

# Board Meeting

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**BE D·B·H·D·D**

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental  
Disabilities

June 12, 2025



# Agenda

## Roll Call

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## Call to Order

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## Introduction of Guest Speaker

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## Action Items

- Board Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2025
- Breakthru House Resolution

## Commissioner's Report

- Recruitment Update
  - Co-Responder Budget Presentation
  - Legislative & Budget Update
  - Georgia Opioid Crisis Abatement Trust Update
  - Board Engagement
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## Chair's Report

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## Public Comment

# Roll Call

Chelsea Nabritt

*Board and Special Project Manager*

# Call to Order

Lasa Joiner

*Chair*



# Introduction of Guest Speaker

BreNita Jackson

*Executive Director, Breakthru House Inc.*

# Action Item

- Board Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2025

# Action Item

- Breakthru House Inc. Resolution

# Commissioner's Report

Kevin Tanner  
*Commissioner*

# DBHDD Recruitment Video



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# BE D·B·H·D·D

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

Joy Bell, MPA  
Forensics Manager

Carol McVey, MPA, LCSW-QS  
Senior Director Office of Adult Mental Health



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## Co-Response in Georgia



# Co-Responder Programs

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Senate Bill 403 defines a co-responder program as a program established through a **partnership between a Community Service Board (CSB) and a law enforcement agency**, to **utilize the combined expertise of peace officers and behavioral health professionals** on emergency calls involving behavioral health crises, **to de-escalate situations and help link individuals with behavioral health issues to appropriate services.**





# State Funded Co-Responder Programs

Advantage

Loganville/Monroe

Clayton Center

Clayton County

Georgia Pines\*

Mitchell County

Colquitt County

Highland Rivers

Floyd County

McIntosh Trail

Stockbridge

Middle Flint

Perry

New Horizons

Harris County

Pineland

Bulloch County

Unison

Ware County

\*Submitted 2 programs and both were awarded.

# Co-Responder Models

Clinician/First  
Responder Ride-  
Along

Dispatch

Telehealth/Virtual

Multijurisdictional

Behavioral Health  
Professional

# Annual Report and Provider Manual

- SB 403 requires that an annual report be completed to talk about the work that is being done by co-responder programs across the state, this includes data from the programs funded by DBHDD and those who receive funding from other sources. These are due in January.
- DBHDD publishes its expectations, requirements, and standards for community providers via policies and the respective Behavioral Health or Developmental Disabilities Provider Manuals. The manuals are updated quarterly throughout each fiscal year (July – June) and are posted one month prior to the effective date.

Co responder Report Codes



Provider Manual Codes



# Co-Responder Budget Workbook

- In collaboration with the Georgia Association of Community Service Boards, a budget template was created and shared with all CSB's to submit their budgets in the same format.
- Individual program budgets are based on community needs and the program model that was implemented. Some programs are with one county or city partner while other programs are taking a multijurisdictional approach.
- The budgets presented are based on the needs of each CSB, to fulfill the requirements of Senate Bill 403.



# Co-Responder Team vs Co-Responder Program

- Senate Bill 403 provides requirements for a co-responder program.
- Funding received for 10 new co-responder programs is \$897,060. Each program receives \$89,706 each.
- The funding set aside allows funding for a behavioral health professional to participate as a team member on the co-responder team but not the development of a co-responder program.
- A team can meet the following elements of Senate Bill 403 given the resources available:
  - Establish a co-responder program to offer assistance or consultation to a partnering law enforcement agency responding to emergency calls involving an individual experiencing a behavioral health crisis.
  - Behavioral health profession available to accompany law enforcement in person or via virtual means or be available for consultation via telephone or telehealth
  - Facilitate training for the behavioral health professional to learn the operations, policies, and procedures of partnering law enforcement agencies.
  - Establish a co-responder protocol committee
  - Contact an individual who has had a response from a co-responder team within 2 business days
  - Transfer cases to appropriate CSB area if individual does not live in service area
  - Collect and report data to DBHDD

# Budget Summary

## Summary Budget Justification

Personnel	
Total:	\$ 8,851,326
General Supplies	
Total:	\$ 297,843
Transportation - Specific to costs incurred by CSB - does not include LEA co-response vehicle	
Total:	\$ 234,513
Technology	
Total:	\$ 325,007
Training	
Total:	\$ 166,195
Total Direct Costs:	\$ 9,874,885
Administrative	
Total:	\$ 962,063
Total	
Funding Request:	\$ 10,836,948

\*This does not include submissions from Avita Community Partners, New Horizons and Serenity.

