

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**SEVENTH MEETING**  
**of the**  
**LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**November 5-7, 2025**  
**State Capitol, Room 307**  
**Santa Fe**

The seventh meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was called to order by Representative Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, chair, on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 9:08 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

**Present**

Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, Chair  
Sen. Linda M. López, Vice Chair  
Sen. Jay C. Block (11/6, 11/7)  
Rep. Eleanor Chávez  
Rep. Pamelya Herndon  
Rep. Jenifer Jones  
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez (11/5, 11/6)

**Absent**

Sen. Larry R. Scott

**Advisory Members**

Rep. Marianna Anaya (11/5, 11/7)  
Rep. Kathleen Cates  
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary  
Rep. Miguel P. García  
Rep. Anita Gonzales  
Sen. Harold Pope  
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

Rep. John Block  
Rep. Christine Chandler  
Sen. Angel M. Charley  
Rep. Nicole Chavez  
Sen. Katy Duhigg  
Sen. David M. Gallegos  
Sen. Martin Hickey  
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson  
Rep. Tara L. Lujan  
Rep. Alan T. Martinez  
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto  
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero  
Rep. Elaine Sena Cortez  
Rep. Sarah Silva  
Rep. Reena Szczepanski  
Rep. E. Diane Torres-Velásquez

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

**Staff**

Zander Dawson, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)  
Andrea Lazarow, Bill Drafter, LCS  
Grace Balderamos, Staff, LCS

## **Minutes Approval**

Because the committee will not meet again this year, the minutes for this meeting have not been officially approved by the committee.

## **Guests**

The guest list is in the meeting file.

## **Handouts**

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

## **References to Webcast**

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at [www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov), under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

## **Wednesday, November 5**

### **Welcome and Introductions (9:08 a.m.)**

Representative Thomson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

### **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) For Justice-Involved Individuals (9:12 a.m.)**

Allegra Hernandez, Ph.D., senior fiscal analyst, Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), reviewed a brief about MAT provided by the state for incarcerated people. The brief's findings included that the rollout of MAT for incarcerated people has been slower than anticipated, most funding from legislative appropriations for providing MAT to justice system-involved individuals has not been spent and most incarcerated individuals who need MAT have not received treatment. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

### **Pharmaceutical Update (10:10 a.m.)**

RubyAnn Esquibel, principal analyst, LFC, and Harry Rommel, Ph.D., fiscal analyst, LFC, provided an overview of rising pharmaceutical costs in New Mexico and the subsequent increase in Medicaid costs, noting the role of glucagon-like peptide-1 agonist pricing in driving costs. Ms. Esquibel noted that the state Medicaid program is implementing a statewide preferred drug list for fee-for-service programs that will be similar to other states' preferred drug lists. Dr. Rommel shared strategies for lowering drug costs that have been implemented by other states. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

### **Senate Bill 3 (2025) Update (11:13 a.m.)**

Kristie Brooks, M.S., L.P.C., director of behavioral health transformation and innovation, Health Care Authority (HCA), and Esperanza Lucero, M.S.W., M.B.A., behavioral health integration and reform administrator, Administrative Office of the Courts, discussed the implementation of the Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act. Ms. Brooks described the work of the Behavioral Health Executive Committee and outlined the committee's rubric for evaluating regional plan proposals. Ms. Lucero discussed the creation of behavioral health regions. They presented the New Mexico Enhanced Sequential Intercept Model. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

### **New Mexico Medical Board (NMMB) Update (1:01 p.m.)**

Karen Carson, M.D., F.A.A.P., chair, NMMB, and Angela Medrano, public member, NMMB, explained pathways to medical licensure in New Mexico and potential implications of New Mexico joining the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact. They discussed the NMMB's new data analytics program and staffing issues at the NMMB. Dr. Carson and Ms. Medrano outlined the NMMB's disciplinary guidelines and investigation process and explained the NMMB's role in reviewing whether physician actions resulting in medical malpractice cases violate the Medical Practice Act. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

### **SYNCRONYS (2:38 p.m.)**

Terri Stewart, president and chief executive officer (CEO), SYNCRONYS, and Phillip Gibbs, director of customer engagement, SYNCRONYS, presented on the work of SYNCRONYS, a nonprofit organization that serves as the state's designated health information exchange. Ms. Stewart discussed the maintenance of security and privacy of patient records and summarized the analytics and dashboards used by SYNCRONYS. Mr. Gibbs provided a demonstration of the SYNCRONYS portal. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

### **Disabilities Concerns Subcommittee: Accessibility for State Employees (4:04 p.m.)**

Megan Green, president, Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 7076; Sunny Gonzales, chair, Disability Justice Committee, CWA Local 7076; and Linsey Hurst, executive vice president, CWA Local 7076, expressed concerns with instances of inequitable treatment of state employees with disabilities while at work, such as some state buildings not being accessible and some employees' requests for accessibility accommodations being denied. Sara Araujo, M.P.H., public health advocate, and Sarah Jo Bowman, health equity advocate, shared their personal experiences navigating difficulties attaining accessibility accommodations at work while employed by the state. Dylan Lange, director, State Personnel Office, and Heather

