
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1557 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY HARKINS, KINSEY, HANBIDGE, HOWARD, DAVIDSON,
MERSKI, DELLOSO, CONKLIN, FREEMAN, HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG,
DRISCOLL, SANCHEZ, PASHINSKI, GALLOWAY, O'MARA AND CIRESI,
JUNE 7, 2021

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, JUNE 7, 2021

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of November 22, 1978 (P.L.1166, No.274),
2 entitled "An act establishing the Pennsylvania Commission on
3 Crime and Delinquency, providing for its powers and duties
4 establishing several advisory committees within the
5 commission and providing for their powers and duties,"
6 further providing for Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and
7 Delinquency; and establishing the Mental Health and Justice
8 Advisory Committee and the Mental Health and Justice Grant
9 Program.

10 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
11 hereby enacts as follows:

12 Section 1. Section 2(d)(2) of the act of November 22, 1978
13 (P.L.1166, No.274), referred to as the Pennsylvania Commission
14 on Crime and Delinquency Law, is amended and subsection (b) is
15 amended by adding a paragraph to read:

16 Section 2. Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

17 * * *

18 (b) Composition.--The commission shall consist of the
19 following members:

20 * * *

1 (17.3) Chairperson of the Mental Health and Justice
2 Advisory Committee.

3 * * *

4 (d) Term of office.--

5 * * *

6 (2) The term of the chairman of the Juvenile Justice and
7 Delinquency Prevention Committee and the chairperson of the
8 Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee shall be
9 concurrent with [his] their service as [chairman of that
10 committee] chairpersons of their respective committees.

11 * * *

12 Section 2. The act is amended by adding sections to read:
13 Section 7.3. Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee.

14 (a) Establishment.--The Mental Health and Justice Advisory
15 Committee is established within the commission.

16 (b) Composition.--The members of the committee shall be
17 appointed by the Governor and shall include:

18 (1) Representatives of:

19 (i) The Department of Corrections.

20 (ii) The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

21 (iii) The Department of Military and Veterans
22 Affairs.

23 (iv) The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse
24 Services of the Department of Human Services.

25 (v) The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

26 (vi) The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania
27 Courts.

28 (vii) The Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing.

29 (viii) Units of local government.

30 (ix) Public and private agencies and organizations

1 that provide or advocate for mental health treatment and
2 services.

3 (x) Agencies that provide housing for the mentally
4 ill.

5 (xi) Victim service agencies.

6 (2) Drug and alcohol treatment providers.

7 (3) Police.

8 (4) District attorneys.

9 (5) Public defenders.

10 (6) Judges of the courts of common pleas.

11 (7) County adult and juvenile probation officers.

12 (8) County wardens.

13 (9) Other individuals with expertise in the public
14 safety response and management, treatment or provision of
15 services to individuals with mental illness involved in the
16 juvenile justice or criminal justice system.

17 (c) Term.--A member shall serve for a four-year term and may
18 be appointed for no more than one additional consecutive term.

19 (d) Number and qualifications.--The committee shall consist
20 of no more than 33 members, all of whom must have experience in
21 the public safety response and management, treatment or
22 provision of services to individuals with mental illness
23 involved in the juvenile justice or criminal justice system.

24 (e) Conditions of appointment.--The committee and its
25 members are subject to the same limitations and conditions
26 imposed upon the commission as prescribed in section 2(d), (e),
27 (h), (i), (m) and (n).

28 (f) Quorum.--A majority of the members shall constitute a
29 quorum and a vote of the majority of the members present shall
30 be sufficient for all actions.

1 (g) Chairperson.--The Governor shall appoint a chairperson
2 from among the members of the committee who shall serve at the
3 pleasure of the Governor. A vice chairperson shall be designated
4 by the chairperson and preside at meetings in the absence of the
5 chairperson. The committee shall meet at the call of the
6 chairperson, but not less than four times a year.

7 (h) Powers and duties.--The committee shall have the power
8 and its duty shall be:

9 (1) To serve in an advisory capacity to the commission
10 through the committee's participation in the development of
11 that part of the commission's comprehensive plan relating to
12 the provision of treatment and services to individuals with
13 mental illness involved in the juvenile justice and criminal
14 justice systems.

15 (2) To serve the commission in an advisory capacity
16 relating to the direct approval and disbursement of financial
17 assistance.

18 (3) To advise the commission on the definition,
19 development and correlation of programs and projects and the
20 establishment of priorities for the provision of treatment
21 and services to individuals with mental illness involved in
22 the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.

23 (4) Upon request, to provide assistance and advice to
24 the commission on any other matters relating to the provision
25 of treatment and services to individuals with mental illness
26 involved in the juvenile justice and criminal justice
27 systems.

28 (i) Resource and staff support.--The Department of Human
29 Services and the Department of Corrections shall cooperate with
30 the commission in providing resources to the commission in

1 support of the committee. Staff support shall be made available
2 to the committee by the executive director in order to
3 adequately perform the duties provided for in this section.

4 Section 8.2. Mental Health and Justice Grant Program.

5 (a) Establishment.--The Mental Health and Justice Grant
6 Program is established within the commission. The purpose of the
7 program shall be to provide grants in accordance with this
8 section.

9 (b) Awarding grants.--The commission shall award program
10 grants to assist in planning, implementing or expanding
11 initiatives that increase public safety, avert increased
12 spending on criminal justice and improve the effectiveness of
13 treatment services for individuals with mental illnesses,
14 substance abuse disorders or co-occurring mental health and
15 substance abuse disorders who are involved or at risk of
16 involvement with the criminal justice system.

17 (c) Number of grants.--The commission shall base the number
18 of program grants on the amount of funds appropriated by the
19 General Assembly and other funds available for the program.

20 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 90 days.