# Funding and Sustainability Highlights

- There are 4 co-responder programs that receive funding outside of DBHDD that will no longer continue to have the funding in FY 2026. There are co-responder programs that have been funded through grants that are coming to an end.
- Two co-responder programs will be partially funded in FY2026 with federal funding.

## **Plan for sustainability:**

- A full comprehensive evaluation of co-responder programs can generate evidence of cost-savings by law enforcement, criminal justice, and mental health systems would inform future investments of state and local funds.
- Incident Level Data Collection is soon to come.



# Areas of Progress – Co-Responder Day

The Georgia House of Representatives and Georgia Senate recognized DBHDD and Georgia's Co-Responder programs during Georgia Co-Responder Day at the Capitol on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Legislators took a moment to officially recognize the vital role Co-Responder teams play in connecting individuals in crisis to the care they need with House and Senate Resolutions.





# Areas of Progress – Georgia Co-Responder Conference

DBHDD hosted its inaugural Co-Responder Professional Development Conference in February 2025.

Co-Responder teams from across the state had the opportunity to participate in workshops, network with other co-responder teams, brainstorm, and attend interactive sessions.

Plans for a 2<sup>nd</sup> conference  
February 2026 – Peachtree City,  
Georgia.



# Areas of Progress - GPACT

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## Georgia Partnership in Action Co-Responder Training

- Georgia DBHDD received an award to develop a curriculum for statewide co-responder training.
- Specialized training targeting first responders and behavioral health professionals; including effective techniques, language, and sensitivities to the first responder and behavioral health cultures to improve connection and partnership.
- Education on navigating a crisis effectively while in the community (rural and urban) while promoting access to behavioral health treatment and diverting away from the criminal justice system when appropriate.



The poster for the 6th Annual National Co-Responder Conference features a background image of the Atlanta skyline with a Ferris wheel. On the left, a blue shield logo contains a white heart and a profile of a head. The text '6TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CO-RESPONDER CONFERENCE' is prominently displayed in white. Below this, it says 'June 1 - 4, 2025 | Atlanta, GA'. Further down, it lists 'Co-Hosted by' followed by logos for ICRA, Highland Rivers Behavioral Health, and ViewPoint Health. The section 'CORCON 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS' is followed by three headshots of speakers: Tonier Cain, Brandon Del Pozo, and Kaki Dimock. At the bottom, the website 'coresponderalliance.org/CoRCon' is listed.

6TH ANNUAL  
**NATIONAL  
CO-RESPONDER  
CONFERENCE**  
June 1 - 4, 2025 | Atlanta, GA

Co-Hosted by

ICRA  
International Co-Responder Alliance

Highland Rivers  
Behavioral Health

ViewPoint  
Health

**CORCON 2025 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

  
TONIER  
CAIN

  
BRANDON  
DEL POZO

  
KAKI  
DIMOCK

[coresponderalliance.org/CoRCon](https://coresponderalliance.org/CoRCon)

## Areas of Progress – National Co-Responder Conference

- This year's National Co-Responder Conference took place in Atlanta, GA June 1 – 4, 2025.
- There were over 1200 attendees with 12% of attendees being from Georgia.
- The Conference was hosted by Highland Rivers Behavioral Health and ViewPoint Health.
- Presentations were completed by co-responder teams in Georgia, including a presentation from DBHDD and statewide implementation of co-response.



# Law Enforcement – Impact of Co-Response

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**Chief Bill Grogan**

*Chief of Police, Norcross*





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# 2025 Legislative Session Recap

Monica A. Patel, Esq.

Assistant Commissioner for Agency Affairs and Chief Legal Officer  
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

June 2025 | DBHDD Board Meeting



The background of the entire graphic is a photograph of the Georgia State Capitol dome, showing its iconic gold leaf dome and the statue of Liberty atop the dome's finial. The image is slightly faded to allow the text to stand out.

# 2025 Legislative Support & Victories

HB  
268

HB 268 **boosts school safety by funding mental health coordinators, requiring youth suicide prevention and behavioral health training for staff, and mandating behavioral threat assessments in safety plans.** DBHDD will help guide screening tools, training, and coordination to support early intervention in schools.

HB  
584

HB 584 **transfers oversight of drug treatment programs, narcotic treatment, community living arrangements, and adult residential mental health programs from DCH to DBHDD, effective January 1, 2026.** This streamlines oversight and aligns these services with DBHDD's core mission.

