



2026 Legislative Session Preview

January 7, 2026



Behavioral Health System
Baltimore

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM BALTIMORE

Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB) is a nonprofit organization that manages Baltimore City's behavioral health system—the system of care that addresses emotional health and well-being and provides services for substance use and mental health disorders.



Vision

We envision a city where people thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness.



Mission

We work to develop, implement and align resources, programs and policies that support the behavioral health and wellness of individuals, families and communities.



Values

Integrity, Equity, Innovation,
Collaboration, Quality.

Expert Panel

- . Dan Rabbitt, Director, Policy, Behavioral Health System Baltimore (BHSB)
- . Alyssa Brown, Director, Office of Innovation, Research, and Development, Maryland Medicaid
- . Nicole Graner, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland

BHSB 2026-2027 POLICY PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- Conducted digital community survey and obtained 188 responses including 68 residents of Baltimore City
- Received qualitative feedback from 88 community members
- Interviewed 11 community partners
- Identified 6 key priorities for the next two years



NEW BHSB 2026-2027 POLICY PRIORITIES



Promote high quality behavioral health services and provider accountability within the public behavioral health system



Ensure Marylanders continue to have access to the full range of behavioral health services through Maryland's Medicaid program



Strengthen and expand the behavioral health workforce to ensure timely access to high-quality behavioral health care

NEW BHSB 2026-2027 POLICY PRIORITIES



Increase affordable housing options for those with behavioral health needs, including quality recovery housing and permanent supportive housing



Implement policies to reduce law enforcement and criminal justice interaction for people with behavioral health needs



Maximize the impact of state and local opioid restitution funds by investing in overdose prevention strategies, connections to treatment, and recovery support services

LIKELY 2026 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES

- Mitigating the harms of H.R. 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)
 - Taxes and revenue
 - SNAP
 - Medicaid
- Behavioral health care reimbursement rates and grant funding
- Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)
- Behavioral health quality initiatives and ongoing COMAR 10.63 revision
- Behavioral health workforce licensing and certification
- Overdose prevention and harm reduction

MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2026 DATES OF INTEREST

- Jan 14: General Assembly convenes
- Jan 21: Governor's Budget introduction deadline
- Feb 9: Senate bill introduction deadline
- Feb 13: House bill introduction deadline
- March 23: Crossover deadline
- April 13: Adjournment "Sine Die"



Questions

*Submit questions through the chat
or use the raise hand function*

NEXT STEPS

- Sign up for [BHSB's Policy Alerts](#) and follow us on social media to stay informed!

- @BHSBaltimore



- Attend the Overdose Prevention Advocacy Day on February 10 at 9am.

- Register: :

<https://forms.gle/Jzwnt5MrcUyUXr5f9>

- Attend the Keep the Door Open Rally in Annapolis on February 26 at noon.

- Register: [Mental Health Association of Maryland - Events](#)

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