

Massachusetts 988 Commission

Meeting Minutes
 January 22nd, 2026
 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, January 22nd, 2026

Start time: 2:20 PM

End time: 4:00 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Count	Members participating remotely	Vote 1	Vote 2	Vote 3
1	Danielle Bolduc – Director of the Suicide Prevention Program	X	O	X
2	Patrick Bowlin - Current or former consumer of mental health or substance use disorder supports or services	-	-	-
3	Kelly Casey, PhD – Department of Forensic & Clinical Services at William James College	-	-	-
4	Rebekah Caylor – Raynham Police Department (MCPA), 911 Dispatcher	A	A	-
5	Courtney Chelo – Mass. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC)	A	X	X
6	Undersecretary Kerry Collins – Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS)	-	-	-
7	Rebekah Gewirtz – National Association of Social Workers - MA & RI Chapter	X	X	X
8	Debbie Helms – Samaritans Merrimack Valley	-	-	-
9	Jessica LaRochelle – Mass. Association for Mental Health (MAMH)	X	X	X
10	Josh Quirk – National Alliance on Mental Illness Massachusetts (NAMI-MA)	X	A	X
11	Charmain Jackman, PhD – InnoPsych, Inc.	X	O	X
12	Karin Jeffers – Clinical & Support Options (CSO)	A	O	-
13	Kathy Marchi – Samaritans, Inc.	-	-	-
14	Kimberly Martin – Riverside Trauma Center – Riverside Community Care	A	A	-
15	Paul Mina – United Way of Tri County & United Way of Pioneer Valley, Mass 211	X	X	X
16	Ivy Moody – Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC)	X	X	X
17	Pam Sager – Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)	-	-	X
18	Pata Suyemoto - National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association	X	O	X
19	Joan Taglieri - Cambridge Health Alliance	X	-	-
20	Mio Tamanaha – Department of Mental Health	X	A	X
21	Stacy Vail – Cataldo Ambulance Service, Paramedic	A	A	-
22	Monna Wallace – State 911 Department	X	A	-
23	Sam Langstein - Current or former consumer of mental health or substance use disorder supports or services	X	X	X
24	Chair Kelley Cunningham – Division of Violence and Injury Prevention, DPH	X	O	X

* **(X)** Voted in favor; **(O)** Opposed; **(A)** Abstained from vote; **(-)** Absent from meeting or during vote

** **Vote 1:** Roll Call and Minutes Approval; **Vote 2: To continue voting on recommendations 12-18 for this year's Annual Report;** **Vote 3:** To Adjourn Meeting

Call to Order and Opening Remarks:

Chair Kelley Cunningham, Director of the Division of Violence and Injury Prevention at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, introduced herself and mentioned her designee as the Commission Chair. Kelley opened with some general housekeeping tips reminding the group that the meeting is subject to Open Meeting Law and that any votes taken during the meeting will be conducted via a roll call vote. Commission members should remain muted unless they are speaking, and to please not use the chat feature as it is not available to the public. Members are encouraged to use the raise hand feature for comments or questions and to state their names before speaking to record the minutes accurately and encourage accessible communications.

Kelley thanked the commission members for making this additionally scheduled meeting today possible and reminded everyone that we are here today to continue to vote on the recommendations. Before getting to the recommendations, she inquired if everyone had received the December minutes and if there were any suggested edits. Jessica LaRochelle noted a correction needed to be made where the "A" for "Abstain" has been left off the voting record answer key.

December Meeting Minutes: Kelley called for approval of the draft minutes from the last Commission meeting on December 15th, 2025.

Rebekah Gewirtz introduced a motion to approve the December 15th minutes, and Joan Taglieri seconded the motion.

Vote 1 on approval of the December meeting minutes: The December 15th minutes were approved by roll-call vote.

Kelley clarified to the group that in the agenda set for today's meeting the Commission will only continue to review and vote on the next two recommendations (numbered 10 and 11) as these were part of the original recommendations while recommendations #12 through #18 were add-ons that have not been fully vetted. Given that the Annual Report is due on March 1st and it is Kelley's prerogative as chair to set the agenda, she stated that the discussion and vetting process for the remaining recommendations should instead continue as part of our meetings in 2026.

Ivy Moody countered this information and called for a vote to continue to discuss and vote on the full list of recommendations, and Rebekah Gewirtz seconded the motion. Ivy referred to the vote taken in the December meeting in which the Commission voted to decide to continue the conversation with a January meeting.

Kelley called on Rebecca Ashby, Deputy General Counsel, to weigh in, Rebecca explained to the Commission that if the recommendations are not part of the posted agenda, it is a violation of Open Meeting Law to discuss them today. However, the Commission does have the right to vote on whether the Commission will continue to vote on the full list in the open meeting. Several other Commission members spoke for and against continuing with the recommendations beyond #11.

