

2027 Massachusetts Legislative Highlights

Between-Session Education | Sept. 2026



Who We Are

MOAR organizes recovering individuals, families and friends into a collective voice to educate the public about the value of recovery from alcohol and other addictions.

What's Going On

'25-'26 Legislative Session: Policies important for the recovery community were introduced to MA legislature, and in several cases, advanced through committee consideration but have not been enacted by the legislature as of September 29, 2026.

'27-'28 Legislative Session: As the Massachusetts Legislature begins a new legislative session, MOAR will reassess specific policies for community education when the 2027 legislative session begins, knowing that what was previously filed may be reintroduced under new bill numbers, combine with other proposals, or significantly revised.

'27-'28 Addiction Recovery Legislative Highlights

Areas for continued consideration in the upcoming MA legislative session

Treatment over incarceration: Policies that expand access to treatment, recovery services, and community-based alternatives to incarceration.

Automatic record sealing: Policies that reduce barriers created by past criminal records and support access to employment, housing, education, and other opportunities.

Overdose prevention and naloxone access: Policies that increase access to lifesaving overdose-prevention tools, particularly for people at elevated risk, including individuals transitioning from incarceration.

Access to addiction and recovery services: Equitable access to evidence-based treatment, peer recovery support, recovery community organizations, and other recovery-oriented services.

Recovery on college campuses: Policies that support recovery-friendly environments, including collegiate recovery programs, recovery housing, peer support, and education.

Stigma reduction: Policies that promote person-first, recovery-oriented language and reducing outdated or stigmatizing terminology in public policy and systems of care.

Alcohol policy and public-health investment: Policies that examine alcohol-related harm and opportunities to reinvest resources in prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery.

Prescription monitoring and treatment access: Monitoring the policies affecting prescription monitoring systems while considering patient privacy, treatment access, clinical practice, and the needs of people receiving addiction treatment.

Massachusetts State Policy Education

Between-Sessions Information | Sept. 2026

Between Legislative Sessions

'25-'26 Session: Policies important to the recovery community were introduced and, in some cases, advanced through committee, but none were enacted as of October 2026.

'27-'28 Session: As the new session begins, MOAR will reassess policies for community education, recognizing that prior proposals may be reintroduced under new bill numbers, combined, or revised.

Bills on the Docket - Understanding Addiction Recovery Policies

The following bills were not enacted, but are areas for continued consideration going into the '27-'28 legislative session.

An Act relative to preventing overdose deaths and increasing access to treatment

What it does: Establishes a legal framework for harm reduction programs, including Overdose Prevention Centers (OPCs), needle exchanges, and overdose response services.

Why it is important: OPCs save lives, provide harm reduction services, and connect people to treatment while addressing Massachusetts' ongoing overdose crisis and racial disparities in overdose deaths.

An Act relative to treatment, not incarceration

What it does: Allows judges to require substance use treatment as a condition of pretrial release or probation and prevents incarceration solely because someone relapses while participating in treatment.

Why it is important: Relapse can lead to incarceration even when someone is actively engaged in treatment. This bill prioritizes treatment and recovery over punishment.

An Act relative requiring Clean Slate automated record sealing

What it does: Automatically seals eligible arrest and conviction records, allowing people who have completed their sentences to move forward without the burden of a record.

Why it is important: Criminal records can create barriers to employment, housing, education, and other opportunities. Clean Slate policies can reduce these barriers and provide a path to a fresh start.

An Act relative supporting parents in recovery from substance use disorder & enhancing child welfare

What it does: Strengthens support for parents with SUD involved with DCF by improving service planning, connecting families to resources, allowing recovery coaches or licensed counselors at team meetings, and providing SUD training for DCF staff.

Why it is important: The bill supports parents and families, strengthens pathways to reunification, and promotes a more recovery-oriented approach to child welfare.

An Act helping overdosing persons in emergencies

What it does: Increases access to naloxone and provides more overdose training for first responders. It aims to improve how first responders respond to opioid overdoses by making overdose-reversal medication more available and ensuring that first responders have the training and protections they need.

Why it is important: Ensures emergency personnel have the tools and training needed to respond quickly and prevent overdose deaths.

An Act ensuring access to addiction services

What it does: Ends the placement of men ordered into involuntary SUD treatment under Section 35 in correctional facilities and requires sufficient treatment capacity through DPH and DMH.

Why it is important: Replaces correctional settings with treatment environments and reduces the stigma and harms associated with incarceration.

An Act relative to Narcan availability in schools

What it does: Requires schools to establish naloxone programs, train school nurses, and maintain naloxone on site.

Why it is important: Equips schools and students with the knowledge and tools to respond to an overdose.

An Act relative requiring opioid use disorder education

What it does: Requires schools to include OUD education in health curricula, including overdose recognition, naloxone use, and stigma reduction.

Why it is important: Gives students the knowledge and skills to recognize and respond to opioid overdoses.

An Act to support college students in recovery

What it does: Requires public colleges with housing to offer recovery programs, overdose education, and naloxone access, with state support and funding.

Why it is important: Helps students in recovery access peer support, counseling, and safe, supportive campus environments.

An Act to relative to the fair taxation of alcoholic beverages

What it does: Increases the alcohol excise tax by 10 cents per drink and directs new revenue toward public health, wellness, and education.

Why it is important: Provides additional funding for programs addressing substance use, mental health, and other public health needs.

An Act replacing outdated and stigmatizing language for substance use

What it does: Updates Massachusetts laws to replace outdated and stigmatizing substance use terminology with modern, medically accurate language.

Why it is important: Promotes a more accurate and respectful understanding of SUD and helps reduce stigma around treatment and recovery.

An Act to save lives by distributing Narcan to individuals at risk for an overdose

What it does: Requires correctional facilities to provide naloxone training, community access information, and at least two doses of naloxone upon release.

Why it is important: Provides critical overdose prevention resources to people at increased risk following release from incarceration.