

DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**

Meeting	Montana Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee
Date/Time	10/28/2025; 2 pm virtually via Google Meet meeting invite: meet.google.com/rxn-pboz-spu

[illegible]

Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



Time	Length	Topic	Topic Owner	Discussion	Decision
1400	5 mins	Call to Order	Mike McManus	- Welcome - Agenda - Roll Call	
1405	5 mins	Approval of Minutes – no July meeting - Aug cancelled - no Sep meeting	Mike McManus	Any discussion? Ask the question.	Motion To Approve: N/A 1 st 2 nd
1410	10 mins	Update on HTAN	Mike McManus		Exec summary submitted to the BHAC in 03/2025 . Changes coming that may combine several block grants into the Innovation Block Grant funded at a lower level. 06/23/2025: Mike and Blake met virtually with Lawrence Rhone, Chair BHAC, who informed us the exec committee hasn't been meeting to discuss any MHBG funding b/c the feds have put a hold on it. The overall submission is due to SAMHSA by the end of Sep, but there might not even be a SAMHSA by end of year. Its functions would be rolled into another fed agency. In the meantime, Lawrence recommended we introduce the HTAN proposal to MDOT. Blake and I started with Scott Aspenlieder, District 5 MT Transportation Commissioner, https://ftp.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/trans-comm/trans-

Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



		MT Warriors Forward funding update	Funding bill (SB95)	commissioners.aspx. 07/01/2025 Update: HTAN proposal sent to District 5 Transportation Commissioner Scott Aspenlieder who will take it to the MDT Director for consideration. 07/02/2025: Blake discussed HTAN with Rep Curtis Schomer (HD48, Billings) who said he speak with the MDOT Director. 08/12/2025: Blake will follow up with Commissioner Aspenlieder and Rep Schomer. 10/17/2025: Senator Mike Yakawich (Billings) has been making calls about HTAN and will be in Helena the week of 10/20 to meet with the MDT Director or a rep from the Governor's office. 11/04/2025 (New and not covered during the meeting): Scott Aspenlieder reported that the MDT Director informed him the state has no money to fund HTAN, but they may have high mileage, well maintained vans they could contribute. Bill had no fiscal note attached so there is NO funding (see below agenda item)
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council
Veterans Subcommittee
Meeting Agenda



1420	15 mins	Regional Initiatives Heroes Transport Access Network	Subcommittee Members Mike McManus	Updates, discussion, and next steps. Initiative POCs please be ready to brief the group. Subcommittee members should have Read access to the shared drive at	See above
				https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UViavtHiAuhakb8pgUIXmErehI13bWOv/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=114705549933523958717&rtpof=true&sd=true . If not, please let me know.	

Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



1435	25	Additional Comments	Mike McManus	Anyone have suggestions on a Miles City area subcommittee member? Any person or organization VNN should connect with related to our office opening? Montana Warriors Forward: ending veteran suicide...exec team concept	VNN will be opening a two-person office in Miles City on Dec 1, 2025. The following people met at the Capitol on 07/22/2025 to discuss the future of MWF: John Tabb, DPHHS/Prevention Karl Rosston, DPHHS/Prevention Caitlin Clark, MT NG Prevention LTC Chris Oelkers, MT NG Prevention Janine Mahn, MVAD Kelly Ackerman, MVAD Taran Philips, MVAD Denny Lenoir, Senator Daines' Office Mathias Ward, Senator Daines' Office MT Senator Ken Bogner Michael Shepard, Veterans Coalition of NW MT Blake Fuhriman, VNN Michael McManus, VNN Many topics were covered from the history of the MWF (formerly the
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council
Veterans Subcommittee
Meeting Agenda



				Governors Challenge to end veteran suicide), to MVAD outreach efforts, perspective of VNN, discussion around the failed SB95 effort to gain funding, and next steps. Next steps include Blake working on options that will be brought to the governor. If that fails to garner support, we have a statewide Call to Action campaign drafted. 10/17/2025: Senator Mike Yakawich (Billings) has been making calls about MWF and will be in Helena the week of 10/20 to meet with the MDT Director or a rep from the Governor's office. If VNN hears nothing from the governor's office regarding the submitted proposals for funding MWF by end of month, we will move forward with the Call to Action. More to come ... Reminder: MVAD outreach schedules at https://dma.mt.gov/MVAD/veterans-benefits Female veterans: Operation Juliet https://operationjuliet.org/ https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61565652249104	
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council
Veterans Subcommittee
Meeting Agenda



