



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Sam Chase, Director
1221 S.W. Fourth Ave., Room 410
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-4130
Fax: (503) 823-3014

Date: September 4, 2026
To: Portland City Council
From: Director Chase, Office of Government Relations
Subject: September 9, 2026 Behavioral Health Work Session

Council Members,

On Wednesday, September 9, 2026 from 2-5pm in Council Chambers we will have a work session to hear from local behavioral health providers and subject matter experts as a part of the 2027 State Legislative Agenda Development process. Over the course of the Office of Government Relations' discussions with Council, there appears to be growing consensus among Council members that behavioral health should be a priority and there is a need for legislative action to support a relatively small group of Portlanders who are unable to access essential psychiatric needs. The gaps in behavioral health care not only deprive individuals of compassionate care, but also have a disproportionate impact on healthcare, first responders, shelter, criminal justice, and affordable housing systems.

Core Objectives for the Work Session

This work session is an opportunity for Council to hear from behavioral health experts, review proposed solutions, and begin to align the city's legislative support for a unified and focused behavioral health coalition as the city prepares its 2027 Legislative Agenda.

Work Session Agenda

The agenda for the work session will be:

- Welcome & Purpose | *what are we hoping to achieve?*
- Background | *key context*
- Proposed Area of Focus | *with needs across the full behavioral health service spectrum, where do we focus?*
- Proposed Path Forward | *how do we tackle the problem most strategically?*
- Council Discussion
- Next Steps & Closing

State Legislative Context

The Oregon State Legislature has recognized in recent years that Oregon's behavioral health system is in crisis and they have made historic levels of statewide investment over the past five years, including:

- 2021: \$130 M (GF) to expand licensed residential facilities for people with serious and persistent mental illness requiring a higher level of care;
- 2022: \$100 M (GF) to increase behavioral health housing and treatment capacity (resulting in ~420 new beds statewide).
- 2023: \$15 M (GF) for SUD treatment beds (resulting in ~70 new beds statewide)
- 2025: \$65 M (GF) for withdrawal management, residential treatment, and inpatient psychiatric beds; \$18 M (GF) for SUD treatment and supportive housing; and \$50 M (lottery) for community based psychiatric beds and supportive housing (resulting in about ~175 beds statewide)

The State's [Behavioral Health Housing and Licensed Capacity Investments Dashboard](#) documents the increase in investment since 2021 and tracks current and projected capacity across the state.

These investments have produced new capacity, some of which is still coming online, and it has helped to stabilize service providers across the state. It still will not be enough to create a fully functioning continuum after decades of under-funding. Simultaneously, federal policy changes are shifting significant health care costs to the state. This, combined with slower economic and revenue growth will be the marquee issues of the 2027 legislative session. Efforts to balance the state budget will affect all legislative efforts in 2027. This landscape creates an even greater need to clearly demonstrate how investments will have the greatest overall systemwide benefit. The work that Health Share and its members and partners are doing will help to do this.

Legal Constraints

Oregon's operations at the Oregon State Hospital (OSH) are governed primarily by the federal injunction issued in *Oregon Advocacy Center v. Mink* (2003), which requires the hospital to admit defendants found unable to "aid and assist" in their defense within seven days of a court order. Persistent delays in meeting this mandate led to multiple enforcement actions, including renewed litigation in 2019 and ongoing federal oversight. Beginning in 2022, Judge Mosman issued a series of orders (now known as "the Mosman Orders") clarifying admission priorities and setting strict limits on the length of stay with timelines tied to the severity of the charge.

Continued noncompliance resulted in a 2025 contempt ruling with daily fines for each defendant waiting more than seven days and elevating the court-appointed Neutral Expert to the role of Court Monitor. These enforcement mechanisms, paired with detailed reporting requirements and narrowly defined extensions for violent felony cases, pushed OSH back into compliance by mid-2026.

Mink and the subsequent enforcement orders now form the operational framework for OSH to ensure timely admissions and regulated lengths of stay for Aid & Assist patients. This, however, means that OSH's capacity is prioritized for Aid & Assist patients to restore competency so they can stand trial (not to achieve long-term stabilization). This means that the highest level of public inpatient psychiatric care in the state is not available to people outside of the justice system.

Guest Speakers

We appreciate the speakers who are taking the time to share their knowledge and discuss the work that is underway to align a broad coalition around a collective regional agenda that will help address the capacity and throughput challenges we face in the Portland metro area. There were many others who also contributed to this presentation and are actively involved in this work.



Dr. Joe Hardman, Health Share of Oregon

Dr. Joe Hardman is the Chief Medical Officer for Health Share of Oregon. Before this, Dr. Hardman worked as an internal medicine physician and Associate Professor at OHSU, specializing in general internal medicine and geriatrics. He served as Chief Medical Officer at OHSU Hillsboro Medical Center, helping align clinical care across the system. Trained at UC San Diego and Harvard's Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, he has over two decades of experience providing care at multiple medical



Julie Ibrahim, New Narrative

Julie Ibrahim is the CEO of New Narrative, a Portland nonprofit providing mental health treatment, housing, and peer support for adults with severe and persistent mental health needs. With more than 13 years of leadership at the organization, she has directed clinical and residential programs, expanded services, and led efforts to strengthen Oregon's behavioral health workforce. Ibrahim also serves in statewide advocacy roles, including as Vice Chair of the Governor's Behavioral Health Talent Council and as a board member for key behavioral health associations. Her work centers on improving access to care, addressing workforce shortages, and advancing long-term residential treatment solutions for vulnerable Oregonians.



James Schroeder, Cascadia Behavioral Health

James Schroeder is the President and CEO of Cascadia Behavior Health, a Portland-area behavioral health organization serving over 18,000 people annually with integrated mental health, addiction treatment, primary care, housing, crisis intervention, and wellness services. Schroeder stepped into this role in March 2025 after serving as Deputy CEO. Schroeder began his career as a primary care provider in rural Idaho and Nevada, later founding the Neighborhood Health Center in Portland and serving in multiple executive positions at Kaiser Permanente and Health Share of Oregon. He also serves as a medical officer in the Oregon Air National Guard.



Rachael Banks, Multnomah County

Rachael Banks is a longtime Portland public health leader with more than 20 years of experience in community health and statewide public health administration. She began her career as a community health worker and later led major maternal health and chronic disease programs before advancing through leadership roles at Multnomah County. In 2020, she became Oregon's first Black Public Health Director, overseeing the state's pandemic response and boosting vaccination rates for communities of color. Returning to Multnomah County in 2023, she now leads the Health Department's 1,600-person workforce.



Stephanie Howard, City of Portland

Stephanie Howard serves as the Director of Community Safety with the Public Safety Service Area for the City of Portland, overseeing key public safety programs and working closely with bureaus across the service area. Prior to assuming this role, Stephanie served three years in the Mayor's Office as Director of Community Safety. Before moving to Oregon, Stephanie worked as Deputy Monitor in the Office of the Independent Monitor in Denver, Colorado, where she focused on oversight of law-enforcement accountability. Stephanie's career began in Colorado as a Deputy State Public Defender, representing indigent clients in serious criminal cases, preceded by a decade as a legal assistant and paralegal supporting litigation teams in criminal, civil, and appellate matters.