



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
ADMINISTRATORS**

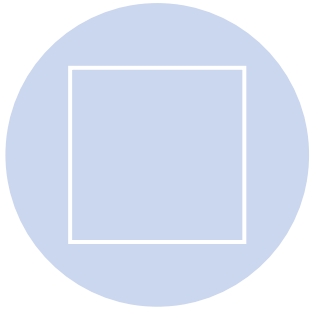
**From Capitol Hill
to Community
Services:
Federal Policy
Impacts on Brain
Injury Services**

Support States.

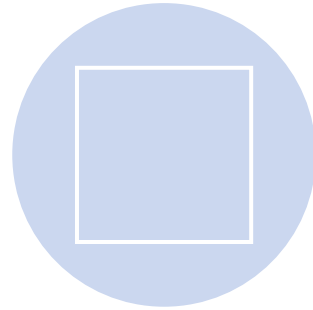
Grow Leaders.

Connect Partners.

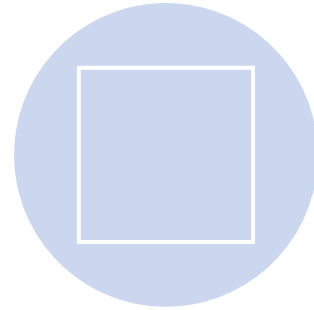
About Me



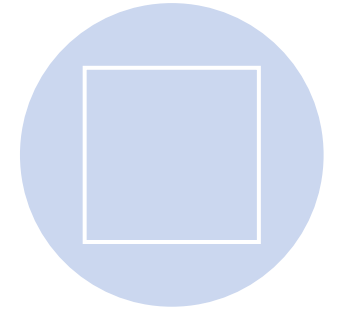
DIRECTOR OF
STRATEGIC
PARTNERSHIPS AND
POLICY



BACKGROUND ON
CAPITOL HILL IN BOTH
THE HOUSE AND
SENATE



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
CONSULTANT



ADVOCACY DOES
MATTER!!

Vision: Individuals with brain injury have access to a robust and appropriate service delivery system regardless of the state in which they live.



NASHIA

Mission: NASHIA is a nonprofit organization created to assist state governments, and their partners, with enhancing collaboration and strengthening capabilities to address the needs of individuals with brain injury and their support systems.

Support States.

Grow Leaders.

Connect Partners.

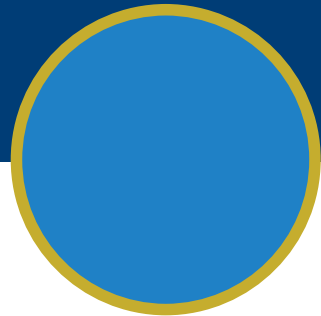


NASHIA Services and Supports



**Resources
and
Information**

Support States

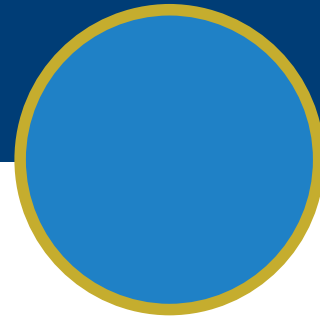


**Training and
Professional
Development**



Connections

Grow Leaders



**Develop,
Promote &
Implement
State and
National
Trends**



Advocacy

Connect Partners

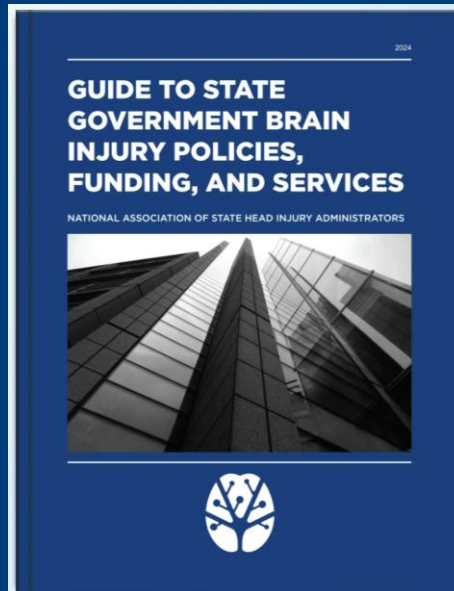
Key Brain Injury Partners



Building Systems of Care in Every State

NASHIA's State Program Directory includes information about state and territory lead brain injury programs and BIAA affiliates, Medicaid waiver programs, services offered and brain injury advisory councils.

<https://www.nashia.org/state-program-directory>



State Systems of Care Improve Outcomes



**STATES WITH STATE-LEVEL
SYSTEMS OF CARE FOR
PEOPLE WITH BRAIN INJURY
HAVE BETTER LONG-TERM
OUTCOMES**



**SYSTEMS WITH BRAIN
INJURY COMMUNITY
SUPPORTS HAVE REDUCED
DISABILITY LEVELS AND A
DECREASE IN THE SERVICES
INDIVIDUALS REQUIRE**



**BRAIN INJURY
RESOURCE FACILITATION
SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVES
RETURN-TO-WORK AND
RETURN-TO-SCHOOL
OUTCOMES**



State Systems of Care Improve Outcomes

The Path to Strong State Systems of Care



Start with Advocacy

Advocacy is the essential first step required to generate good policy.



