



Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

It is with renewed sense of gratitude and great joy that we write to share the details of Governor Lee's proposed budget increases for TDMHSAS in FY25. Yet again, Governor Lee and his team have shown their overwhelming support for the life-changing and life-saving work that you do. Even with the current budget climate, they have found ways to make significant investments in the public behavioral health system adding to the years of historic and unprecedented funding increases we have seen since the Lee Administration started. The Governor's proposal includes continued investments in our School-Based Behavioral Health Liaisons, substance use treatment, Children's

Crisis Stabilization Units, provider rates, public behavioral health workforce support, and more. All told, the increases amount to **more than \$32.6 million in new funding** for TDMHSAS and community behavioral health services. [Please see the following grid or click this link for a full listing of the items, descriptions, and amounts.](#)

We had our first of three budget presentations to the House Health Committee on February 14 ([archived video at this link](#)). Our next hearing is with House Finance, Ways & Means on Monday February 26 at 9:00 a.m., and our final budget hearing will be before the Senate Health and Welfare Committee on March 6. Your support and encouragement at these presentations and throughout the Legislative Session is always welcomed.

Many Blessings,

Marie

Governor Lee's Proposed FY25 Budget Increases for TDMHSAS

Program Name	Program Description	Amount
School-Based Behavioral Health Liaison Expansion	To provide recurring funding to add 86 contracted school-based behavioral health liaisons across the state.	\$6,000,000
K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund	To provide funding from the K-12 Mental Health Trust Fund to add 28 contracted school-based behavioral health liaisons and to enhance behavioral health treatment in schools through grants to localities. Of this cost, \$2,000,000 is recurring for liaisons, and \$4,000,000 is non-recurring for grants	\$6,000,000
Substance Use Disorder Treatment	To provide non-recurring funding for payments to substance use disorder providers to increase capacity and access to a continuum of treatment and recovery services.	\$2,000,000 NR
Community Mental Health Center Workforce Development	To provide non-recurring funding for the support of licensed behavioral health professionals supervising individuals seeking clinical licensure in a behavioral health profession.	\$1,000,000 NR
Children and Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) Expansion	To provide non-recurring funding for year two of CSU start-up funding to serve children who are experiencing an acute psychiatric crisis and need immediate access to diagnostic assessments, crisis intervention, treatment, and medication management. (Year two of two)	\$5,000,000 NR
Provider Rate Increase	To provide a pool of recurring funding for provider rate increases in the mental health and substance abuse programs within the department.	\$6,394,300
Addiction Recovery Program	To provide non-recurring funding to expand the Addiction Recovery Program, which includes services such as transitional housing, relapse prevention skills, and transportation. (Year one of four)	\$2,107,600 NR
Tennessee Sports Gambling Fund	To provide non-recurring funding from the fund for grants to develop and establish treatment programs and resources for gambling addiction and compulsive gambling, pursuant to TCA 4-51-319.	\$4,107,000 NR
Total Community Funding		\$32,608,900

Statewide Planning and Policy Council: February Meeting



Thanks to everyone who made the first Statewide Planning and Policy Council meeting of 2024 a big success. Attendees got updates from the regions and committees as well as an exciting update on the budget from Commissioner Williams. Deputy Commissioner Matt Yancey went over items in the needs assessment and relevant department efforts in these areas. Director of Strategic Initiatives, Jessica Youngblom gave an update on extensive efforts to address workforce challenges in the public behavioral health system. You can find information about upcoming Planning and Policy Council meetings in this newsletter [or on our website at this link](#).



Certified Peers: Breaking the Stigma



Tara Harrington's journey to recovery from addiction has been a long road, but she's passionate about sharing her story and how Medication Assisted Treatment helped her along the way. Now in recovery, Tara is a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist who works at a treatment agency. Tennessee has more than 1,200 CPRS who are active. Learn more at this link: [TN.gov/behavioral-health/cprs](https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/cprs)

Women of Worth Celebrates Faith and Recovery



About a hundred amazing women gathered at the Lodge at Paris Landing State Park February 16-18 for the first-ever Women of Worth Retreat. It was a faith-based, empowering weekend for women in recovery and their friends to connect and recharge. The retreat featured motivational speakers, music, fun, and lots of uplifting recovery stories. Congratulations to everyone who put in the hard work to make this event a huge success including Amy Bechtol, Nikki Green, Sarah Mays, Dianne Sherrod, Melissa Fields, Rhonda Phifer, Bobbie Smith, and Landon Davidson. Stay tuned for details on the next Women of Worth retreat and others like it all across the state. [You can find more pictures from the conference on their Facebook page at this link.](#)



Pictured Above: Saturday's "Power Panel" featured personal testimonies from amazing women who are leaders in Tennessee's peer recovery movement.

Pictured Below: Commissioner Marie Williams was proud to bring some encouraging words to the Women of Worth with a moving discussion Friday Night.