SB  
233

SB 233 **creates new IDD and Addictive Diseases Workgroups for the Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission.** This work group will ensure these communities have a seat at the table as the Commission make policy recommendations to the General Assembly.

SB  
132

SB 132 **reforms Georgia's process for evaluating mental competency in criminal cases.** The law **shortens the evaluation timeline** for certain non-violent misdemeanors, requires a hearing before a judge orders an evaluation at the defense's request, and permits outpatient evaluations for non-violent offenses when appropriate.

A blurred background image of a classroom with rows of wooden desks and white chairs. A chalkboard is visible in the background on the right side.

# **HB 268 | OUR ROLE IN SCHOOL SAFETY**

## **What is HB 268?**

**HB 268 aims to enhance the safety, health, and well-being of students and school communities across Georgia. The bill includes new mandates around student records, mental health support, behavioral threat management, school safety infrastructure, and interagency collaboration.**

## **DBHDD's Role**

**Subject matter expertise regarding qualifications and training for school-based mental health professionals**

**Reviewing and providing input on school safety plans and direct assessment/management plans**



# House Bill 584

**Transfers oversight and licensing authority for several behavioral health-related programs from the Department of Community Health (DCH) to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD).**

**Programs impacted:**

- Drug abuse treatment and education programs
- Narcotic treatment programs
- Community living arrangements
- Adult residential mental health programs

**New governing bodies:** Community Service Boards (CSBs) will serve as the governing bodies for these programs.

**Licensing continuity:** Rules and regulations created by DCH before December 31, 2025, will remain in effect until formally changed.  
**Existing and provisional licenses issued by DCH will remain valid** until they are revoked, renewed, surrendered, or terminated.

**Effective date:**

The transition becomes official on January 1, 2026.





# Senate Bill 233

## Behavioral Health Reform and Innovation Commission Updates

**Expands the Commission:** Increases membership from 24 to 30 members, adding voices from law enforcement, clinical professionals, advocacy groups, and individuals with lived experience. The bill updates the chair's authority and creates two new workgroups:

1. **IDD Workgroup**
2. **Addictive Diseases Workgroup**

**Extends the Commission's Work:** Pushes the sunset date for the commission from June 30, 2025 to December 31, 2026.



# Senate Bill 132

## Improving Georgia's Competency Evaluation Process

### 1. Hearing Before Evaluation

- A court hearing is now required before ordering a mental competency evaluation if the concern is raised by the defense (accused or their attorney).

### 2. Confidentiality and Access to Competency Reports

- Competency evaluations must be shared with:
  - The defense attorney (or the accused if representing themselves)
  - The prosecuting attorney
- These reports remain sealed unless a court order allows additional disclosure.



# Senate Bill 132

Specific Rules for *only* Nonviolent Misdemeanor Offenses  
(not including DUI or domestic violence)

- 1. Faster Evaluation Timeline:** DBHDD must complete a mental competency evaluation **within 45 days** of receiving custody or a court order.
- 2. Shorter Treatment Period:** If the person is found **incompetent but restorable**, DBHDD can provide restoration for up to **120 days**.
- 3. Automatic Dismissal:** If the person is **still incompetent** after the 120-day treatment period, the charges will be dismissed as a matter of law—unless the prosecutor convinces the court there's a legitimate interest in maintaining the charges.
- 4. Referral for Services:** The person will be referred to a **community service board for services**, unless the court orders otherwise.



# Looking Ahead: 2025 Legislation Eligible for Consideration

## House Bill 612 (Did Not Pass)

House Bill 612 aims to enhance Georgia's Behavioral Health Coordinating Council (BHCC) by adding the Insurance Commissioner as a member and creating a new Parity Compliance Review Panel. This panel would review provider complaints, oversee mental health parity compliance, and recommend actions against insurers not meeting federal and state parity laws. The bill did not receive final passage during the 2025 legislative session.

## Senate Bill 269 (Did Not Pass)

Senate Bill 269 seeks to modernize and clarify Georgia's legal process for involuntary outpatient commitment under the state's mental health code. The bill would have expanded the authority to initiate outpatient commitments to DBHDD-approved Nurse Examiners, streamlined notification procedures, and added a new code section to support evaluations conducted outside Emergency Receiving, Evaluating, and Treatment (ERET) facilities. The bill did not pass during the 2025 legislative session.