Develop Good Policy

Effective policy is the direct output of successful advocacy efforts.



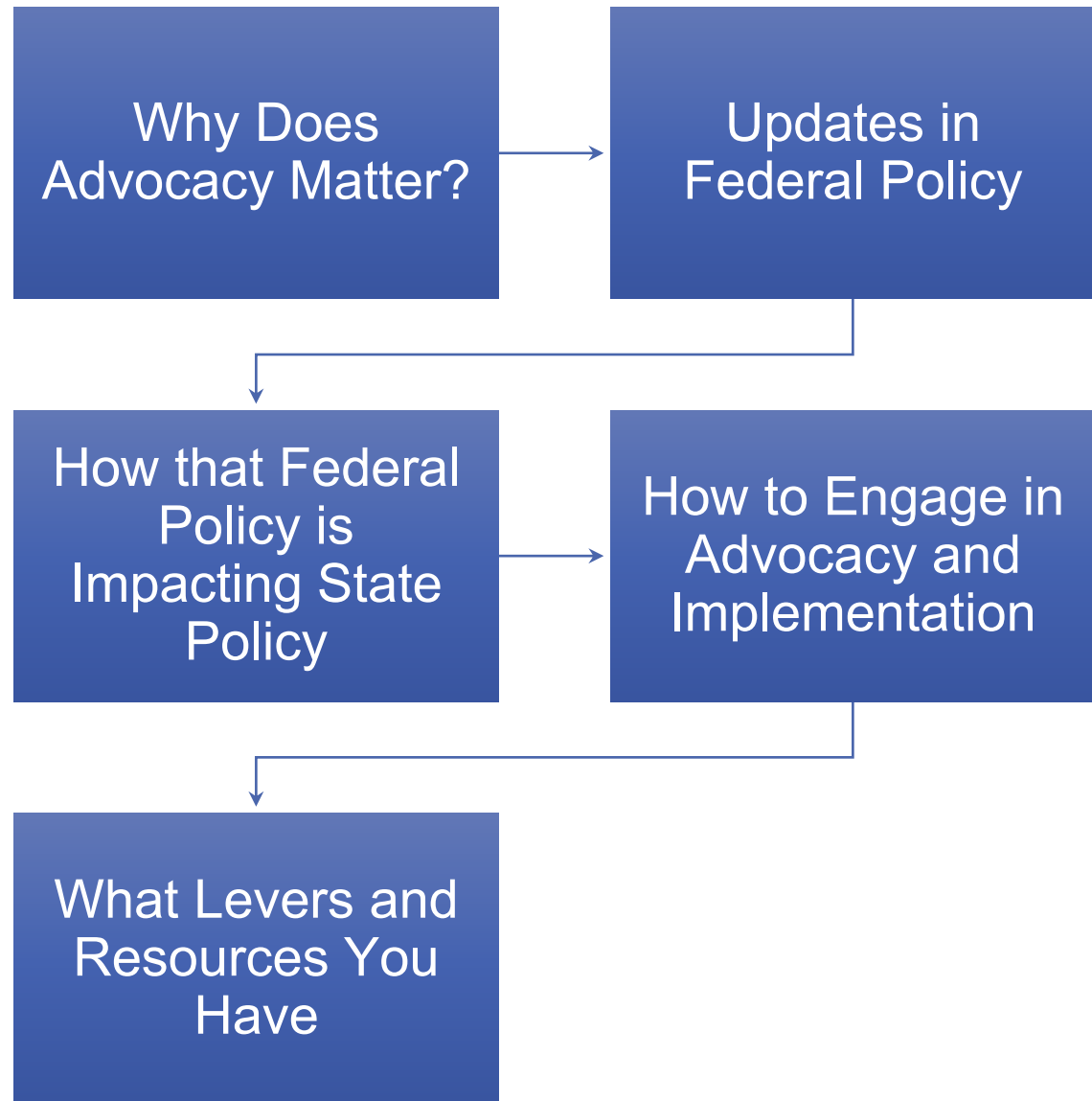
Strong State Systems of Care

Good Policy serves as the foundation for building strong state-level care systems.



How confident do you feel navigating federal policy and what it means for your state?

Remaining Discussion



Why Does Advocacy Matter?

Does it make a difference? Does it work? What's the point?

