



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BY HIS EXCELLENCY
CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR**

Executive Order 2019-02

An order establishing the Governor's Advisory Commission on Mental Illness and the Corrections System

WHEREAS, almost 15 percent of incarcerated men and 30 percent of incarcerated women have a mental illness; and

WHEREAS, populations with mental illness who are currently incarcerated, transitioning from correctional settings back to the community, or managing other legal issues experience a complex set of stressors; and

WHEREAS, incarcerated individuals who do not receive appropriate mental health treatment may experience exacerbated symptoms, more problematic behavior, and longer than necessary jail and prison stays; and

WHEREAS, when released to the community without sufficient transition plans and supports, many individuals with mental illnesses experience trouble at work, difficulties with obtaining housing, and barriers to accessing mental health treatment, and these challenges can lead to homelessness, increased emergency department visits, and re-arrest and recidivism; and

WHEREAS, enhanced transition supports may lead to increased functioning, healthy contributions to the community, decreased law enforcement costs, and increased public safety; and

WHEREAS, for the reasons listed above, the Ten Year Mental Health Plan released in January of 2019 recommends the establishment of a Commission to study the challenges encountered by justice involved individuals with mental illnesses and recommend actions to address and alleviate these challenges.¹

NOW THEREFORE, I, CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU, GOVERNOR of the State of New Hampshire, by the authority vested in me pursuant to part II, article 41 of the New Hampshire Constitution, do hereby order, effective immediately, that:

1. There is established the Governor's Advisory Commission on Mental Illness and the Corrections System. The Commission shall consist of the following members:

- a) The attorney general, or designee;
- b) The Commissioner of Health and Human Services, or designee;
- c) The Commissioner of Corrections, or designee;
- d) The Chief Executive Officer of New Hampshire Hospital, or designee;
- e) One state representative, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Speaker of the House;

- f) One state senator, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the President of the Senate;
- g) A representative from the New Hampshire Judicial Branch, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;
- h) A current or retired judge, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;
- i) A representative from a designated receiving facility, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor;
- j) One member who shall be a county attorney or assistant county attorney, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor; and
- k) Four additional members, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Governor.

2. The Governor shall designate a member of the Commission to serve as chair.

3. The Commission shall examine and make recommendations on issues facing individuals with mental illnesses in the corrections system, including but not limited to the following:

- a) steps that can be taken to reduce incarceration and improve mental health services for incarcerated individuals who suffer from mental illnesses;
- b) the use of restraints during transports to and from either mental health or corrections facilities;
- c) methods for improving transitions between county and state institutions;
- d) reforms to support individuals with a mental illness who are transitioning from incarceration back into the community; and
- e) any other issues which the Commission deems relevant to its charge.

4. The Commission shall meet at least monthly, and shall, beginning in the year 2019, submit to the Governor on or before November 30th of each year, a report which summarizes the Commission's activities and which details any recommendations that the Commission develops.

5. In between annual reports, the Commission shall provide recommendations to the Governor as the Commission deems appropriate and as the Governor may request.

Given under my hand and seal at the Executive Chambers in Concord, this 12th day of March, in the year of Our Lord, two thousand and nineteen, and the independence of the United States of America, two hundred and forty-three.


GOVERNOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

¹ The background and statistics in the whereas clauses of this Order are taken directly from the State's Ten Year Mental Health Plan released in January of 2019.