

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

3.9.20



➤ Politics at the Capitol

This week closes out the first half of the 2020 legislative session. The sixtieth calendar day is Saturday, March 7, and the state constitution requires that the General Assembly conclude all business and adjourn within 120 calendar days. That said, for anyone tracking legislation, it feels like things are just getting started. To date, a total of 541 bills have been introduced in the two chambers. Of those, 88 have already been defeated, and 68 have already passed the full General Assembly. The remaining 385 (plus any additional bills yet to be introduced) will have 58 days to make their way to the Governor's desk if they're to become law. Some of the bigger, more contentious bills still looming include the immunization bill (SB 163), which passed the Senate last Friday (2/28) with Sen. Priola being the only Republican to join Democrats in supporting the bill. That bill was introduced in the House on Monday (2/24) and will soon be scheduled for a House committee hearing. The "long bill" (state budget bill) should be introduced in two weeks and will likely follow a three-week process before receiving final approval (one week in the House, one week in the Senate, one week in conference committee and back to each chamber for final passage). The members will also need to take up the annual school finance bill at some point. Timing on that bill varies a bit more than the budget bill, and this year's legislation may include some substantive policy changes, which could generate more debate than it has in previous years.

➤ Budget

The Joint Budget Committee (JBC) continues to move through the figure setting process. The behavioral health sections of both the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing were done on Tuesday (3/3). Mental Health Colorado, in collaboration with other advocacy partners, successfully lobbied the JBC to deny CDHS' request to remove funding from the Special Connections line item. As a reminder, this program services pregnant and post-partum women with substance use disorders. The JBC laid over the decision to deny the Department's request to reduce funding for the Momentum program. We will be working to protect this funding and to ensure it continues to be available to serve our most vulnerable children and adults in Colorado. If the JBC stays on schedule, they should conclude the initial figure setting process by the middle of next week. With a few days to finalize and review those figures, the last (and perhaps most important) step prior to long bill introduction will be hearing the revenue forecast from staff of legislative council and the Governor's Office of State Planning & Budgeting. That forecast will be presented on March 17.

➤ What's Coming

Mental Health Colorado has two agenda bills up in committee this week: HB-1312, Behavioral Health Training Requirements Educator License, will be heard in House Education on Thursday (3/12), and SB-181, Measures On Incompetent To Proceed, will be heard in Senate Judiciary on Wednesday (3/11). Additionally, many other bills we support will be in committee, including: SB-

026, Workers Compensation for Audible Psych Issues; HB-1086, Insurance Coverage Mental Wellness Exams; and HB-1314, Behavioral Health Crisis Response Training. Mental Health Colorado will be testifying in opposition to HB-1271 on Thursday (3/12). This bill would repeal the Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law passed last year and make significant changes to the 72-hour hold criteria.

In addition to the immunization bill starting up in the House, as previously mentioned, next week also promises some lively debate in the Senate. HB-1031, replacing Columbus Day with a new state holiday, was laid over Friday (3/6) for second reading debate. In general, the activity level may pick up in both chambers as each of the Appropriations Committees met Friday morning (3/6) and passed several bills to their respective floors—House Appropriations passed 14 bills, and Senate Appropriations passed 17. As bill introductions slow and the flood gates of the Appropriations Committees open, we will likely see less time in committee hearings and longer hours of floor work. On Friday morning (3/6) the Senate Minority Leader took a moment of personal privilege to express appreciation for how well the two parties were working together in the Senate and commended all his colleagues.

➤ New Bills

Bill #	Title
HB20-1335	Colorado Homeless Project Contribution Tax Credit
HB20-1347	Licensure Exemption For Family Child Care Homes
HB20-1349	Colorado Affordable Health Care Option
SB20-187	DYS Therapeutic Group Treatment Pilot Program
SB20-188	Plain Language In Hospital Bills

➤ This Week

Monday, March 9

- HB20-1137, Broadband Grant Certification of Unserved Area Requirement, Senate Business, Labor & Technology at 1:30pm
- HB20-1206, Sunset Mental Health Professionals, House Finance at 1:30pm in room HCR 0112
- HB20-1270, One Parent Consent For Behavioral Health Services, Senate Judiciary at 1:30pm in room SCR 352
- HB20-1302, CAPS Check Program Changes, House Floor at 10:00am

Tuesday, March 10

- SB20-026, Workers' Compensation For Audible Psychological Trauma, House Business Affairs & Labor, upon adjournment in room HCR 0107

Wednesday, March 11

- HB20-1086, Insurance Coverage Mental Health Wellness Exams, Senate Health & Human Services at 1:30pm
- HB20-1237, Medicaid Managed Care Assignment For Child Welfare, House Public Health Care & Human Services, upon adjournment in room HCR 0112
- SB20-106, Consent To Shelter And Services By Homeless Youth, House Public Health Care & Human Services, upon adjournment in room HCR 0112

- SB20-181, Measures On Incompetent To Proceed, Senate Judiciary at 1:30pm, room SCR 352

Thursday, March 12

- HB20-1128, Educator Education Requirements Special Education, Senate Education at 1:30pm
- HB20-1312, Behavioral Health Training Requirements Educator License, House Education at 1:30pm, Mental Health Colorado bill

Friday, March 13

- HB20-1314, Behavior Health Crisis Response Training, House Public Health Care & Human Service upon adjournment, room HCR 0112

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