



POLICY REPORT 2017

PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION

The first signs of mental illness typically appear during adolescence. By promoting mental wellness and early detection, we can prevent more serious problems later in life.

SUPPORTED AND PASSED:

- ✓ [House Bill 1055](#) creates an income tax checkoff for Urban Peak, a nonprofit organization that provides housing and mental health services for homeless youth.
- ✓ [House Bill 1211](#) creates a pilot program to instruct teachers and other school staff on student discipline.
- ✓ [House Bill 1276](#) protects public school students by prohibiting the use of prone restraint.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 68](#) opens a state grant program to elementary schools, helping them hire mental health professionals.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$9 million** to fund 150 mental health professionals in Colorado schools.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$45,000**, matched by federal funds, to support postpartum depression screenings.

COVERAGE & DELIVERY

Current law requires insurers to provide equal coverage for mental and physical care and to maintain an adequate network of providers. By enforcing these requirements – and by integrating mental health into the primary care system – we can make it easier for Coloradans to get the services they need.

SUPPORTED AND PASSED:

- ✓ [House Bill 1229](#) expands worker’s compensation coverage to include psychologically traumatic events.
- ✓ [House Bill 1351](#) requires the state to analyze the cost and impact of covering, as a Medicaid benefit, residential and inpatient treatment of substance use disorders.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 203](#) makes it easier for consumers to obtain the medication they need, instead of being forced by insurance companies to pursue ineffective alternatives.

OPPOSED AND DEFEATED:

- ✗ [Senate Bill 3](#) would have repealed the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange, jeopardizing insurance coverage for more than 200,000 Coloradans.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

For thousands of Coloradans with serious mental health or substance use disorders, a shortage of therapeutic services has resulted in incarceration, homelessness, or suicide. By providing inpatient, outpatient and residential care, transition and diversion programs, and supportive housing, we can save money and improve lives.

SUPPORTED AND PASSED:

- ✓ [House Bill 1207](#) allows kids ages 10 to 13 who commit misdemeanors to be placed in settings other than the Division of Youth Corrections.
- ✓ [House Bill 1329](#) requires the Division of Youth Corrections to prioritize therapy and rehabilitation and to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 12](#) streamlines the process by which individuals in the justice system are restored to competency, requiring courts to consider outpatient services and to review juvenile cases more promptly.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 19](#) makes it easier for Coloradans with mental illness in the criminal and juvenile justice systems to receive consistent, effective medication – at a lower cost to the state.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 21](#) provides housing and reentry services for Coloradans with serious mental illness exiting the criminal justice system.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 74](#) creates a pilot program for medication-assisted treatment of opioid use disorders in Pueblo and Routt counties.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 193](#) creates a research center for the prevention and treatment of opioid and other substance use disorders.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 207](#) ends the practice of jailing Coloradans who are experiencing a mental health crisis but have not committed a crime. The bill directs Colorado’s crisis response centers and mobile response teams to handle such emergencies and provides \$7 million for telehealth technology, transportation, and other services.
- ✓ [Senate Bill 264](#) clarifies that marijuana tax dollars may be used for mental health and substance use disorder services

- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$15 million** to house homeless Coloradans with serious mental illness.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$4 million** to fund local child caseworkers.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$3 million** for housing and community reentry services for offenders with serious mental illness leaving the prison system.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides **\$700,000** to fund eight addiction counselors at Colorado's mental health institutes.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) provides an additional **\$666,000** to fund mental health services for juveniles in state detention facilities.
- ✓ The [state budget](#) adds **\$400,000** to support Colorado's statewide 24/7 crisis response hotline.