



# 2026 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY UPDATES

Behavioral Health Legislative Updates from the Indiana Statehouse

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January 23, 2026

## 2026 Indiana General Assembly

### Priority Bills:

***HB 1296: Mental Health Services***



With an eye toward recovery transparency, accountability, and public safety, **HB1296** strengthens two critical components of our behavioral health and public safety system: **the IRACS program** and **the registration of Recovery Residences**.

**First, IRACS—the Integrated Reentry and Correction Supports program—was created by MHAJ to bring recovery resources directly into county jails.** IRACS, as highlighted by Chief Justice Rush in her 2026 State of the Judiciary, began as a 5-site pilot and now operates in 11 counties: Blackford, Clark, Daviess, Dearborn, Dubois, Delaware, Fayette, Scott, Vigo, Tippecanoe and Jay—with Indiana sheriffs requesting additional expansion. IRACS embeds criminally justice trained peer recovery coaches inside jails to provide group and individual recovery support, resource navigation, coordination with treatment providers, and reentry planning in partnership with local criminal justice stakeholders.

Independent evaluation shows the program is producing meaningful outcomes. Participants who completed IRACS have only a 17% return-to-jail rate, along with a 33% reduction in jail bookings, a 25% reduction in ER visits, and a 7% decrease in EMS interactions. HB1296 would enable IRACS sites to continue with the provision of technical assistance, training and site coordination, supervision, quality and safety assurance, and data collection to ensure fidelity to the program model.

**Second, HB1296 establishes a statewide registry for Recovery Residences.** These homes are a vital part of the recovery continuum, yet Indiana has seen numerous documented issues with uncertified or unregulated residences, including unsafe conditions, lack of utilities the absence of recovery programming, and ethical violations. Without a registry that protects the title of “Recovery Residence”, the state cannot distinguish legitimate Recovery Residences from rapidly expanding group homes that may misrepresent themselves as “sober living” that may be more focused on revenue than recovery.

A registry will increase safety and clarity by allowing law enforcement, providers, and communities to verify “Recovery Residences”; encourage uncertified homes in moving toward DMHA and NARR-aligned standards; improving referral pathways; and clearly differentiating Recovery Residences from group homes. This creates transparency and accountability while strengthening the entire recovery housing system and public safety.

**In short, HB1296 provides two essential tools our state does not currently have—tools that directly enhance transparency, accountability, and public safety, while we support recovery.**



*Author of HB 1296 - Rep. Garrett Bascom*

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### **MHAI Priorities for the 2026 Session:**

To stay informed about the bills MHAI is tracking and sign up for future Advocacy Alerts, please see below:

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**Join Us at Hoosier Idol 2026**

We hope you'll join us for ***Hoosier Idol 2026***, an inspiring evening where talent meets purpose. The event takes place February 10, from 6–9 p.m. at the Indiana Roof Ballroom, and brings together community leaders and advocates for a shared commitment to behavioral health in Indiana.

Hoosier Idol is more than a night of incredible performances—it's a celebration of recovery, resilience, and the power of community. Your attendance helps elevate behavioral health awareness and supports efforts that make a real difference across our state.

Please see the flyer below for registration details—we encourage you to save your seat early for this unforgettable evening. ***For those interested in deepening their impact, sponsorship opportunities are available and help make this event and our mission possible.***

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75 YEARS OF  
Mental Health America of Indiana

# Hoosier Idol

February 10, 2026

6-9 PM

@ The Indiana Roof Ballroom



Scan the QR code or click the  
MHAI logo to register.



For information on sponsorships please contact Chief Operating  
Officer, Stephanie Anderson at [sanderson@mhai.net](mailto:sanderson@mhai.net)