TBI and PTSD Law Enforcement Training Act

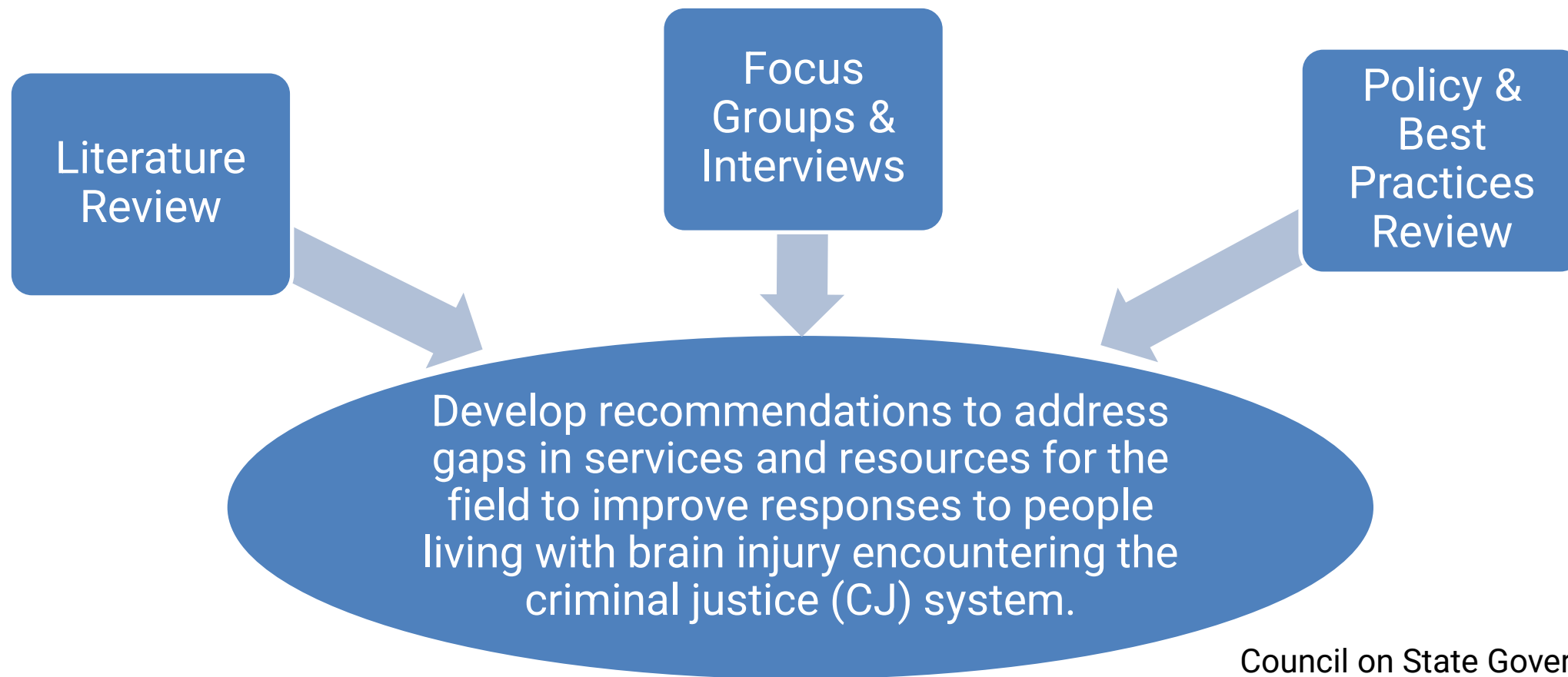
Legislative action with the passage of the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Law Enforcement Training Act (H.R. 2992) in August 2022

Required Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to develop training tools/resources focused on brain injury/PTSD for first responders

BJA requested a landscape review to lay the foundation for future work in this area. This was conducted by the Council on State Government with input from a variety of partners including NASHIA



Mind Matters Project Overview



Findings and Recommendations

1



**Training and
Education**

2



**Screening and
Identification**

3



**Compensatory
Strategies and
Modifications**

4



**Referrals and
Resource
Coordination**

5



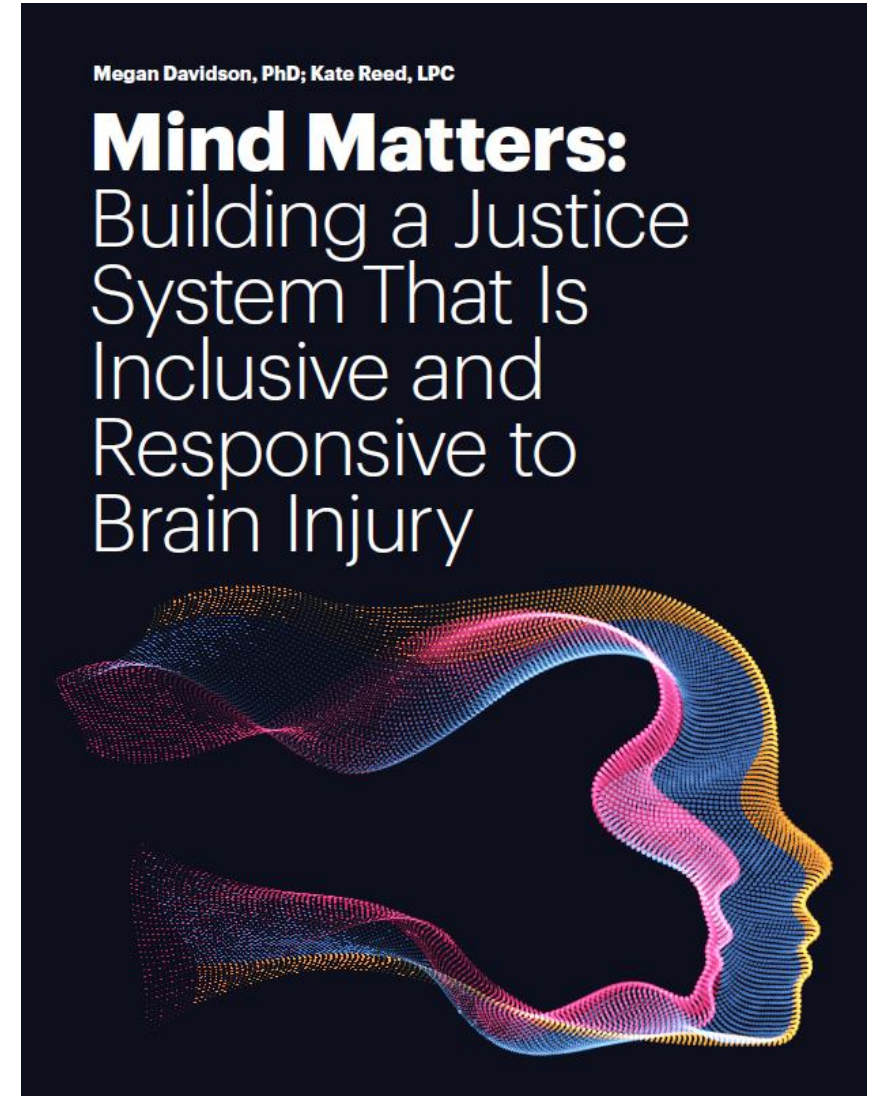
**Strategies
for Advancing
Recommendations**

Council on State Governments, 2024

Mind Matters:
Building a Justice System That Is Inclusive and Responsive to People with Brain Injury

Report Released!

The [Mind Matters](#) report was published in June 2024 and can be accessed via the CSG Justice Center website.



Legislation Funding

- DOJ Federal Funding started to explicitly include brain injury as a priority population.
- NASHIA applied for and was awarded funding to support Kansas.



Kansas Project

- Project Goal: Reduce recidivism and increase community engagement for justice-involved individuals who screen for high criminogenic risk and who also screen positive for a history of brain injury in the Wyandotte County (Kansas) Detention Center (WCDC).
- Three-year project: 10/1/24-9/30/27
- Screen for brain injury and criminogenic risk
provide psychoeducation through AHEAD provide case management to support reentry
- Partners: LifeStreams, MindsMatter

Federal Policy Impacts State Services

Federal Policy

What the Services Are or What Cuts to Services There Are
Funding Opportunities or Lack of Funding for Services
Policy Guidance



State Policy

How the Services are Implemented
What Services Get Funding vs Not

What Is Happening at the Federal Level with Policy Now?

What do you think of when you hear federal policy?

The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from



Federal policy sets the direction, but states decide the destination.

TBI Act

TBI Act History and Importance

- First signed into law in 1996 by President Bill Clinton.
- Last reauthorization signed into law in 2018 by President Donald Trump.
- Lapsed authorization in 2024.
- An authorization in 2026 would ensure that programs are protected for 5 years, as various priorities shift by Administration.

The ***only*** federal piece of legislation authorizing programs that support civilians with brain injury.

This Year's Champions

- House: Reps. Menendez (D-NJ), Pallone (D-NJ), Bacon (R-NE), and Crenshaw (D-TX)
 - H.R. 1493
- Senate: Senators Markwayne Mullin (Now DHS Secretary so working with others), Alex Padilla (D-CA), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)
 - S. 2898



ACL State Partnership Program

The **Administration for Community Living (ACL)** provides grants to states, tribes, and territories through the **Traumatic Brain Injury State Partnership Program** to improve access to services.

Grant Purpose: Supports a central state program that coordinates resources for individuals with brain injuries and their families.

Goal: Improve long-term outcomes by making services more accessible and better coordinated.

What Grants Are Used For

Expand and Improve State Capacity, including:	Collaborate with Other State Agencies Who Serve People with Brain Injury, such as:	Maintain State Brain Injury Advisory Boards to:
Ensuring Dedicated Staff	Law Enforcement	Develop State Plans on Brain Injury
Connecting Individuals to Community Resources	Areas across the lifespan, such as Children and Youth and Older Adults	Promote Awareness
Creating Partnerships Within the Community	Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder	Identify Areas of Needed Focus and Resources
Providing Training to Community Professionals	Veterans	Amplify the Voice of Individuals with Lived Experience to Impact Service Delivery

What Services Are Provided Through These Grants?



Screening

Nearly **60% of grantees** conduct brain injury screening within a single setting to identify individuals in need of services.



Brain Injury Resource Facilitation

60,000+ individuals receive support annually through Brain Injury Resource Facilitation.

This service helps individuals with brain injuries and their families find and navigate resources to address challenges, improve quality of life, and promote overall well-being.



Training and Awareness

Thousands of professionals are trained each year through these grants.

Training equips professionals to better support people with brain injuries and refer them to appropriate services when needed.

CDC TBI Program Background

In 2025, the Administration eliminated the positions of all staff working for CDC's TBI Program, within the Injury Prevention Center.

This has stalled progress on brain injury education, data collection, and research.

Congress has continued to fund the CDC's TBI efforts, recognizing the importance of this work.

Reauthorizing will help restore stability within the Program and signal Congress' support for rebuilding staff capacity and programming.

CDC TBI Programs

1



2



3



4

HEADS UP Campaign:

Offers educational resources and training programs for coaches, parents, and athletes to recognize the signs and symptoms of concussion, understand the importance of recovery, and ensure safe return to play.

Youth Concussion

Guidelines: Whether sports related or other mechanisms, CDC's Injury Center prioritizes supporting children in receiving the best care post-concussion.

Workplace Injury:

The CDC Injury Center recently put out guidance on supporting work related brain injury, including ensuring that U.S. service members have the best care.

Data Collection:

The National Concussion Surveillance System provides for the first time prevalence of brain injury. Current data collection relies on hospital information.

TBI Act Next Steps

1

Authorization: TBI Act
Movement

2

Funding: Letters to Members
of Congress asking for
Increased Funding

Why Do the TBI Act Programs Matter to Kansas and Missouri?

- Both states have TBI State Partnership Program Grants.
- Federal authorization and funding help ensure that these grants continue.
- CDC programming provides information to coaches and other partners in the state.
- CDC data helps provide a foundation for more services in states.



One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)



One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA)

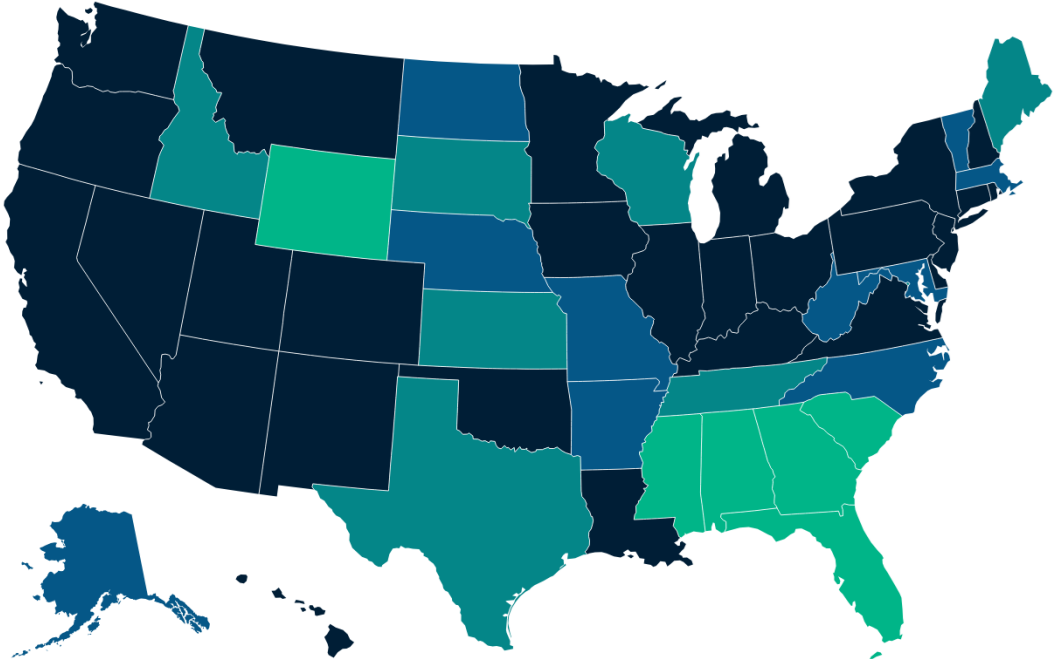
- Will reduce Medicaid funding by ~14% over 10 years (~\$911B)
- Changes include limits on federal financing and new constraints on eligibility and program structure
- Shift in responsibility from federal government to states
- Impacts begin to phase in soon, affecting state budgets starting around FY2027
- Occurring alongside broader fiscal pressure (slower revenue growth, rising healthcare costs)

Figure 3

Federal Medicaid Cuts in the Enacted Reconciliation Package, By State

As a % of 10-year baseline federal spending (2025-2034)

■ < 7% ■ 7%–10% ■ 10%–13% ■ ≥ 13%



Note: \$911 billion in federal Medicaid spending cuts over the 10-year period is allocated across states, including \$79B in estimated Medicaid spending interactions. See Methods in "Allocating CBO's Estimates of Federal Medicaid Spending Reductions Across the States: Enacted Reconciliation Package" for more details.

Source: KFF analysis of CBO estimates of the enacted reconciliation package



Medicaid Payment Decreases

Kansas: 9%
decrease over
the next 10
years

Missouri: 12%
decrease over
the next 10
years

How States Will Respond

- States will face significant budget gaps in one of their largest spending areas
- Likely state responses may include:
 - Reducing provider rates or limiting increases
 - Cutting optional benefits (e.g., HCBS, dental, vision)
 - Tightening eligibility or increasing administrative requirements
 - Adding utilization controls (prior auth, service limits)
 - Cutting other states services
 - Exploring new revenue sources

Community Engagement Requirements

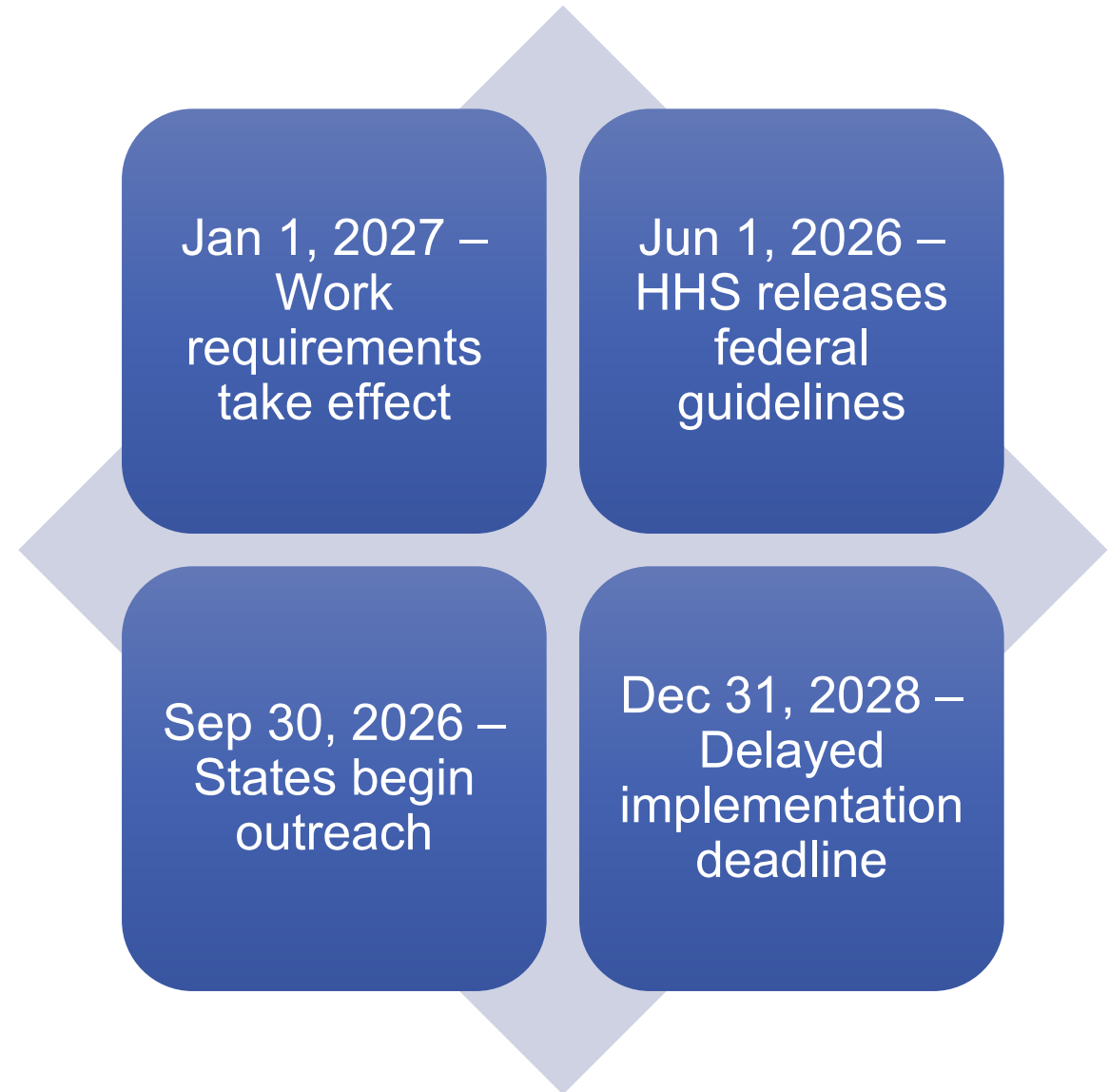
- In addition to funding cuts, OBBBA also included a requirement for community engagement requirements for people receiving Medicaid benefits

Figure 2

Proposed Qualifying Activities and Exemptions

Qualifying Activities	Mandatory Exemptions	Optional Hardship Exceptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 hours per month of work, community service, and/or “work program” participation• Enrolled in education at least half time• Any combination of the above totaling 80 hours per month• Monthly income of minimum wage multiplied by 80 hours• Seasonal workers with an average monthly income over 6 months of minimum wage multiplied by 80 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent/guardian/caretakers of dependent children under age 13 or disabled individuals• Pregnant or receiving postpartum coverage• Foster youth/former foster youth under age 26• Medically frail• Participating in SUD program• Meeting SNAP/TANF work requirements• American Indians and Alaska Natives• Disabled veterans• Incarcerated or released from incarceration within 90 days• Entitled to Medicare Part A/enrolled in Medicare Part B	<p>State option to allow short-term hardship exceptions, for an individual who...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• was in an inpatient hospital, nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or inpatient psychiatric hospital• resided in a county with a federally-declared emergency or disaster• resided in a county with a high unemployment rate (above 8% or 1.5x the national unemployment rate), subject to a request from the state to the Secretary• traveled outside of the individual’s community for an extended period for medical care for themselves or for their dependent

Community Engagement Requirements Timeline



NASHIA Recommendations

- **Use a functional, whole-person approach to identify exemptions:** Eligibility for medical frailty exemptions should be based on how a condition impacts daily functioning (like memory, behavior, and ability to work), not just diagnoses or medical records.
- **Use Multiple Data Sources:** Not just ICD-10 codes, but other records should be reviewed where there are high rates of brain injury.
- **Incorporate screening tools that capture real-world challenges:** Screening should go beyond asking if someone has a diagnosis.
- **Prevent people from falling through the cracks due to documentation barriers:** If you are looking at ICD-10 codes, look at secondary or tertiary diagnosis.
- **Encourage cross-agency coordination at federal and state levels**
- **Recognize cumulative and co-occurring conditions**
- **Minimize churn and ensure continuity of coverage**
- **Clarify that exemption does not mean inability to work**

How This Impacts You

Kansas/Missouri will have to implement community engagement requirements for Medicaid

This is an opportunity for advocates/educators to engage to ensure exemptions for people with brain injury (as much as is allowed by Federal policy).

Opportunities to support implementation of these requirements to ensure individuals you support and serve who aren't exempted are able to participate in community engagement effectively.

New 1915(c) Waiver Authority for Those Who Do NOT Meet Institutional Level of Care

States can apply for a **standalone 1915(c) waiver** to provide HCBS starting **July 1, 2028**. First approval lasts **3 years**.

Can be extended in **5-year periods** if requirements are met.

State Requirements for Approval:

- All other HCBS waivers in the state must meet existing requirements.
- Must show that the new waiver **won't increase wait lists** for people already eligible for HCBS.
- Must set **needs-based criteria** (approved by HHS) for who qualifies without needing institutional-level eligibility.
- Must attest that **per-person costs under the waiver won't exceed** the cost of institutional care.

Potential Opportunities

A more upstream approach - by providing supportive services to people earlier, greater potential to prevent or delay the need for more costly institutional care

Expanded reach – this type of option may create eligibility for complex conditions or circumstances that may not meet traditional 1915c requirements

Multi-occurring conditions - brain injury and behavioral health with expanded options around peer supports

Serve those identified through screening - Individuals with multiple mild brain injuries who, overtime, face increased independent living instability

Pathway for some to achieve full dual eligible status – e.g. those not currently receiving Medicaid LTSS (partially dually eligible)

1915i and the expanded 1915c option

States may look at opportunities to shift a current 1915i to a 1915c



Stronger budget controls

Statewideness

Enrollment caps

Waiting lists

Medicaid Program Integrity

Update on Reconciliation

Potential inclusion of provisions to “combat fraud waste and abuse.”

This could impact Medicaid HCBS services.

What Are Opportunities at
the State Level Outside
of Federal Policy?

Where Are Areas You Could be Focusing On Now?

While you right now must be reactive to Federal Policy

You can also be proactive in seeking the support that you want!

Develop recommendations for new policy or funding and start to build the case.

Partnerships are Essential



How to Engage in Policy & Advocacy

How to Influence Policy at a Federal Level

Join NASHIA or another group to inform
Federal Policy (Legislation & Regulations)

Participate in NASHIA Public Policy
Committee, Medicaid Subgroup, or Special
Interest Groups to Inform Policy
Recommendations

Federal policy trickles down to the state level

Influence implementation at the state level in
partnership with one another

How to Influence Policy at a State Level

In general, the perfect combination for advocacy is highlighting lived experience and data, regardless of the topic, focus area, or mechanism to sharing information.

After sharing the personal experience and data, remember to have an ask.

Centering the Voices of Lived Experience



BE PREPARED

Think about the message or story you want to convey. Come prepared with any supporting materials that may be beneficial. Rehearse messages with a supportive friend or family member. This can boost confidence and



FOCUS ON A SPECIFIC ASPECT OF YOUR STORY

Your story is rich and complex, but focusing on a relevant point makes it easier to share and keeps the audience engaged. For example, talk about the impact of a specific program or a strategy you used to overcome a challenge.



CONSIDER MEETING AGENDA

It may be helpful to come prepared with a specific agenda. Typically, a meeting may follow this format:

- Introductions to Participants
- Topic Introduction
- Present Overarching Impact/ Data
- Share Individual Story
- Provide the “Ask”
- Thank Participants for Their Time



LEGISLATORS ARE PEOPLE TOO!

It can be very easy to put people in political or legislative power on a pedestal. While it is important to be respectful to the person and the office, most legislators are friendly and kind people. Many of them came from positions just like others. Talk to them just like any other professional colleague.



Remember, lived experience, however expressed, is valuable. Don't feel pressure to present perfectly. Everyone's unique perspective is the information they have, and it is exactly what matters.

Does Data Make a Difference?

Pew Charitable research found that data is used in states to:

- Inform policy responses to complex problems
- Improve service delivery
- Guide budget and resource allocation
- Evaluate program effectiveness
- Identify system inefficiencies and opportunities



How States Use Data to Inform Decisions

A national review of the use of administrative data to improve state decision-making

How to Use Data for Advocacy

Start with the policy problem: Use data to clearly define the issue, who is affected, and why it matters now.

Turn statistics into a story: Pair 1–3 key data points with a real-world example to make the issue tangible.

Tailor the message to the audience:

- Legislators → constituent impact and costs
- Governors → statewide outcomes and priorities
- Agencies → implementation and program effectiveness

Keep it simple and visual: Focus on a few clear insights and use charts, trends, or comparisons rather than dense data tables.

Connect data to action: Always end with a clear take away—what the data means and what policymakers should do next.

Bottom line: Data influences policy when it is translated into clear insights, compelling stories, and actionable recommendations.

What role do personal stories play in policy making?

The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

Why is it important for policymakers to hear personal experiences?

The Slido app must be installed on every computer you're presenting from

NASHIA Resources That Can Support Your Advocacy

<https://www.hsri.org/projects/the-grassroots-project/>

NASHIA Practical Advocacy Toolkit



Join us on April 13!

Grassroots Project Webinar: An Overview of H.R. 1

April 13, 2026

2pm-3pm EST

In this national webinar, the Grassroots Project will host a one-hour walkthrough and overview of [H.R. 1](#), focusing on how this legislation pertains to people with disabilities. The webinar will feature a subject matter expert who will provide an overview of the legislation and its key provisions, followed by a state-level perspective highlighting how H.R. 1 may shape community-based efforts and systems at the local level.

Registration: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_w_BCZzNVQXiSpOYrJSOhoA

[H.R. 1 Webinar Appendix](#)

Opportunity

The Grassroots Project is a national effort to support disability grassroots advocacy. This project is administered by Human Services Research Institute with funding from the Administration for Community Living. The purpose of the project is to build effective advocacy networks and leaders to support high quality policy design and implementation.

<https://thelinkcenter.org/>



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The Link Center is a project led by NASDDDS in close partnership with NASMHPD, NASHIA, and NADD

Advancing systems of care for people with co-occurring conditions

The Link Center works to improve supports for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), brain injuries, and other cognitive disabilities who also experience mental health conditions.

[Learn more about The Link Center](#)





Online Brain Injury Screening and Support System

The OBISSS uses the OSU TBI-ID (self-administered version) to screen participants for potential brain injury. If someone screens positive for a potential brain injury.

If a person screens positive for brain injury, they are asked questions about their current symptoms.

This data can support advocacy!

NASHIA's Innovation Center: Research Practice Policy

Serves as a
**national
infrastructure for
systems
transformation**

Develops, tests,
and scales
**research-based
service delivery
models**

Translates
research into
**implementable
practices** for
states and
communities

Maintains a
**national
repository of
best practices** to
support replication
and continuous
improvement



Technical Assistance

- Evaluation assistance
 - Outcome measurement guidance
 - Logic model development
 - Low-burden evaluation design
- Data review and analysis
 - Dashboard templates
 - Annual report templates
 - Infographic design

Program/ Research Partnership

- Multi-state pilot projects
 - Example: Arnold Ventures
 - NCSS over-sampling
- Shared measures
- Research incubator
 - You propose ideas, we can help design pilot and pursue funding
 - Help find partners
 - Publication strategy

Professional Development and Capacity Building at All Levels



Webinars



Workshops



Learning on
Demand



Conferences



Summits



AUG 31 - SEP 3, 2026

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF STATE HEAD INJURY
ADMINISTRATORS**





Thank you!

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