

House Budget Reconciliation Legislation 2021

February 11, 2021

This week, the House Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees, released their budget reconciliation bills. Hearings to consider and approve these bills out of committee are planned for February 11-12. Below is a high-level summary of the provisions most important to mental health and addiction treatment providers.

House Energy and Commerce Committee:

More information, including proposed legislative text, can be found by clicking [here](#). An important nuance of this legislation is that the House Energy & Commerce Committee proposal allows agencies to use the allocated monies until they are fully expended. In other words, there is no fiscal year deadline by which all of these new monies must be spent.

Mental Health and Addiction Funding

- **\$1.75 billion for each** of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Community Mental Health block grant programs administered by SAMHSA.
- **\$80 million** for mental and behavioral health training for health care professionals, paraprofessionals, and public safety officers.
- **\$20 million** for a national evidence-based education and awareness campaign targeting health care professionals and first responders.
- **\$40 million** for grants for health care providers to promote mental and behavioral health among their health professional workforce.
- **\$30 million in grants** to support community-based overdose prevention programs, syringe services programs, and other harm reduction services, with respect to harms of drug misuse that are exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Nonprofit community-based entities and primary and behavioral health organizations are eligible.
- **\$50 million in grants** to support increased community behavioral health needs worsened by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Nonprofit community-based entities and primary and behavioral health organizations are eligible.
- **\$100 million** to the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program, which is administered by HRSA, to expand access to behavioral health services through focused training.

Medicaid Provisions:

- Provides Medicaid eligibility, for five years, to **incarcerated individuals 30 days prior to their release**. This is based on the recently reintroduced Medicaid Reentry Act.
- **Enhanced FMAP to incentivize state Medicaid programs** to cover mobile crisis intervention services for individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis.
- An **incentive for states to expand Medicaid** by temporarily increasing the state's base FMAP by five percentage points for two years for states that newly expand Medicaid.
- **Temporary FMAP increase of 7.35 percentage points** for states to make improvements to Medicaid home- and community-based services (HCBS) for one year.

- Allows states, for five years, to **extend Medicaid eligibility to women** for 12 months postpartum.

Public Health Funding

- **\$1.8 billion to HHS to support the purchase, procurement, or distribution of COVID-19 tests and testing supplies, PPE, and vaccines** for staff and individuals in congregate settings. It also allows HHS to provide technical assistance and award grants or cooperative agreements to states, localities, territories, and tribes to support strategies and activities to detect, diagnose, trace, or monitor COVID-19 in congregate settings, including prisons, jails, detention centers, long-term care facilities, **psychiatric hospitals and residential treatment facilities**, intermediate care facilities, and other settings providing care for individuals with disabilities.
- **Requires Medicaid coverage of COVID-19 vaccines and treatment** without beneficiary cost sharing with vaccines matched at a 100 percent federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP) through one year after the end of the public health emergency (PHE). It also gives states the option to provide coverage to the uninsured for COVID-19 vaccines and treatment without cost sharing at 100 percent FMAP.
- **\$331 million** to expand the number of [Teaching Health Centers \(THC\) Graduate Medical Education \(GME\)](#) sites nationwide and increase the per resident allocation.

House Ways and Means:

More information, including that legislative text, can be found by clicking [here](#).

- **Reduces health care premiums** for low- and middle-income families by increasing the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) premium tax credits for 2021 and 2022.
- **Supports the continuation of employer-based health coverage** by subsidizing COBRA coverage through the end of the fiscal year.
- **Creates health care subsidies** for unemployed workers who are ineligible for COBRA.