

May 4, 2026

DMHAS Legislative Newsletter

Greetings to DMHAS Staff and Partners!

Reporting live from the Capitol! Please see below what has taken place at the CT General Assembly as the legislative session is nearing the end:

May is Mental Health Awareness Month



May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to recognize the importance of mental well-being and to encourage awareness and understanding in our communities. It also serves as a reminder that support and resources are available for anyone who may need them.

This Week at the Capitol

As we approach the final day, both the House and Senate are in full gear trying to pass as many bills as possible before session ends.

Some highlights below:

Our agency bill, [HB 5515](#), *An Act Concerning the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services' Recommendations Regarding Access to Opioid Overdose Reversal Medication and Various Revisions to Mental Health and Addiction Statutes*, was voted out of the House **unanimously!**

An amendment was filed on our bill which folded most of the provisions of our other agency bill, HB 5517, into one bill.

This Week at the Capitol Cont.

Oftentimes, bills are combined as time runs out as a way to ensure they can pass both chambers and can be signed into law. As of Saturday evening, only a little over 20 bills had passed both chambers, also known as “in concurrence”.

- [HB 5350](#), *An Act Concerning Cannabis, Hemp, and Infused Beverage Regulation*. This bill makes various unrelated changes to laws on cannabis, hemp, and THC-infused beverages. [Plain Language Summary](#).
- [HB 5514](#), *An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes*. This bill makes several unrelated changes to public health provisions in law. [Plain Language Summary](#). Of note:
 - Section 12 of this bill gives explicit authority to hospital emergency departments to operate programs to induct individuals onto medication assisted treatment.
 - Section 32 required DMHAS, with other state agencies, to consult on severe weather protocol guidance and improve outreach.
 - Section 27 removes caps on certain nonprofit CEOs state-funded salaries.
- [SB 5](#), *An Act Concerning Online Safety*. This bill adds various requirements and establishes and repurposes certain programs related to artificial intelligence (AI). [Plain Language Summary](#).
- [SB 397](#), *An Act Concerning Democracy and Government Accountability*. This bill makes various changes to laws related to civil rights and law enforcement activity. [Plain Language Summary](#).

4th Annual Mental Health and Wellness Fair

Rep. Kai Belton hosted the 4th Annual Mental Health and Wellness Fair at the Capitol on Friday, May 1st. This event aimed to provide support and wellness resources to state legislators, staff, and the public.



FY 2027 Midterm Budget is Released

On Saturday, May 2nd, the Senate and House came in to run an omnibus bill that contained new budget numbers for FY 2027, language that implemented those changes, new bond provisions for FY 2027, and deficiency bill provisions. This [bill](#) (SB 1, as amended by LCO 5762) had almost 500 sections and was **over 700 pages**. The Governor highlighted some of the major changes in [press release](#).

Other highlights include:

- *Section 165* – includes language from Section 2 of the DMHAS agency bill relating to promoting naloxone access.
- *Section 264* – makes changes to the cannabis tax structure.
- *Section 297* – provides \$5 million in bonding for the Office of Policy and Management for the purchase of nonlethal equipment and crisis response tools for municipal police departments dealing with behavioral health calls.
- *Section 457* – creates a safety net mitigation group, which DMHAS will sit on, to advise on, monitor, and coordinate the state’s response to federal cuts or changes in policy.

What’s Happening This Week?

The House and Senate will be in Session the Following Days:

Monday, May 4th

Tuesday, May 5th

Wednesday, May 6th – LAST DAY

*The last day of session, also known as **“sine die”**. Latin for “without day”, Sine Die means a final adjournment and is the motion used to close an annual session of the General Assembly.

Quick note: As the legislative session wraps up this week, this will be our last weekly newsletter of the season. Thank you for reading, sharing feedback, and standing with us in service to our communities.

Stay tuned after session ends for our annual “Session Round-Up”, highlighting final bill outcomes and important budget updates for DMHAS staff and partners.

