \$200K over the Administration's H.1 budget recommendation, to establish two additional EMHOTs in new communities within the Commonwealth.

Inpatient Behavioral Health Beds for Children (4000-0052): The pandemic has dramatically worsened the existing problem of children waiting in Emergency Departments for days and even weeks waiting for a psychiatric inpatient bed.

PRIORITY: Support for a \$50M Innovation Fund within EOHHS to address emergency department boarding and create better systems of supporting children and families in crisis.

EOHHS Ambulatory Care Behavioral Health Roadmap: On February 24, 2021, the Administration released its Roadmap for Behavioral Health Reform: Ensuring the right behavioral health care treatment when and where people need it.

PRIORITY: Support \$84M, as proposed in H.1, to implement the EOHHS Ambulatory Care Behavioral Health Roadmap, creating a more connected and responsive behavioral health system in the Commonwealth.

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