

**GALLATIN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH LOCAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
BYLAWS
AS AMENDED AUGUST 10, 2026**

**ARTICLE ONE
Creation**

Section 1. Statutory Authority. The Gallatin County Mental Health Local Advisory Council (MHLAC) is established under the mental health care system developed by the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. Section 53-21-702, which provides for local advisory councils that shall report to and meet on a regular basis with the Behavioral Health Advisory Council (BHAC) formed by the DPHHS.

**ARTICLE TWO
Purpose**

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the MHLAC is to assist, in a manner it determines to be most productive, in strengthening public mental health services in the Gallatin County and to provide input and recommendations to BHAC, DPHHS and the Service Area Authority (SAA) serving the community.

Section 2. Objectives. Specific objectives include some or all of the following related to public mental health services:

- a) Examine gaps in child and adult services.
- b) Identify potential additions to services within the community.
- c) Analyze and discuss local problems with local service providers, advocacy groups, public officials and the general public.
- d) Facilitate accurate and timely communications between the local community and BHAC, DPHHS and the regional SAA.
- e) Assess the effectiveness of local mental health services and suggest ways of making services more effective.
- f) Serve as a catalyst and facilitator in solving local mental health service problems.
- g) Organize and coordinate needed services in the community.
- h) Educate the local community on mental health issues.

**ARTICLE THREE
Membership**

Section 1. Members. The MHLAC is comprised of 21 members, including consumers of mental health services equal to 50% of membership, and one member from each of the following entities:

- a) One (1) County Commissioner or their designee
- b) One (1) City Commissioner or their designee

- c) One (1) provider of adult mental health services
- d) One (1) provider of child mental health services
- e) One (1) representative from criminal justice
- f) One (1) representative from the Bozeman Deaconess Health Services
- g) One (1) treatment provider for alcohol and drug addiction
- h) One (1) representative from Community Health Partners
- i) One (1) representative from Public Health
- j) One (1) representative from Law Enforcement

Consumers of mental health services may include persons with serious mental illness who are receiving public mental health services, other recipients of mental health services, former recipients of mental health services, and immediate family members of recipients of mental health services. All members must be residents of Gallatin County, unless serving as a representative of the entities described above.

Section 2. Members at Large. Members at large (non-voting) may be included as determined by the MHLAC. Once voted to serve, members-at-large may serve for as long as they are able to contribute to the mission of the Council. Members-at-large may resign at any time through a written letter/email to the board chair. LAC may terminate a member-at-large without cause if deemed necessary.

Section 3. Terms.

- Voting Members (civilians):
 - Shall serve four (4) year terms.
 - Members may serve up to two (2) consecutive terms.
 - Upon completion of two consecutive terms, members may be subject to replacement through the application and appointment process.
 - If no qualified applicants are identified, the member may:
 - (a) be reappointed to an additional term; or
 - (b) transition to Member-at-Large status.
- Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to require reappointment or continued service; the Council or appointing authority retains discretion to appoint a new member or leave the position vacant.
- Voting Members (elected officials):
 - Shall serve (1) year terms, which will be reviewed for appointment annually by the Commission.
 - term limits will depend on continued service in the elected role.

Renewal

- Membership Committee will communicate with member and invite them to renew
- Voting member will explain their interest in continuing to serve, including explanation of how they have contributed to the LAC over their previous term, and share this information with the Membership Committee.
- Membership Committee will review and make a recommendation for renewal to LAC chair with supporting/refuting evidence (attendance records, etc.)
- LAC chair calls for a motion to renew/deny renewal based on evidence.

Termination

- In the event that a Voting Member no longer meets the expectations of the role and responsibilities of the LAC, the Membership committee can propose to the Chair that termination of their membership should be initiated.
- LAC can terminate a Voting Member without cause if deemed necessary by the LAC

Resignation process

- In the event that a Voting Member chooses to depart before the completion of their term, the Voting Member is to submit a letter of resignation to the board chair who will inform the LAC of their departure.