TDMHSAS Employees Graduate from LEAD Tennessee



Congratulations to the TDMHSAS employees who recently graduated from LEAD Tennessee! Tony Jackson, Nicole Copeny, Katie Lee, Libby Brown, Rodney Henderson, completed the program in December. LEAD Tennessee is a program for current and emerging leaders in state government who participate in a year-long set of high-impact development exercises in eight leadership core competencies. Congrats, everyone!

RIP Presents Eight Strategies



The Regional Intervention Program team presented their “8 Strategies That Help” to a packed house on February 7th. This training was specifically designed and marketed for educators in the community. Hannah Dieckhaus & Ashley Jasinski from RIP delivered the training. Stay tuned to our newsletter and [department Facebook page for upcoming RIP training opportunities](#).

Career Accomplishments

Mary Robinson retires from state after 46 years of service



Congratulations to Mary Robinson on her retirement from Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute! Mary started at MBMHI as a Psychiatric Technician. She worked the last 20 years in patient rights and most recently served as the hospital's Patient Rights Advocate. Mary's 46 years at MBMHI have also seen her talents in facilities management as well as assisting in the executive office. She will be greatly missed, and everyone at the Bend wish her the best in her retirement.

WMHI Employee of the Year



Logan Bell is the Western Mental Health Institute's 2023 Employee of the Year! Logan began his career with WMHI in January 2021 as a Psychiatric Technician. Throughout the course of his employment, he has proved an invaluable member of the team and someone that fellow employees can count on during stressful situations. Nursing leadership describe him as approachable and willing to go above and beyond to do whatever needs to be done on the unit. This year, Logan has successfully performed the Heimlich maneuver on two different patients, possibly saving their lives. He was also selected to be a Handle with Care instructor. Recently, when the primary instructor was out sick, Logan jumped in without any prompting and led the class without ever having done so before. Congratulations, and thanks for your service!

Shout Out!

Let's Move Challenge



Let's Move Challenge

2,300,000+ steps taken

Congratulations to all TDMHSAS employees who participated in the first ever TDMHSAS's Let's Move Challenge. Participants took a combined of over 2,300,000 steps and the winning division was Central Office/RIP.

If you'd like to "shout out" to a TDMHSAS colleague, please send an email to Kearston.Winrow@tn.gov. Tell us who you'd like to recognize and why.

Save-the-Dates

Planning and Policy Council Meetings

The TDMHSAS Planning and Policy Council Committee meetings will resume in April.

To verify the schedule and plans for future meetings, please visit the department website at these links:

[Statewide & Committee Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

[Regional Council Meeting Schedule \(tn.gov\)](#)

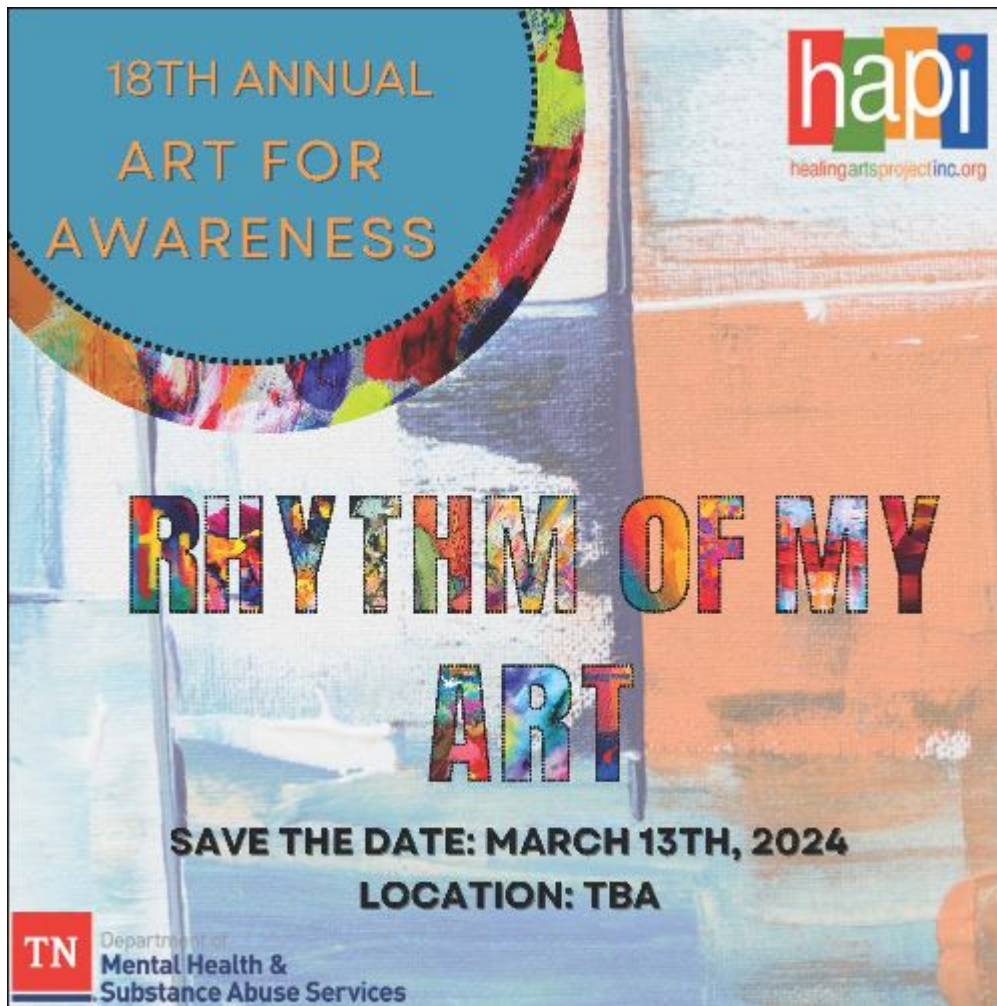
TDMHSAS is committed to providing individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from TDMHSAS programs, activities, and services. To request reasonable accommodations or modifications, please

