
HOUSE BILL 2053

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Dent and Callan

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a behavioral health work group to
2 study the root causes of rising behavioral health issues in
3 Washington communities; creating a new section; and providing an
4 expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The department of health shall convene
7 a work group to study the root causes of rising behavioral health
8 issues in Washington communities. The membership of the work group
9 shall emphasize individuals with actual, practical experience dealing
10 with the behavioral health system and shall include:

11 (a) Individuals who have received behavioral health services in a
12 variety of settings and circumstances throughout the behavioral
13 health system;

14 (b) Family members of individuals who have received behavioral
15 health services, including parents;

16 (c) Behavioral health treatment providers with actual experience
17 providing behavioral health services in various settings, including
18 crisis behavioral health services. Behavioral health treatment
19 providers serving on the work group may not represent, or be employed
20 by, any organizations or interest groups representing the interests
21 of health care providers or behavioral health stakeholders;

1 (d) Invited tribal representatives with experience providing or
2 receiving behavioral health services from tribal health departments;

3 (e) Members of the clergy;

4 (f) Law enforcement officers who have training and experience
5 dealing with individuals with behavioral health conditions or
6 undergoing behavioral health crises;

7 (g) Behavioral health advocates; and

8 (h) Any other individuals with actual, practical experience
9 dealing with the behavioral health system deemed appropriate by the
10 department of health.

11 (2) The work group shall, at a minimum, discuss:

12 (a) The factors that are leading to increased demand for
13 behavioral health services in Washington;

14 (b) Methods to address behavioral health workforce shortages;

15 (c) The current status of Washington's behavioral health system,
16 including the barriers to meeting unmet need and any gaps in the
17 system;

18 (d) The effectiveness of the state's integrated care initiative
19 in terms of access for the seriously mentally ill, reductions in
20 hospitalization and institutionalization, improvements in community-
21 based care, and support for an effective network of community-based
22 care providers for the seriously mentally ill; and

23 (e) Any other suggestions for improving the behavioral health
24 system.

25 (3) The work group shall submit a progress report to the governor
26 and the appropriate committees of the legislature no later than
27 December 15, 2022. The work group shall submit its findings and
28 recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the
29 legislature no later than November 15, 2023.

30 (4) This section expires January 1, 2024.

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