Section 4. Vacancies. Member vacancies shall be filled by the County Commissioners with consultation from the MHLAC. Prospective vacancies shall be posted at least one (1) month prior to filling the vacancy.

Section 6. Compensation. Members are not entitled to salary or per diem, are not reimbursed for mileage or expenses, and are not otherwise compensated.

Section 7. Conflict of Interest. A transaction in which any member has a conflict of interest must be disclosed on the record. A conflict of interest may include, but is not limited to, a financial stake in the outcome of the decision. That member may not participate in discussion of the matter or motion being considered, and shall not attempt to exert personal influence with respect to the matter, either at or outside the meeting. Such non-participation may necessarily include leaving the meeting.

ARTICLE FOUR

Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings. The MHLAC shall meet on the second Monday of every month at 12PM in the Community Room, Gallatin County Courthouse, 311 West Main Street, Bozeman, Montana.

Section 2. Special Meetings. The Chair of the MHLAC may convene a special meeting by written and public notice provided at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

Section 3. Staff Support. The Executive Assistant of the County Commission (Executive Assistant) will serve as the Assistant to the MHLAC and will prepare, distribute, and store minutes of the meetings.

Section 4. Quorum. A majority of the total number of members constitutes a quorum and must be present in order to conduct business and exercise powers and responsibility. Action may be taken by a majority vote of members present and voting. There is no proxy voting.

Section 5. Voting. Each MHLAC member has one vote.

Section 6. Parliamentary Authority. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, revised, governs all MHLAC meetings. The MHLAC may, by a vote of two-thirds of the quorum, suspend the Rules at any time.

Section 7. Public Involvement. All meetings of the MHLAC are open to the public in accordance with the Public Participation and Open Meetings laws of the State of Montana, Title 2, Section 3, Parts 1 and 2, Montana Code Annotated. Adequate notice and an opportunity for public comment on any matter not on the agenda shall be provided at each meeting.

Section 8. Notice. The Executive Assistant shall notify all members of all regularly scheduled meetings either in person, telephonically, electronically, or in writing. No special meeting shall be held unless diligent efforts have been made to notify all members. To comply with the spirit and intent of the Open Meeting Law, public notice shall be posted for all regular and special meetings at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

Section 9. Agenda. Agenda items shall be submitted to the Executive Assistant the Monday before a meeting. The Executive Assistant shall post and publish the agenda forty-eight (48) hours prior to a regular or special meeting. An agenda item shall be included allowing public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda and which is within the jurisdiction of the MHLAC.

Section 10. Minutes. Minutes of all MHLAC meetings shall be kept by the Executive Assistant, and shall be signed by the Chair after approval at the next meeting. The Minutes need not have detailed reports of discussions but shall include the date, time and place of meetings, substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided, all motions and a vote summary, including the final vote on all actions and the vote of each member, as well as the names of members present, members absent, staff, and public present.

Minutes shall be kept available for inspection by the public. Minutes and any other Board records shall be preserved consistent with public records law and Gallatin County policies.

ARTICLE FIVE

Council Structure

Section 1. Officers. The Council shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair by majority vote of the voting members. Each officer shall be elected separately. Officers shall serve a two (2) year term beginning upon their election and may be re-elected for additional terms without limitation. Elections shall be held upon the expiration of an officer's term or whenever a vacancy occurs. An officer elected to fill a vacancy shall begin a new two (2) year term upon election.

Section 2. Duties. The Chair is the parliamentary chair of the MHLAC; will preside over all meetings; and will set the agenda with the advice of the members. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in case of absence or disability.

Section 3. Subcommittees. To expedite business, the Chair may appoint subcommittees with the majority vote or consensus of the members.

ARTICLE SIX
Compensation

Members shall serve without compensation and shall not be reimbursed for mileage or expenses, nor granted a per diem or salary.

ARTICLE SEVEN
Amendments to the Bylaws

MHLAC members will review the Bylaws each July and submit proposed amendments for action at the regular August meeting. Any action will become effective immediately following consent and approval by the County Commission.