Vigil Clark, human resources manager and federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) coordinator, State Personnel Office, reviewed the requirements for state agencies to employ ADA coordinators. Ellen Pinnes, J.D., The Disability Coalition, reviewed the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's ADA compliance requirements for employers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

**Public Comment (5:12 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 5:18 p.m.

**Thursday, November 6**

**Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:08 a.m.

**Meeting Basic Needs in Every County: The Changing Role of New Mexico's Food Banks (9:08 a.m.)**

Jill Dixon, executive director, The Food Depot, and Katy Anderson, vice president of strategy, partnerships and advocacy, Roadrunner Food Bank, discussed food banks' expanding role in helping to mitigate the rise of food insecurity stemming from the nationwide increase in the cost of living. They reviewed the changes to work requirements to qualify for federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits from the 2025 federal budget reconciliation bill and how those changes could impact New Mexico residents. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

**Dental Hygienists: Bridging the Oral Health Gap Through Innovation (10:17 a.m.)**

Barbara Posler, R.D.H., chair, Council on Regulation and Practice, New Mexico Dental Hygienists' Association, and Christie Baca Garcia, R.D.H., B.S.D.H., former president, New Mexico Dental Hygienists' Association, explained dental hygiene licensure pathways in New Mexico. They provided information about the American Dental Hygienists' Association's dental hygiene practitioner model, which expands the scope of practice for dental hygienists, and presented a framework for how the model could be implemented in New Mexico. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=8>.

### **Juvenile Justice Evaluation Report Status Update (11:04 a.m.)**

Clayton Lobaugh, M.P.A., program evaluator II, LFC, and Rachel Garcia, Ed.D., deputy director of program evaluation, LFC, provided information about the LFC's November 2025 juvenile justice report, which addressed trends in juvenile crime, court cases involving juvenile crime, outcomes of referrals to the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and court systems, the CYFD's spending and risk assessment instrument tool, juvenile crime offense types and the effectiveness of interventions at reducing crime. They compared the state's trends to those nationwide. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=11>.

### **Motion to Draft Letter (12:12 p.m.)**

On a motion made by Senator Sedillo Lopez and seconded by Representative Chávez, the committee voted to write a letter to the LFC and the CYFD to request that the LFC and the CYFD develop reporting metrics to better identify inequities within the juvenile justice system.

### **Animal Protection New Mexico (APNM) (12:14 p.m.)**

Stacy Sutton Kerby, chief government affairs officer, APNM, and Judy Wolf, chief program and policy officer for humane communities, APNM, discussed the role of animal abuse in domestic violence and noted that the lack of pet-inclusive domestic violence shelters can prevent survivors of domestic violence from leaving abusers. They provided information about the APNM's companion animal rescue effort services, which include a confidential helpline and a co-sheltering initiative. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=9>.

### **Council of State Governments (CSG) Youth and Public Safety Initiative (1:32 p.m.)**

Nina Salomon, deputy division director, Corrections and Reentry, CSG Justice Center, and Christina Gilbert, project manager, Corrections and Reentry, CSG Justice Center, discussed an assessment conducted by the CSG Justice Center regarding methods of early intervention and community-based services in New Mexico's juvenile justice system. The assessment included recommendations for improving outcomes for justice-involved youth and increasing public safety, such as expanding diversion services and creating a state office focused on gun violence prevention and intervention. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=10>.

### **Office of Superintendent of Insurance (OSI) (2:45 p.m.)**

Viara Ianakieva, director, Life and Health Division, OSI, discussed rate reviews for 2026 individual qualified health plans and mental health parity in health insurance coverage. Alejandro Amparan, director of pharmacy benefits and drug compliance, Life and Health Division, OSI, discussed the implementation of the Prescription Drug Price Transparency Act.

Alice T. Kane, superintendent of insurance, OSI, provided background on medical malpractice insurance and the Patient's Compensation Fund. Christian Myers, chief actuary, OSI, compared New Mexico's medical malpractice rate increases and premiums to those of other states. Superintendent Kane reviewed the model of Wisconsin's Injured Patients and Families Compensation Fund. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=12>.

**Supporting Caregivers and Direct Support Workers (4:06 p.m.)**

Meggin Lorino, M.S.W., executive director, New Mexico Association for Home and Hospice Care; Adrienne R. Smith, president and CEO, New Mexico Caregivers Coalition; and Reena Aurora, director of care policy, National Domestic Workers Alliance, discussed the national and state landscapes of home health care. They described the shortage of direct care workers and direct support professionals and highlighted low, uncompetitive wages as a challenge in recruiting and retaining caregivers. They noted the impacts of the 2025 federal budget reconciliation bill on caregivers and patients requiring the services of caregivers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=13>.

