

HB 578-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2021 SESSION

21-0737

04/10

HOUSE BILL ***578-FN***

AN ACT relative to standards for mental health courts.

SPONSORS: Rep. Cannon, Straf. 18; Rep. Berch, Ches. 1; Rep. Walz, Merr. 23; Rep. Shurtleff,
Merr. 11; Sen. Reagan, Dist 17

COMMITTEE: Judiciary

ANALYSIS

This bill requires the chief justice of the supreme court to submit a report on the standards necessary to implement a statewide mental health court system.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty One

AN ACT relative to standards for mental health courts.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Purpose. The general court finds that: mental health diversion programs, operating in certain
2 courts around New Hampshire, have increased access to treatment for individuals and families
3 impacted by mental health issues. A statewide system of mental health courts would expand access
4 to treatment services across the state and save taxpayer dollars by preventing incarceration of
5 individuals with mental illness who become justice-involved due to symptoms or behaviors arising
6 from their illness.

7 2 Mental Health Court Standards; Report.

8 I. In order to increase access to mental health treatment services and maximize savings to
9 taxpayers, the chief justice of the New Hampshire supreme court shall submit a report establishing
10 standards for a statewide system of mental health courts to reduce criminal justice system costs,
11 reduce recidivism, and better treat the mental health needs of individuals with mental illness. To
12 establish these standards the chief justice shall, either internally or through an independent
13 consultant, review successful programs in other states and localities, and shall identify models for
14 staffing and structure to extend access to mental health courts to all New Hampshire residents.

15 II. The report shall be submitted to the governor, the speaker of the house of
16 representatives, the senate president, the chairpersons of the house and senate policy committees
17 with jurisdiction over judicial branch matters, the chief justice of the New Hampshire superior court,
18 and the administrative judge of the New Hampshire circuit court on or before November 1, 2021.

19 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect upon its passage.

LBA
21-0737
12/23/20

**HB 578-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to standards for mental health courts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Legislative Budget Assistant has determined that this legislation, as introduced, has a total fiscal impact of less than \$10,000 in each of the fiscal years 2021 through 2024.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Judicial Branch