

# Community Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (CBHPP) Commission

## Meeting Minutes

August 7, 2025

3:00 - 4:30 pm

Date of meeting: Thursday, August 7, 2025

Start time: 3:00 pm

End time: 4:30 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Commission Members		Present	Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	<b>Gabriel Cohen</b> – Executive Office of Health and Human Services ( <i>chair</i> )	X	X	X
2	<b>Nancy Allen Scannell</b> – Mass. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children	X	X	X
3	<b>Lena Asmar</b> – New England Center and Home for Veterans	X	X	X
4	<b>Ruth Blodgett</b> – Department of Public Health ( <i>designee of Commissioner Goldstein</i> )	X	X	X
5	<b>Jessica Collins</b> – Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts	-	-	-
6	<b>Georgia Critsley</b> – Trial Court ( <i>designee of Chief Justice Briege</i> )	X	X	X
7	<b>Yaminette Diaz-Linhart</b> – National Association of Social Workers – Mass.	X	X	X
8	<b>Mindy Domb</b> – Mass. House of Representatives	-	-	-
9	<b>Delaney Fisher-Cassiol</b> – Office of Tram Nguyen ( <i>designee of Rep. Nguyen</i> )	X	X	X
10	<b>Lynette Gabrila</b> – Executive Office of Veterans Services	X	X	X
11	<b>Elizabeth Ganz</b> – Association for Behavioral Healthcare	X	X	X
12	<b>Margaret Hannah</b> – Freedman Center at William James College	X	X	X
13	<b>Sophie Jean-Felix</b> – Mass. Association of Community Health Workers	X	X	X
14	<b>Jessica Larochelle</b> – Mass. Association for Mental Health	X	X	X
15	<b>Thomas Mahoney</b> – Office of Senator Pavel Payano ( <i>designee of Sen. Payano</i> )	X	X	X
16	<b>Danna Mauch</b> – Mass. Association for Mental Health	X	A	X
17	<b>Emma McNamara</b> – CHIA ( <i>designee of Executive Director Peters</i> )	X	X	X
18	<b>Josh Quirk</b> – National Alliance on Mental Illness - Mass.	-	-	-
19	<b>Noel Sierra</b> – Mass. Organization for Addiction Recovery	X	X	X
20	<b>Stephanie Sladen</b> – Justice Resource Institute (JRI)	-	-	-
21	<b>John Velis</b> – Mass. Senate	-	-	-
22	<b>James Vetter</b> – Social Emotional Learning Alliance for Mass.	-	-	-
23	<b>Charlene Zuffante</b> – Department of Mental Health	X	X	X

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

APPROVED

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## **Proceedings**

Gabriel Cohen with the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm. He welcomed members and explained that he would be chairing the meeting on behalf of Eliza Lake, Director of Health Policy and Strategic Initiatives at EOHHS, who Secretary Mahanian had designated as Acting Chair of the Commission until a new Undersecretary of Health is named. Director Lake introduced herself to the group.

Mr. Cohen reminded members that the Commission is subject to the Open Meeting Law, noting that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

**Vote 1 to approve the 6/12/2025 minutes:** Mr. Cohen called for a vote to approve the minutes from the Commission's previous meeting on 6/12/2025. Ms. Critsley introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Gabrila and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Sarah Mughal, Program Director for the Office of Behavioral Health Promotion and Prevention (OBHPP), shared updates from the OBHPP office's ongoing initiatives. She highlighted the completion of the OBHPP's environmental scan, which helped the Office identify seven areas that they deemed underfunded and/or underrepresented in state-wide initiatives:

1. Reducing loneliness and social isolation;
2. Reducing family stress and supporting caregiver well-being;
3. Promoting infant, early childhood, and maternal mental health;
4. Reducing psychological distress in immigrant populations;
5. Promoting early intervention with youth and young adults;
6. Reducing family and intimate partner violence; and
7. Promoting population well-being through education, training, and skills development.

Director Mughal explained that the OBHPP recently posted a notice of intent (NOI) for its upcoming grant program, which they anticipate will award approximately \$3 million annually to community-based organizations (CBOs) across the state to develop new programs or expand existing programs that address one or more of the OBHPP's seven focus areas (listed above). She stated that the grants would be structured in three tiers, each with different funding amounts:

- Tier A: Capacity funding for early-stage program development
- Tier B: Implementation support to launch or scale formed programs
- Tier C: Scaling and sustainability support

Director Mughal noted that the OBHPP anticipates formally accepting grant proposals in late September, with the goal of reviewing proposals in November and announcing a first round of awards before the end of the year. She invited interested Commission members to contact her team to provide feedback on the process and noted that additional information on participating in a review committee would be provided at a future meeting. In response to members' questions, Director Mughal clarified that award amounts have not yet been determined and would be determined by the proposals received.

As part of her updates, Director Mughal noted that the OBHPP has been working with the marketing agency ASG to design and implement its first statewide behavioral health awareness campaign, which would be launched in the coming months. She explained that the theme of the campaign would be "*What's on your mind?*" and would be aimed at promoting the importance of behavioral and mental health to overall wellness; reducing the stigma surrounding mental health; and increasing health equity by focusing campaigns within prioritized communities as identified by the Advancing Health Equity in Massachusetts (AHEM) Initiative.

Director Mughal shared updates on the two working groups, focused on school-based behavioral health initiatives and early interventions. In response to members' comments about the large number of existing initiatives, Mr. Cohen encouraged members to consider joining the proposed workgroup focused on interagency collaboration and coordination. He also proposed that the Commission consider exploring at a future meeting how best to "de-silo" the various ongoing behavioral health promotion and prevention initiatives being conducted across the state.

In response, Noel Sierra shared the following link to MOAR's mini-guide in the Chat, which includes a comprehensive list of behavioral health resources: <https://www.moar-recovery.org/mini-guide>

In summarizing next steps, Mr. Cohen noted that the Commission's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 9, based on the regular, bi-monthly cadence. In response to a request for proposed agenda items, Ms. Diaz-Linhart suggested that the Commission consider a presentation on AI in the behavioral health promotion and prevention space.

**Vote 2 to adjourn:** Mr. Cohen requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Mauch introduced the motion, which was seconded by Director Blodgett and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

#### Meeting Materials

1. Draft 6/12/2025 meeting minutes
2. OBHPP presentation