

Meeting Minutes  
November 19, 2025  
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

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Date of meeting: Wednesday, November 19, 2025

Start time: 09:33AM

End time: 10:56AM

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

| Member Votes |                                                                                                                                                             | Present | Vote I * |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|----------|
| 1            | <b>Lauren Almeida</b> , Director of Mental Health, DCF                                                                                                      | X       | X        |
| 2            | <b>Kevin Beagan</b> , Deputy Commissioner, DOI                                                                                                              | X       | X        |
| 3            | <b>Carmel Craig</b> , Vice President for Child, Youth and Adult Mental Health Services, ABH                                                                 | X       | X        |
| 4            | <b>Kelly English</b> , Chief Innovation Officer, MSPCC / Eliot Community Human Services ( <i>representative from the CMHC</i> )                             | X       | X        |
| 5            | <b>Rachel Gwaltney</b> , Executive Director, Children's League of Mass                                                                                      | X       | X        |
| 6            | <b>Paul Hyry-Dermith</b> , Director of Bridge Resilient Youth in Transition, Brookline Center for Community Mental Health ( <i>designee of Chair Domb</i> ) | X       | X        |
| 7            | <b>Senator Robyn Kennedy</b> ( <i>or Carole Meehan Oyama, Chief of Staff, or Bryan Bates, Legislative Director</i> ) ( <i>designee of Chair Velis</i> )     | X       | X        |
| 8            | <b>Jessica Larochelle</b> , Co-Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, MAMH                                                                     | X       | X        |
| 9            | <b>David Matteodo</b> , Executive Director, MABHS                                                                                                           | X       | X        |
| 10           | <b>Kristen McKinnon</b> , Assistant Director, Student and Family Support, DESE                                                                              | X       | X        |
| 11           | <b>Lee Robinson</b> , Medical Director for Behavioral Health, MassHealth                                                                                    | -       | -        |
| 12           | <b>Pam Sager</b> , Executive Director, PPAL                                                                                                                 | X       | X        |
| 13           | <b>Leigh Simons</b> , Senior Director for Healthcare Policy, MHA                                                                                            | X       | X        |
| 14           | <b>Aimee Smith-Zeoli</b> , Behavioral Health Supervisor, EEC                                                                                                | X       | X        |
| 15           | <b>Charlene Zuffante</b> , Deputy Commissioner for Children, Youth, & Families, DMH                                                                         | X       | X        |

| Member Votes |                                                                      | Present | Vote I* |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| 16           | Amy Rosenthal, EOHHS, Chair ( <i>designee of Secretary Mahanah</i> ) | X       | X       |

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

## **Proceedings**

1. Welcome
2. Oath of Office
3. Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Overview
4. Remarks on Importance of the Special Commission
5. Member Introductions
6. Commission's Charge
7. Goals and Expectations

Undersecretary Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. She welcomed members and thanked them for their willingness to participate in the nominating process. He informed the Committee members are subject to the Open Meeting Law (OML) and that any votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll-call vote.

Instructions were provided for managing Zoom logistics:

- Keep microphones muted unless speaking
- Locate and use raise hand feature to indicate a desire to speak

Phil Duarte with EOHHS administered the oath of office to members and Dominique Jeudy with EOHHS served as witness.

Don Siriani, Chief of the Public Education and Communications Division at the State Ethics Commission, provided the Nominating Committee with a brief overview of the State's Conflict of Interest Law and ethics regulations. He covered ethics principles, conflict of interest, disclosure and recusal obligations, gift rules, confidentiality requirements, and restrictions on political activity and misuse of office. He stressed that members should view the State Ethics Commission as a resource and to reach out directly with questions or concerns related to potential conflicts of interest.

Lauren Cleary, Associate General Counsel with EOHHS, provided an overview of the Open Meeting Law as it relates to the work of the Nominating Committee. She explained the requirements for public access, quorum definition (a simple majority), emphasized the importance of transparency in how the Nominating Committee conducts its work and explained the specific limitations related to members' communications (via email, text, and otherwise) outside of a formal meeting on matters which might pertain to the work of the Nominating Committee. She also reviewed executive session criteria and public record obligations.

Undersecretary Rosenthal delivered remarks on the importance of the Commission's work and the challenges to timely, affordable, coordinated access to the full spectrum of necessary services. She noted that the group would be examining barriers to children and families' access to behavioral health care and proposing recommendations to improve access to behavioral health services for children and families, including a detailed review of the common challenges that children, adolescents, and families face in seeking behavioral health services.

After members introduced themselves, Undersecretary Rosenthal reviewed the Commission's full legislative charge. She noted that the group was given until 06/30/2026 to submit its report and recommendations to the Legislature. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the [Commission's Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Undersecretary Rosenthal then facilitated an open discussion of members' goals and expectations for the Commission. In their remarks, members highlighted a range of issues, including children stuck in inpatient or emergency settings due to placement barriers; the exhaustion and navigation burdens on families; longstanding system silos that limit coordination; the scattering of small specialty programs across agencies; and the need for more integrated, scalable models. Members also raised concerns about payer-driven obstacles, workforce shortages (especially in behavioral health), and gaps in services for Autism Spectrum Disorder, medically complex youth, and LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities. Additional themes included the critical role of schools in supporting mental health, the importance of safe and appropriate discharge models, and opportunities to streamline access so families encounter "no wrong door" across the system.

Arianne Henry, Director of Policy with EOHHS, then presented a list of reports and resources that were collected prior to the meeting. As a next step, the Commission members volunteered to review one or more of these reports and provide an overview of them. Additionally, the Commission members were asked to identify what gaps might exist or what other resources are relevant to this work and to share them with members.

In closing, Undersecretary Rosenthal highlighted the Commission's Mass.gov webpage, where copies of the meeting materials will be posted for members of the public (<https://www.mass.gov/special-commission-on-access-to-behavioral-health-services-for-children-and-families>). She noted that seven additional Commission meetings have been scheduled over the next six months and shared a proposed calendar for meetings leading up to the 06/30/2026 deadline for submission of the Commission's report and recommendations. The group's next meeting will be on 12/17.

**Vote I to adjourn the meeting:** Undersecretary Rosenthal requested a motion to adjourn and the motion was introduced by a Committee Member and seconded by another Committee Member and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 A.M.

**Meeting Materials:**

1. Meeting I Slide Deck
2. Open Meeting Law Guide