**Association of Developmental Disabilities Community Providers (ADDCP) (5:03 p.m.)**

Jim Copeland, executive director, ADDCP, reviewed findings of the most recent annual workforce report required by House Bill 395 (2023) regarding the compensation of direct support professionals. He described demographics of recipients of the Mi Via Self-Directed Waiver, the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and the Medically Fragile Waiver. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=14>.

**Public Comment (5:07 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 5:17 p.m.

**Friday, November 7**

**Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:10 a.m.

**PIVOT Evaluation (9:10 a.m.)**

Simon Miller, strategic planning and performance analyst, Department of Finance and Administration; Sarah Dinces, Ph.D., program evaluator III, LFC; and Sarah Rovang, Ph.D., program evaluator, LFC, shared results of the 2025 PIVOT Evaluation, which is an evaluation conducted pursuant to the Accountability in Government Act regarding state agencies' expenditures on certain programs. They reviewed health-and-human-services-related program spending by the Corrections Department, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department, the Behavioral Health Services Division of the HCA, the CYFD, the Department of Health (DOH) and the Public Education Department. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=15>.

**Budget Request Previews (10:12 a.m.)**

Emily Hilla, fiscal analyst, LFC; Eric Chenier, M.P.A., principal analyst, LFC; Carlie Malone, J.D., Ph.D., fiscal analyst II, LFC; and Jon Courtney, Ph.D., deputy director, LFC, provided overviews of budget requests, including requests for nonrecurring funding and for funding from the General Fund, for fiscal year 2027 for the DOH, the HCA and the CYFD. They reviewed the LFC's performance report cards for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2025 for behavioral health services, the CYFD, the DOH and the HCA. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=16>.

**Approval of Minutes (11:25 a.m.)**

Upon a motion made, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the October 6-9, 2025 meeting.

**Status of Nonrecurring Appropriations (11:27 a.m.)**

Maggie Klug, program evaluator, LFC; Josh Chaffin, M.A.I.A., program evaluator, LFC; and Dr. Courtney provided an update on the performance of state agency pilot projects funded by nonrecurring appropriations to the Government Results and Opportunity Expendable Trust and the Government Results and Opportunity Program Fund in 2024 and 2025. They highlighted the LFC's creation of a dashboard to track the pilot projects' expenditures and outcomes and discussed considerations for future nonrecurring appropriations through the Government Results and Opportunity Expendable Trust and the Government Results and Opportunity Program Fund. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=17>.

**Preparing for Extreme Heat: Update and Opportunities (1:03 p.m.)**

Nathaniel Matthews-Trigg, M.P.H., C.E.M., member, Board of Directors, Healthy Climate New Mexico; Shelley Mann-Lev, M.P.H., executive director, Healthy Climate New



Mexico; and Charles Goodmacher, M.A., policy advisor, Healthy Climate New Mexico, presented about the rise of extreme heat in New Mexico. They highlighted Healthy Climate New Mexico's collaborations with other agencies to address extreme heat in tribal communities and discussed the proposed heat illness and injury prevention rule being developed by the Occupational Health and Safety Bureau of the Department of Environment. The presenters explained how the state can prepare infrastructure for future extreme heat. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=18>.

#### **Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Task Force (1:55 p.m.)**

Angelina Flores-Montoya, Ph.D., R.N., deputy secretary, Aging and Long-Term Services Department, and Donald Smithburg, M.P.A., executive director, Alzheimer's Association, New Mexico Chapter, provided an update on the work of the Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Task Force, which was created to address the requests of House Memorial 53 (2025). They explained that the task force's priorities are to increase awareness of Alzheimer's disease and dementia risk factors and access to services for Alzheimer's disease and dementia patients. They highlighted the clinical services and resources offered by the University of New Mexico Center for Memory and Aging. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=19>.

#### **Solutions to Address Hospital and Independent Medical Practice Administrative Costs (2:48 p.m.)**

Miriam Laugesen, Ph.D., associate professor, Department of Health Policy and Management, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, and Julius L. Chen, Ph.D., assistant professor, Health Policy and Management, Columbia University, provided an update on Columbia University's ongoing research on reducing administrative costs in New Mexico's health care system. Dr. Laugesen explained challenges in administrative processes, billing and payer variation. Dr. Chen outlined the regulation of prior authorization and credentialing processes. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=20>.

#### **Transitioning the Medicaid Fee Model (3:54 p.m.)**

Michael K. Gusmano, Ph.D., professor, Department of Population Health, College of Health, Lehigh University, presented about Connecticut's Medicaid system transition to an administrative services organization (ASO) in the early 2010s. He explained how the ASO model works and how it compares to other managed care organization models and discussed



how New Mexico's Medicaid system could be evaluated for determining the feasibility of implementing the ASO model. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=11/5/2025&ItemNumber=21>.

**Public Comment (4:30 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.