

**COORDINATED RESPONSE TEAM: LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

**STATE LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY**

The Coordinated Response Team supports the following bills currently before the Massachusetts Legislature:

Bill	Sponsors	Bill Overview	Current Status
<b><i>An act relative to preventing overdose deaths and increasing access to treatment</i></b> ( <a href="#">H. 1981</a> , <a href="#">S.1242</a> )	Rep. Fernandes, Rep. Decker, and Sen. Cyr	Permits a 10-year pilot program establishing overdose prevention centers (OPCs) in Massachusetts	Referred to the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery  Hearing date anticipated for Fall 2023
<b><i>An Act relative to successful transition and re-entry to tomorrow for incarcerated persons</i></b> ( <a href="#">H.2326</a> , <a href="#">S.1506</a> )	Rep. Fluker Oakley and Sen. DiDomenico	Ensures that all persons returning from incarceration have access to an identification document upon release	Referred to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security  Hearing date: TBD
<b><i>An Act to provide identification to youth and adults experiencing homelessness</i></b> ( <a href="#">H.3360</a> , <a href="#">H.3388</a> , <a href="#">S.2251</a> )	Rep. Khan, Rep. O'Day, and Sen. R. Kennedy	Establishes a fee waiver for ID applicants experiencing homelessness. The bill also allows ID applicants who are experiencing homelessness to submit proof of residency documentation from providers of homelessness services or from state agencies under the Executive Office of Health and	Referred to the Joint Committee on Transportation  Hearing happened on 06/13/2023. Tania Del Rio testified on behalf of Mayor Wu in support of the bill and provided written testimony as well.

**COORDINATED RESPONSE TEAM: LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

		Human Services (EOHHS)	
<b>An Act to create and implement a Massachusetts Flexible Supportive Housing Subsidy Pool Program</b> ( <a href="#">S.855/H.1354</a> )	Sen. Crighton and Rep. Meschino	Leverages both public and private funding streams in order to provide flexible, responsive funding for housing subsidies. The MFSHP also stands to offer tenancy stabilization and supports when there is no other alternative payer	Referred to the Joint Committee on Housing  Hearing took place on 06/26/2023
<b>An act ensuring access to addiction treatment</b> ( <a href="#">S.1247</a> )	Sen. Friedman	Requires that all Section 35 commitment beds for substance use disorder be in treatment facilities approved by either the Department of Public Health (DPH) or the Department of Mental Health (DMH), and not in jails or correctional facilities	Referred to the Joint Committee on Mental Health, Substance Use, and Recovery  Hearing date: TBD

**FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY**

At the federal level, the Coordinated Response Team seeks to accomplish the following:

1. Amend the ‘**Crack House Statute**’ ([21 U.S. Code § 856](#))

The code currently outlaws knowingly opening, leasing, renting, using, or maintaining any place, whether permanently or temporarily, for the purpose of manufacturing, distributing, or using any controlled substance. This means that current and future operators and

## **COORDINATED RESPONSE TEAM: LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

owners of OPCs could be prosecuted. This has been one of the main reasons OPCs in the United States have been very slow to open as compared to other parts of the world.

New York City opened its first OPC in 2021. Despite facing legal controversy, the facilities are still running, partially as the result of a shift in mindset from the U.S. Justice Department now under the Biden Administration. The institution has been signaling it [may allow OPCs to operate](#), as they are evaluating the facilities and discussing with local regulators what type of measures should be applied. Enshrining this into legislation will protect these services against a change in this approach should there be a change in administrations.

2. Support the [Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act](#) filed by Sen. Markey (D-Mass.) Sen. Paul (R-KY), Rep. Norcross (NJ-01) and Rep. Bacon (NE-02)

Current federal regulations limit the access and availability of methadone, particularly for those in rural areas. Empowering board-certified physicians to prescribe methadone to patients and allowing U.S. pharmacies to dispense methadone, the bipartisan and bicameral legislation will improve patients' ability to access medication for opioid use disorder, and save lives in the process.

### **BUDGET PRIORITIES**

The Coordinated Response Team believes that a regional coalition is crucial to addressing Massachusetts' current substance use disorder and homelessness crises. As such, the Coordinated Response Team seeks investments in:

- Statewide low threshold housing
- Enhanced wrap-around services at temporary and permanent supportive housing
- Workforce development programs for unsheltered individuals
- Long Island Recovery Campus rehabilitation

Collaborating with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, the Coordinated Response Team worked to identify a shared set of substance use disorder-related advocacy and legislative priorities. Signed by Mayor Wu and thirteen other mayors, town managers, and city managers, the following [letter](#) was sent to Governor Maura Healey on April 24th, 2023.

### **SHELTER REFORMATION**

Throughout the Commonwealth, there are insufficient shelter options for couples and for trans individuals. Our shelter system's policies have also historically created barriers for individuals with substance use disorder. In order to decrease unsheltered homelessness and to better meet the needs of these populations, the Coordinated Response Team seeks:

## **COORDINATED RESPONSE TEAM: LEGISLATIVE AND ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

- Increased shelter options for couples
- Increased shelter options for trans individuals
- Increased low-threshold shelter options