Vote 2 on whether to continue to vote on the recommendations numbered 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, and 18 (14 was voted on in the December meeting) for this year's Annual Report.

6 voted in favor of, 5 opposed continuing beyond #11, 6 abstained from voting, 7 members were absent

The Commission will continue to vote on the full list of recommendations for this year's Annual Report. There was some discussion on potentially asking the legislature for an extension on the Annual Report due date. Kelley will pick up this conversation at the February 9th meeting depending on where the Commission is.

Continuation of the review of, and voting on, Recommendations numbered 10 and 11 for the Annual Report:

The recommendation discussion continued with #10, "Data reporting requirements". There were several member comments in the Word doc that was shared on screen suggesting the types of data that might be collected: feedback from callers who use the service, data on interoperability and warm handoffs, demographic data, how the caller heard about 988, reasons and outcomes of calls. Kelley suggested that it would be more helpful to put this conversation on hold for a 2026 agenda item so we can gather what type of data is already collected and discuss further what type of data would be important to collect since the Commission has not done a deep dive on this topic. She also reiterated that demographics cannot be collected from callers.

Jessica LaRochelle recommended that we instead make a recommendation to explore the creation of a public data dashboard for 988 Massachusetts citing research she conducted that other states (10 out of 50) are doing this, and 6 out of the 10 had public data around performance. She went on to explain that some states documented publicly the reasons for calling, whether follow-up was offered or not, and if the caller consented, as well as some demographic points. Kelley responded that Jessica's points on the creation of a public facing dashboard lent itself to her argument that Commission needs the time to properly discuss before putting forward a recommendation.

Jessica called on Rebecca Ashby, Deputy General Counsel, to weigh in on the difference between making the recommendation to the legislature that this public dashboard is explored or deciding as a Commission that we will continue to have conversations about it. Rebecca stated that if we are making a recommendation to ourselves to continue to explore data reporting requirements and a recommendation on a publicly facing dashboard, that isn't something we need to put in front of the legislature.

Danielle Bolduc noted that there is state data publicly available from Vibrant on their website. Paul Mina expressed to the Commission that it is not appropriate to put anything forward to the legislature that hasn't been fully vetted and that something like this might be the job of a subcommittee. Paul reminded the Commission that it is the Commission's duty to file recommendations in an Annual Report to the legislature, not to put forward to them ideas for discovery. Further discussion among team members ensued for and against putting a recommendation forward at this stage.

Courtney Chelo put a motion forward that we vote on the recommendation as written, and if it fails, the Commission can pick it up again next year. However, for context she suggested this language: The 988 Commission recommends that the Commonwealth has a publicly available dashboard for 988.

Danielle felt it was important to state to the Commission that what she is hearing from this body is that they do not fully understand the data that is collected and the nuances of it well enough to make this recommendation. As someone who has access to state and national data, she thinks this is an important topic for the Commission to spend more time exploring. Danielle also asked Rebecca Ashby, Deputy General Counsel, to clarify whether it is the Commission's job to put forward well researched and thoroughly discussed recommendations that align to what we believe are best practices versus putting forward a concept. She stated this isn't a value statement on any of the recommendations, but this recommendation as an example would require funding and resources that haven't been considered yet.

In response, Rebecca Ashby highlighted the Commission's statutory charge: to review national guidelines and best practices and make recommendations for the implementation of the statewide 988 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis system, including any legislative or regulatory changes that may be necessary, and then take these findings and recommendations and include them in the Annual Report.

Paul responded that what this means is that we do not need legislative approval to create a discovery process for a dashboard because it is not statutory, and Kelley confirmed that is correct. Courtney stated that this isn't

about getting approval, rather it is about surfacing the recommendation regardless of what the legislature does with it.

Kelley provided a time check here – 3:14 PM.

Ivy Moody interjected with two separate things:

1. A recommendation to the Commission that once we are through with the Annual Report, we set a meeting to discuss the agendas for 2026 with the items we are carrying into this year.
2. An ask to Rebecca Ashby, Deputy General Counsel, if the Commission is not allowed to update recommendations year-to-year, and Rebecca responded that if that is what the Commission wants to do, she is unaware of anything that would restrict the Commission's ability to do that.

Jessica added that if we make the recommendation that the 988 Commission would like to explore a public data dashboard then what we are communicating to the legislature that there is work to be done in 988 that includes funding, and since the legislature is responsible for state budget that includes 988, we are making a case for funding.