contact Amy Holland at amy.holland@tn.gov at least 10 business days prior to the meeting. Requests for accommodations or modifications made after the deadline will be honored to the maximum extent feasible, but it may not be possible to fulfill them.

Tennessee's Day of Hope

Governor Bill Lee has once again proclaimed **March 10 as Tennessee's Day of Hope**. This year marks the 5th annual Day of Hope, and events are planned leading up to, on, and after the date. Read more on our website at TN.gov/behavioral-health/dayofhope or click the image to read Gov. Lee's proclamation.





Resources

In the event of a mental health emergency ...

The logo consists of several stacked rectangular boxes. The top box is red with the word "STATEWIDE" in white. Below it is a large black box with "CRISIS LINE" in white. Underneath is a dark blue box with "HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS" in white. The bottom section contains the phone number "855-CRISIS-1" and the website "TN.gov/CrisisLine" in black. Below that is the phone number "855-274-7471" in black, followed by the Tennessee state logo "TN" and the text "Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services" in black.

STATEWIDE
CRISIS LINE
HELP IN A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS
855-CRISIS-1 [TN.gov/CrisisLine](https://www.tn.gov/CrisisLine)
855-274-7471  Department of
Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services

For questions about addiction treatment/referrals ...

**TN
REDLINE** 
1.800.889.9789
CALL OR TEXT 

To talk with a TDMHSAS Consumer Advocate ...

Need help with mental health or substance use services?

Call the TDMHSAS Office of Consumer Affairs and Peer Recovery Services

HELPLINE

1-800-560-5767

We can help with:

- finding mental health and substance abuse resources in your area
- questions about insurance
- finding housing options
- communicating with mental health and substance abuse providers
- questions about the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist program
- filing a complaint



We are available

- Monday through Friday
- 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. CT
- Closed on state holidays



Department of
**Mental Health &
Substance Abuse Services**

OCA.TDMHSAS@tn.gov | [TN.gov/behavioral-health](https://tn.gov/behavioral-health)



Department of
**Mental Health &
 Substance Abuse Services**

OUR MISSION: CREATING
COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS
 TO RESILIENCY, RECOVERY & INDEPENDENCE
 FOR TENNESSEANS LIVING
 WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND
 SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

OUR VISION:

A STATE OF RESILIENCY, RECOVERY, AND INDEPENDENCE
 IN WHICH TENNESSEANS
 LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS
 AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS THRIVE

AS A DEPARTMENT, WE VALUE:

<p>CUSTOMER FOCUSED: <i>An unwavering commitment to keep patients and those who serve them at the forefront of every decision.</i></p>	<p>COMPASSIONATE AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP: <i>The commitment to make effective decisions and inspire others through active listening and empathy.</i></p>
<p>INTEGRITY: <i>Honesty and truth in all we do.</i></p>	<p>SOLUTIONS AND OUTCOMES-ORIENTED: <i>The commitment to positive outcomes and meaningful changes in response to the critical needs of the Tennesseans we serve.</i></p>
<p>INSPIRED PURPOSE: <i>The call to action in service of a cause greater than one's self.</i></p>	<p>PARTNERSHIP: <i>Beyond teamwork, collaboration based on mutual success to the benefit of the Tennesseans we are blessed to serve.</i></p>
<p>EXCELLENCE: <i>The highest standards for services, efficiency, and conduct.</i></p>	

We hope you've enjoyed this issue of the Update! If you have news to share (a story idea, accomplishment, provider news, etc.) or if you'd like to be added to the distribution list, please email: the Office of Communications at OC.TDMHSAS@tn.gov.

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