			https://www.youtube.com/@notsoaverageja ne Suicide Grief Support: https://theazurefoundation.org/events https://www.facebook.com/theazurefoundat ion/# The Veterans' ACCESS Act of 2025 (H.R. 740) aims to enhance the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Community Care Program by establishing clear eligibility standards and improving access to care for veterans. - The bill sets specific eligibility criteria for veterans to receive non-VA care, such as if the VA cannot schedule an appointment within 30 minutes driving time or 20 days for primary care, and 60 minutes or 28 days for specialty care. - It mandates that the VA notify veterans of their eligibility for community care and provide reasons for any denial of such care. - Veterans' preferences, continuity of care, and the need for caregivers are to be considered in care decisions. - The bill requires discussions of telehealth options under the Community Care Program. - It extends the deadline for healthcare providers to submit claims under the prompt payment standard. - The act introduces a standardized process to determine veterans' eligibility for mental health treatment programs and seeks	https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/740
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



				improvements to the VA’s Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program. - It calls for the establishment of an interactive, online self-service module for veterans to manage their care. - The bill also proposes modifications to the VA’s Center for Innovation for Care and Payment and requires pilot programs to test new care models. VNN Navigator, three different training tracks, military culture competency, suicide prevention, lethal means safety awareness and education VNN Veteran and Community Expo save the date – 02/07/2026 VNN has a pending grant to bring Firearm Informed Training to Billings and Dynamic Recovery in Great Falls is considering it as well.	See flyer for QR code access or go to https://www.veteransnavigation.org/navigator See save the date flyer https://www.mindandsafetyinstitute.org/firearm-informed-training Training Objectives: ✓ Understand the cultural context and motivations of firearm ownership ✓ Gain basic firearm knowledge through hands-on instruction ✓ Develop respectful, client-centered language to build trust
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council
Veterans Subcommittee
Meeting Agenda



				VNN has a pending grant to bring Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University Community Risk Index.	✓ Learn best practices in suicide prevention, ethics, and legal duty-to-warn considerations ✓ Reduce stigma and foster open dialogue with firearm-owning clients MFRI and VNN will lead efforts to collect and analyze county-level data across key suicide-related risk and protective indicators (such as overdose rates, mental health access, social determinants of health metrics) and adapt the MFRI outreach model to Montana's context. This CRI tool will be used to guide strategic advocacy and policymaking, inform state and local elected, business, & community leaders, veteran organizations, and service providers of strengths and deficiencies in order to steer budget and resource allocations. The data will also enable VNN to tailor and adjust its programs more precisely where need is highest.
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Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



				What's working or not working in your region? No November or December meeting	Chauncey Parker - contacted by Indian Health Services, the SSGT Fox Suicide Prevention Grant, can't make announcement until after shutdown Shannon Noble – Veteran Resource & Career Fair Nov 6th 9:30am flyer at the Montana Jobs Website James Graham - Northwest Veterans Coalition of Montana can provide QPR training anywhere in the State.
1500	5	Wrap Up		Meeting Schedule: Typically, the 4th Tuesday of each month at 1400 - 07/22, Nov and Dec – CANX; 01/27/2026	

Council Meeting Information

BHAC Orientation

To Be Determined: Occurs on the fourth Monday of every month from 2:00 pm until 3:00 pm; Invitation by request

BHAC Executive Committee

Occurs on the fourth Thursday of every month from 8:30 am until 10:00 am; Invitation by request

Committee Lead: Lawrence Rhone, advocaterhone62@gmail.com

Block Grant Planning Workgroup

To Be Determined: Occurs the first Tuesday of every month from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm; All BHAC members are invited.

Workgroup Lead: Jami Hansen, jami.hansen@mt.gov

Youth & Families Subcommittee

(Need to update the meeting details)

Behavioral Health Advisory Council Veterans Subcommittee Meeting Agenda



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Committee Lead: Bella Nyman bnyman@rbhi.org

Treatment Subcommittee

Recurring meetings will be determined at the first meeting on April 2, 2024 at 3:00 pm

Committee Lead: Amanda O'Dell, amanda.odell@mt.gov

Peer Support & Recovery Subcommittee

Occurs the second Tuesday of every month from 3:00 pm until 4:00 pm

Committee Lead: Vanessa Hardy, vhardy54@gmail.com

Crisis Services Subcommittee

(Need to update the meeting details)

Committee Lead: Jennifer Whitfield, jenniferw@manyriverswh.org

Veterans Subcommittee

Occurs: typically, the 4th Tuesday of the month from 2 – 3:30 pm, depending on holidays

Committee Lead: (P) Mike McManus, Mike@VeteransNavigation.org, (A) Emily Caudill, emily.caudill@imail.org

Criminal Justice

The criminal justice sub-committee is dedicated to increasing community services to individuals who encounter the criminal justice system by engaging with stakeholders, consumers and allies of the criminal justice system. Understanding the distinct challenges faced by individuals within the criminal justice system, the subcommittee aims to open communication with impacted individuals to ensure we are implementing the SAMHSA GAINS model on a state level, while utilizing evidence-based practices, peer support, acknowledging the many pathways of recovery, and opening up opportunity for healing within all intercepts of the criminal justice system.

Megan Farmer, megan.farmer@dynamicrecoverymt.org