At this point, Kelley called for a vote on number 10 in two parts:

1. We vote on whether any work on data collection goes into the annual report this year (a yes vote). We vote to table the discussion to next year (a no vote).
2. If the vote passes, we draft and vote on the language of the recommendation.

Pam Sager made a motion to vote per Kelley's suggestion, and Ivy Moody seconded the motion.

The first part of the vote passed with 8 voting in favor of, 6 opposing, 2 abstaining, and 8 absent. The Commission moved on to determine the language of the recommendation, landing on:

10. The 988 Commission recommends that the Commonwealth has a publicly facing data dashboard for 988.

Pam Sager made a motion to vote on the language of recommendation #10, and Ivy Moody seconded the motion.

The second part of the vote passed with 17 votes in favor of, 0 opposed, 0 abstained, and 7 absent.

The Commission continued the discussion with #11, "Funding/Budget Allocation for collaboration with LGBTQ+ groups and additional training for 988 call centers". Member comments were discussed and clarified. The difference between this and recommendations 1 and 2 that were approved in the November meeting is the mention of budget and funding allocation. Ivy Moody made a motion to amend recommendation #2 to include budget and funding. Further discussion ensued on how the Commission would amend recommendation #2.

Mio Tamanaha raised that if we tie additional funding to #2, and it doesn't get approved, the whole recommendation could be lost. Karin Jeffers noted that we already approved #2, and would advocate that we create a separate, simple recommendation to provide funding to support #2. Danielle highlighted her agreement on a separate recommendation, Ivy withdrew her motion to merge them, and Charmain Jackman added the importance that the verbiage specifically state the fundings is for trainings.

Karin Jeffers made a motion to vote on recommendation #11 as written below, and Charmain Jackman seconded the motion.

11. The Commission recommends additional state funding to support trainings noted in recommendation #2.

The recommendation was approved with 15 votes in favor of, 0 votes opposed, 1 abstained, and 8 absent.

Commented [KC1]: Did someone leave by this vote? (above says 7 absent)

Draft Annual Report Review

Casey Pratt shared her screen and walked the Commission members through the Annual Report that has been drafted thus far. After updating the draft with the results of today’s meeting, it was agreed that she would send out the draft copy to the Commission members. The Commission members can then begin their review and provide feedback to the draft Annual Report in the form of comments or track changes in the PPT doc. The Commission members were reminded that they must communicate their feedback directly to Casey and on their own. Any review, comment, and feedback as a group is a violation of Open Meeting Law.

Conclusion of the Meeting

Before the meeting adjourned, Jessica LaRochelle asked Kelley if we can start recording our Commission meetings. Kelley will take that question back to DPH and report back to the group.

Our next meeting will be held on Monday, February 9th from 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM

Vote 3 Adjournment:

Paul Mina made a motion to adjourn, and Charmain Jackman seconded the motion. The vote was approved.

It was identified that quorum was not met when the vote to adjourn was made. A vote to approve the meeting minutes on Feb 9, 2026, will confirm the meeting ended as noted in the minutes.

Appendix:

See voting by Commission member to date on the pages below.

Voting on Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – Monday, November 17th

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 1	Rec. 2	Rec. 3	Rec. 4	Rec. 5	Rec. 6
1	Danielle Bolduc	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	Patrick Bowlin	–	–	–	–	–	–
3	Kelly Casey, PhD	X	X	X	X	X	X
4	Rebekah Caylor	–	–	–	–	–	–
5	Courtney Chelo	X	X	X	X	X	X
6	Undersecretary Kerry Collins	X	X	X	X	X	X
7	Rebekah Gewirtz	X	X	X	X	X	X
8	Sharon Hanson	X	X	X	X	X	X
9	Debbie Helms	X	X	X	X	X	X
10	Jessica LaRochelle	X	–	–	–	–	–
11	Josh Quirk	X	X	X	X	X	X
12	Charmain Jackman	X	X	X	X	X	X
13	Karin Jeffers	O	X	X	X	X	X
14	Kathy Marchi	X	X	X	X	X	X
15	Kimberly Martin	X	X	X	X	X	X
16	Paul Mina	X	X	X	X	X	X

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 1	Rec. 2	Rec. 3	Rec. 4	Rec. 5	Rec. 6
17	Ivy Moody	X	X	X	X	X	X
18	Pam Sager	X	X	X	X	X	X
19	Pata Suyemoto	X	X	X	X	X	X
20	Joan Taglieri	X	X	X	X	X	X
21	Mio Tamanaha	X	X	X	X	X	X
22	Stacy Vail	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	Monna Wallace	X	X	X	X	X	X
24	Sam Langstein	X	X	X	X	X	X
(X) 25	Chair Kelley Cunningham	O	X	X	X	X	X

Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Recommendation 1: Conduct a broad assessment of the anticipated or current impacts of Federal funding cuts and make a recommendation for increased resources – funding and staff support indicated. (approved)

Recommendation 2: Given the removal of the press 3 option, 988 Massachusetts leads a collaboration of GLAD, LGBTQ+ Youth Commission, and PFLAG and makes a recommendation for additional trainings for this community for the call centers and to reach out to the BHHL and organizations representing the LGBTQ+ community to identify needs, make recommendations, and work together on solutions. (approved)

Recommendation 3: Include budget for 988 text capability. (struck down)

Recommendation 4: Expand 988 cultural competency to serve to the Asian communities and how to talk about mental health and how to access services. (approved)

Recommendation 5: Increase marketing initiatives in western Mass. (approved)

Recommendation 6: Advance legislation that prohibits anyone from using AI to provide mental health and therapeutic decision making. Provide support to advance this bill and potentially an outline of where AI is and is not an appropriate use of technology. (tabled)

Voting on Recommendations 7, 8, 9+14 – Monday, December 15th

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 7	Rec. 8	Rec. 9+14
1	Danielle Bolduc	O	X	X
2	Patrick Bowlin	-	-	-
3	Kelly Casey, PhD	-	-	-
4	Rebekah Caylor	-	-	-
5	Courtney Chelo	-	-	-
6	Undersecretary Kerry Collins	-	-	-
7	Rebekah Gewirtz	X	A	X
8	Debbie Helms	O	X	X

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 7	Rec. 8	Rec. 9+14
9	Jessica LaRochelle	X	A	X
10	Josh Quirk	A	X	X
11	Charmain Jackman, PhD	X	X	X
12	Karin Jeffers	-	-	-
13	Kathy Marchi	X	X	X
14	Kimberly Martin	-	-	-
15	Paul Mina	X	X	X
16	Ivy Moody	X	O	X
17	Pam Sager	-	-	-
18	Pata Suyemoto	X	X	X
19	Joan Taglieri	X	X	X
20	Mio Tamanaha	X	A	X
21	Stacy Vail	-	-	-
22	Monna Wallace	X	X	X
23	Sam Langstein	X	A	X
24	Chair Kelley Cunningham	O	X	X

(X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Recommendation 7: Improved Interoperability (tabled)

Recommendation 8: The 988 Commission is again endorsing that legislators consider with urgency the establishment of a user fee as detailed in the 988 Commission's 2024-2025 Annual Report. This recommendation serves as reinforcement of what we put forth in last year's Annual Report and highlights the importance of having a long-term solution for funding. (approved)

Recommendations 9 and 14: Increased training to increase warm handoffs between 988 and BHHL and implement a policy of 988 call-taker ending each call with an offer to transfer the caller to the BHHL to facilitate access to follow-up-services as required by Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 177, § 16EE (c)(x) (2022), unless contra-indicated by the substance of the call. (tabled)

Voting on Recommendations 10 and 11 – Thursday, January 22nd, 2026

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 10 (to include)	Rec. 10 (language)	Rec. 11
1	Danielle Bolduc	O	X	X
2	Patrick Bowlin	-	-	-
3	Kelly Casey, PhD	-	-	-
4	Rebekah Caylor	O	X	X
5	Courtney Chelo	X	X	X
6	Undersecretary Kerry Collins	-	-	-

Count	Members participating remotely	Rec. 10 (to include)	Rec. 10 (language)	Rec. 11
7	Rebekah Gewirtz	X	X	X
8	Debbie Helms	-	-	-
9	Jessica LaRochelle	X	X	X
10	Josh Quirk	X	X	X
11	Charmain Jackman, PhD	X	X	X
12	Karin Jeffers	X	X	X
13	Kathy Marchi	-	-	-
14	Kimberly Martin	O	X	X
15	Paul Mina	O	X	X
16	Ivy Moody	X	X	X
17	Pam Sager	-	X	X
18	Pata Suyemoto	O	X	X
19	Joan Taglieri	-	-	-
20	Mio Tamanaha	A	X	A
21	Stacy Vail	-	X	-
22	Monna Wallace	-	-	-
23	Sam Langstein	A	X	X
24	Chair Kelley Cunningham	O	X	X

(X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Recommendation 10: The first vote on recommendation 10 was to decide whether the recommendation should be included in this year's Annual Report. (approved)

Recommendation 10: The second vote on recommendation 10 was on the language of the recommendation "The 988 Commission recommends that the Commonwealth has a publicly facing data dashboard for 988." (approved)

Recommendation 11: The Commission recommends additional state funding to support trainings noted in recommendation #2. (approved)