



2026 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY UPDATES

Behavioral Health Legislative Updates from the Indiana Statehouse
Stay Informed. Take action.

February 20, 2026

The 2026 Indiana General Assembly is expected to conclude next week, with much yet to be determined.

Mental Health America of Indiana continues to advocate for priority legislation, while connecting legislators and stakeholders on a bipartisan basis through our advocacy and Hoosier Idol.

Congratulations to the winning Caucus performance, the **Senate Democrats**, below.

2026 Indiana General Assembly

Priority Bills:

House Bill 1296, Mental Health Services

Authored by: [Rep. Garrett Bascom](#).
Co-Authored by: [Rep. Brad Barrett](#), [Rep. Lori Goss-Reaves](#), [Rep. Gregory Porter](#).
Sponsored by: [Sen. Brett Clark](#), [Sen. Michael Crider](#), [Sen. J.D. Ford](#), [Sen. La Keisha Jackson](#), [Sen. Shelli Yoder](#), [Sen. Vaneta Becker](#), [Sen. Daryl Schmitt](#).

MHAI is excited about the progress of HB 1296, Mental Health Services, as it has passed both Chambers and now moves on to the Governor!

Under HB 1296, FSSA is to certify integrated reentry and correction support programs. Integrated Reentry and Correctional Support (IRACS) was developed by Mental Health America of Indiana and is a first of its kind (in the nation) model that was piloted in 5 Indiana County jails--now expanded to 11 Counties. This was one of the programs highlighted by Chief Justice Rush in her State of the Judiciary.

IRACs embeds certified peer recovery coaches inside county correctional facilities to provide person-centered recovery support. IRACs Recovery Coaches are formally trained in operations inside criminal justice systems with a specialized curriculum developed and facilitated by Mental Health America's IRACs staff. Services are provided in the jail and continue for 30 days post release with a warm handoff to local community providers. IRACs services include individual and group peer support offering recovery planning, access to treatment and behavioral health services, resource navigation, reentry coordination, and recovery resource linkage.

In addition, Recovery Residences that use the title of Recovery Residences are to register with DMHA. Recovery Residences are certainly a critical part of the treatment/recovery continuum, but across Indiana, numerous documented incidents demonstrate the risks posed by uncertified, unregistered, or unregulated recovery residences. Without a centralized registry, the state cannot effectively track these homes, differentiate them from rapidly expanding group homes, or ensure safe environments for individuals in recovery.

Senate Bill 91, Syringe Exchange Program

Authored by: [Sen. Michael Crider](#), [Sen. Ed Charbonneau](#), [Sen. Brett Clark](#).
Co-Authored by: [Sen. Shelli Yoder](#), [Sen. Kyle Walker](#), [Sen. Mike Bohacek](#), [Sen. La Keisha Jackson](#), [Sen. Lonnie Randolph](#), [Sen. Rodney Pol](#).
Sponsored by: [Rep. Edward Clere](#), [Rep. Ethan Lawson](#), [Rep. Alex Zimmerman](#), [Rep. Victoria Garcia Wilburn](#).

SB 91 was amended and has returned to the Senate with Amendments. The bill extends the Syringe Exchange Program beyond the current expiration date of July 1, 2026 to 2031.

As of January 2025, eight Indiana counties operated a Syringe Exchange Program. Each program must annually register and file quarterly reports with IDOH. IDOH prepares and submits an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly concerning the Syringe Exchange Program. IDOH also provides technical assistance and provides grants to locally approved programs from a federal grant.

Under SB 91, a participating individual will be required to present valid identification and provide only one sterile syringe and needle in exchange for each used syringe and needle.

SB 4, Various Fiscal Matters

Authored by: [Sen. Ryan Mishler](#), [Sen. Chris Garten](#).
Co-Authored by: [Sen. Lonnie Randolph](#).
Sponsored by: [Rep. Craig Snow](#), [Rep. Jeffrey Thompson](#), [Rep. Gregory Porter](#).
SB 4 would make changes in the local property tax allocation to Community Mental Health Centers (effective July 1, 2028). It would allow a county to meet CMHC funding requirements from any funding source in lieu of or in combination with property taxes, excluding federal funds. It adds provisions concerning the location where certain CMHC services may be provided and specifies additional items that are required to be reported by a CMHC.

SB 222, FSSA Matters

Authored by: [Sen. Ed Charbonneau](#), [Sen. Justin Busch](#), [Sen. Michael Crider](#).
Co-Authored by: [Sen. Lonnie Randolph](#).
Sponsored by: [Rep. Brad Barrett](#).
Among other things, SB 222 requires certified peers to be trained and certified by the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA) or an approved nationally accredited certification body. It requires rules to be adopted concerning the implementation and administration of certification requirements for specified entities and amends standards. This bill adds the 9-8-8 crisis response center and a mobile crisis team as first responders.

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

[Bill List](#)



Hoosier Idol 2026 Video Links!

Thank you to each of the legislative caucuses for helping make Hoosier Idol 75 such a memorable evening in celebration of 75 years of advocacy at Mental Health America of Indiana. Your willingness to step on stage, have fun, and support mental health awareness means more than you know.

We also want to extend our sincere appreciation to our testimonial speaker, **Brett Havlin**. Brett's personal remarks started the evening in the true purpose of our work. His willingness to share his story and speak to the importance of mental health support for public safety professionals reminded us all why this mission matters so deeply.

[Watch Brett's Speech Here](#)

To watch the videos of the acts, please see below:

Elvis Act

[Watch here](#)

House Republicans' "Backstreet Boys"

[Watch here](#)

Senate Republicans' "Chooosin' Indiana"

[Watch here](#)

House Democrats' "Neon Moon"

[Watch here](#)

Senate Democrats' "Hey Jude (2026 Winner)"

[Watch here](#)

[Photo Gallery](#)

[Donate](#)