

Special Commission on Access to Behavioral Health Services for Children and Families

Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2026
9:30 - 11:00 am

Date of meeting: Wednesday, February 25, 2026
Start time: 9:30 am
End time: 11:00 am
Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Member Votes		Present	Vote 1*	Vote 2*
1	Amy Rosenthal – Executive Office of Health and Human Service (<i>Chair</i>)	X	X	X
2	Lauren Almeida – Department of Children and Families (DCF)	X	X	X
3	Kevin Beagan – Division of Insurance (DOI)	X	A	X
4	Carmel Craig – Association for Behavioral Health (ABH)	X	X	X
5	Rachel Gwaltney – Children’s League of Massachusetts	-	-	-
6	Paul Hyry-Dermith – Bridge Resilient Youth in Transition, Brookline Center for Community Mental Health	X	X	X
7	Jessica Larochelle – Mass Association for Mental Health (MAMH)	X	X	X
8	Olivia Mathot – Office of Senator Robyn Kennedy (<i>designee</i>)	X	-	X
9	David Matteodo – Mass Association of Behavioral Health Systems (MABHS)	X	X	X
10	Kristen McKinnon – Student and Family Support, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)	X	A	X
11	Lisa Morrow – Health Law Advocates	X	A	X
12	Lee Robinson – Office of Accountable Care & Behavioral Health, MassHealth	X	X	X
13	Pam Sager – Parent/Professional Advocacy League (PPAL)	X	X	X
14	Leigh Simons – Mass Health and Hospital Association (MHA)	X	X	X
15	Aimee Smith-Zeoli – Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)	X	X	X
16	Charlene Zuffante – Child, Youth, & Family Services, DMH	-	-	-

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

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Approval of 1/21/2026 Meeting Minutes
3. Report-out from Challenges & Recommendations Workgroup
4. Discussion of Commission Deliverables
5. Next steps

Proceedings

Undersecretary Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. She welcomed members and reminded them that the Commission meeting is subject to the Open Meeting Law and that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll-call vote.

Lisa Morrow, Managing Attorney at Health Law Advocate's Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids, introduced herself as the representative for the Children's Mental Health Campaign, replacing Kelly English.

Vote 1 to approve the 1/21/2026 meeting minutes: Undersecretary Rosenthal requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Commission's previous meeting on 1/21/2026. Kristen McKinnon introduced the motion, which was seconded by Lauren Almeida and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Undersecretary Rosenthal summarized the previous meeting's presentations, which included a report-out from the workgroup focused on the landscape and funding review for behavioral health services (Workgroup #1) and the group focused on exploring the feasibility of establishing a single, children's behavioral health agency (Workgroup #3). She noted that the Landscape and Funding workgroup presented a draft landscape analysis of behavioral health programs across the state, that has since been updated by EOHHS agencies and distributed to Commission members.

Workgroup #2 members Carmel Craig, Pam Sager, Leigh Simons, Aimee Smith-Zeoli, and Kristen McKinnon presented their findings from their detailed review of the challenges to accessing behavioral health services and proposed recommendations outlined in prior reports. Among the challenges identified, the sheer number and overlapping/cross-sector nature of challenges was highlighted. Members discussed a number of their recommendations, including exploring the establishment of a unified, child- and family-centered access system for behavioral health services, and expanding the single point of entry or front door to accessing services. Additionally, the need to improve cross-agency and cross-sector collaborations among health care (physical and behavioral), child welfare, schools, juvenile justice, and payors (Medicaid, private insurers). For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Commission's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Gabriel Cohen with EOHHS provided an overview of examples of strategic plans that various state agencies and organizations have developed, and requested volunteers to support the development of the Commission's strategic plan.

In closing, Undersecretary Rosenthal noted that the Commission's next meeting is scheduled for March 18 and would include additional time to continue the discussion from the Challenges and Recommendations workgroup, a report-out from the Single Agency workgroup, and a presentation on the work of the Interagency Review Team for Complex Cases.

Vote 2 to adjourn the meeting: Undersecretary Rosenthal requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Matteodo introduced the motion, which was seconded by Leigh Simons and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Meeting Materials

1. Draft 1/21/2026 meeting minutes
2. Meeting presentation
3. Landscape (revised)
4. Workgroup 2 – Challenges and Recommendations summary
5. Workgroup 3 – Survey questions