# FY 2026 Highlights

- ✓ Governor Kemp signs 2026 budget with major DBHDD priorities
- ✓ Reinforces provider rate increases
- ✓ Enhances access to services across divisions
- ✓ Supports DOJ compliance
- ✓ Invests in hospital infrastructure
- ✓ Reflects trust in DBHDD's direction and mission

# FY 2026 Highlights

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2026 Adult Addictive Diseases Services</b>	<b>Line #</b>	<b>Conference Committee</b>
Increase funds for alcohol use disorder peer support	<b>62.2</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2026 Adult Mental Health Services</b>	<b>Line #</b>	<b>Conference Committee</b>
Increase funds to annualize the provider rate increases recommended by the Community Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (CBHRS) provider rate study [TOTAL FUNDS CHANGE: \$45,509,162]	<b>66.4</b>	<b>\$12,528,923</b>
Transfer funds from the Department of Community Health to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities for four licensure programs to match agency roles and responsibilities (HB 584)	<b>66.5</b>	<b>\$1,126,455</b>
Increase funds for the Georgia Housing Voucher program to support the requirements of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement	<b>66.9</b>	<b>\$1,701,600</b>
Increase funds for a North Fulton behavioral health crisis center	<b>66.10</b>	<b>\$9,481,532</b>

# FY 2026 Highlights

## FISCAL YEAR 2026

### Adult Developmental Disabilities Services

	Line #	Conference Committee
Increase funds to annualize the provider rate increases recommended by the New Options Waiver (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waiver Program (COMP) provider rate study [TOTAL FUNDS CHANGE: \$236,560,895]	64.4	\$26,714,565
Annualize 100 New Options Waivers (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waivers	64.5	\$2,331,025
Increase funds for 150 additional New Options Waivers (NOW) and Comprehensive Supports Waivers	64.6	\$3,496,538
Increase funds to annualize the operations of the Macon Crisis Stabilization and Diagnostic Center	64.7	\$3,141,942

## FISCAL YEAR 2026

### Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

	Line #	Conference Committee
Increase funds to annualize the operations of the new Gateway child and adolescent crisis stabilization unit in Savannah.	70.1	\$1,444,308

# FY 2026 Highlights

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2026</b>	<b>Line #</b>	<b>Conference Committee</b>
<b>Adult Forensic Services</b>		
Increase funds to annualize the operations of a 30-bed jail-based competency restoration program pilot in Dodge County.	<b>65.1</b>	<b>\$1,055,621</b>
Increase funds to operationalize a new 20-bed forensic unit at the Skilled Nursing Facility Georgia Regional Hospital in Atlanta.	<b>65.2</b>	<b>\$1,185,089</b>
Increase funds to operationalize a new 30-bed Operation New Hope forensic step-down unit at the West Central Georgia Regional Hospital in Columbus.	<b>65.3</b>	<b>\$1,618,742</b>
Increase funds to operationalize a new 17-bed forensic unit at the Central State Hospital Allen Building in Milledgeville.	<b>65.4</b>	<b>\$1,953,245</b>
<b>FISCAL YEAR 2026</b>	<b>Line #</b>	<b>Conference Committee</b>
<b>Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission (GSFIC)</b>		
Increase funds for one-time funding to address Regional State Hospitals' significant capital needs according to the 2023 Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission (GSFIC) campus survey partially funded in HB915 (2024 Session), statewide.	<b>380.41</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>



# Litigation Update - Lawsuit Dismissed



**Belton v. Georgia – Consent Decree Entered Into 2014  
Dismissed in Its Entirety – 2025**

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**DBHDD has met the terms of the federal consent decree.**

- Improved statewide mental health services for Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals
- Built lasting infrastructure: Deaf Services Office, qualified ASL-fluent providers, and crisis access

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# BE D·B·H·D·D

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

Taylor Peyton

Opioid Abatement Liaison, Georgia Opioid Crisis Abatement Trust



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# 2025 Opioid Grant Applications

As of June 12

- 48 applications submissions
  - 20 state
  - 28 regional
- 261 draft applications

# 2025 Opioid Grant Workshops

- May 2: Savannah
- May 2: Tifton
- May 5: Atlanta (in person & virtual)
- May 6: Dalton





# Board Engagement Highlights



Breakthru House

Break the Stigma – Atlanta Braves Game

Journey of Hope Documentary







# Crisis Services Diagnostic Center Grand Opening



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# BE D·B·H·D·D

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities



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# Chair's Report

Lasa Joiner

*Chair*



# Public Comment



A close-up, soft-focus photograph of several hands being held together in a supportive gesture. The hands are of different skin tones, and the lighting is warm and gentle, creating a sense of care and connection.

# **BE D·B·H·D·D**

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities

