



Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Address To Commissioners

Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Members

Jay Reeve, PhD
Chair

Representative Christine Hunschofsky Co-Chair
Speaker of the House Appointee

Senator Darryl Rouson
President of the Senate
Appointee

Clara Reynolds
Governor Appointee

Ann Berner
Speaker of the House Appointee

Doug Leonardo
President of the Senate

Sheriff William Prummell
Governor Appointee

Dr. Kathleen Moore
President of the Senate
Appointee

Dr. Kelly Gray-Eurom
Governor Appointee

Larry Rein
Governor Appointee

Chief Judge Mark Mahon
Governor Appointee

Melissa Larkin-Skinner
Speaker of the House Appointee

Ray Gadd
President of the Senate
Appointee

Shawn Salamida
Speaker of the House Appointee

Secretary Shevaun Harris
Florida Department of Children and Families

Secretary Jason Weida
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration

Dr. Uma Suryadevara
Speaker of the House Appointee

Chief Judge Ronald Ficarrota
Governor Appointee

Wes Evans
President of the Senate
Appointee

March 14, 2023

Chairs of the Sub-Committees and Members of the Florida Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse,

I hope you are all doing well, and I look forward to seeing everyone Wednesday (March 15th)! I'd like to begin by reiterating my statements in our last full Commission meeting thanking you all for the extraordinary work that you have accomplished in the first phase of the Commission. I'd particularly like to acknowledge Sub-Committee Chairs Representative Hunschofsky, Chief Judge Mahon and Senator Rouson for leading the charge in the deep dive that we have done on business practices, system of care issues, judicial and law enforcement issues, and the financial structure of the system. I'd also like to thank those Commissioners who were active on the Sub-Committees. We are blessed with an extraordinary array of talents, from the amazing Sheriff Prummell, who led our efforts, through respected Legislators like Representative Hunschofsky and Senator Rouson, through Departmental Secretaries and behavioral health champions Shevaun Harris and Simone Marsteller (and now Secretary Jason Weida), through distinguished jurists like Chief Judge Mahon and Chief Judge Ficarrota, eminent clinicians and researchers like Drs Gray-Eurom, Moore and Suryadevara, including thoughtful and seasoned administrators like Ann Berner, Wes Evans, Ray Gadd, and Doug Leonardo, and respected provider organization leaders Melissa Larkin-Skinner, Larry Rein, Clara Reynolds, and Shawn Salamida. Each Sub-Committee has also been supported by a wide range of member experts from the community. I am deeply appreciative of everyone's service, creativity, and powerful commitment to the communities we serve. Thank you for your commitment!

I also wanted to share a legislative update (which is publicly available, and which I will be covering at more length in our Sub-Committee meetings). Currently, there are companion pieces of legislation in both House and Senate that provide new items for Commission consideration, including suicide prevention and response and the behavioral health emergency system of care, including mobile response teams, central receiving facilities, and other front-line interventions. This legislation does **not** eliminate our previous charter or mandate: it adds to it. Accordingly, both bills provide for an extension of the Commission's sunset date – from September 2023 until **September 2026**, with a requirement for annual interim reports. I believe that the scope of the new directions that the Legislature is in the process of giving the Commission will necessitate some significant changes in our committees, which I will discuss in much more depth in our noticed meetings. I am very deeply appreciative of your continued commitment to the Florida Commission on Mental Health and Substance Abuse (soon to be Substance Use), and I look forward to seeing everyone Wednesday in our respective Sub-Committees.

Jay Reeve, PhD
Chair