



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB4000

Introduced 2/6/2026, by Sen. Laura Fine

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Community Mental Health Workforce Paid Internship Act. Requires the Department of Human Services to establish the Community Mental Health Workforce Paid Internship Program to provide funding to eligible entities to support paid internships for non-clinical staff positions within a community mental health organization. Requires the Department to develop the necessary application procedures and standards for acceptance for eligible entities, including, but not limited to, consideration of (1) workforce shortages; (2) service to underserved or rural communities; (3) commitment to training, supervision, and mentorship of interns; and (4) efforts to promote workforce development. Sets forth internship requirements and the permissible uses for funds awarded under the program. Requires eligible entities to submit yearly reports to the Department outlining (1) number of interns hired; (2) duration of internships; (3) positions of internships; and (4) employment outcomes, such as retention, following internship. Requires the Department to submit a report, every 2 years, to the General Assembly outlining the program's outcomes and impact. Grants the Department rulemaking authority. Provides that the General Assembly may appropriate funds for the purposes of the Act. Effective July 1, 2026.

LRB104 19932 KTG 33382 b

1 AN ACT concerning mental health.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Community Mental Health Workforce Paid Internship Act.

6 Section 5. Findings and purpose.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds the following:

8 (1) Community mental health settings play a crucial
9 role in quality, accessible, and equitable behavioral
10 health care in Illinois.

11 (2) Non-clinical staff, including human resource
12 officers, information technology technicians, finance
13 administrators, administrative services, and other
14 non-licensed clinical staff, serve important roles within
15 a mental health organization and are essential to the
16 effective operation of an organization.

17 (3) Workforce shortages, lack of awareness, and
18 limited entry-level paid opportunities hinder the
19 development of a sustainable non-clinical workforce.

20 (4) Paid internships improve an organization's
21 recruitment, retention, loyalty, and diversity while
22 strengthening the overall service delivery and quality of
23 care.

1 (b) The purpose of this Act is to establish a paid
2 internship program within the Department of Human Services to
3 support workforce development and encourage recruitment of
4 non-clinical positions in community mental health settings,
5 including, but not limited to, positions in human resources,
6 finance, and information technology.

7 Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

8 "Community mental health setting" means an organization
9 funded, licensed, or certified by the Department to provide
10 community mental health services.

11 "Department" means the Department of Human Services.

12 "Eligible entity" means a department-approved community
13 mental health setting.

14 "Intern" means an individual participating in a paid
15 internship program developed under this Act.

16 "Non-clinical staff" means individuals who support the
17 delivery of mental health services within an organization but
18 do not provide licensed clinical treatment, including, but not
19 limited to, administrative staff, information technology,
20 finance, and human resources.

21 Section 15. Community Mental Health Workforce Paid
22 Internship Program.

23 (a) The Department shall establish the Community Mental
24 Health Workforce Paid Internship Program.

1 (b) The program shall provide funding to eligible entities
2 to support paid internships for non-clinical staff positions
3 within a community mental health organization.

4 (c) The Department shall develop the necessary application
5 procedures and standards for acceptance for eligible entities,
6 including, but not limited to, consideration of the following:

7 (1) workforce shortages;

8 (2) service to underserved or rural communities;

9 (3) commitment to training, supervision, and
10 mentorship of interns; and

11 (4) efforts to promote workforce development.

12 Section 20. Internship requirements.

13 (a) Internships funded under this Act shall:

14 (1) provide appropriate compensation no less than the
15 State's minimum wage;

16 (2) include structured training and oversight;

17 (3) be offered for no less than 10 weeks and no longer
18 than one year; and

19 (4) support skill development relative to the area in
20 which the intern is assigned.

21 (b) Interns may be current students, recent graduates,
22 career changers, or others entering the community mental
23 health field as designated by the Department.

24 Section 25. Use of funds. Funds awarded under this Act may

1 be used for:

- 2 (1) intern wages, stipends, or other benefits;
3 (2) supervision and training costs; and
4 (3) other costs related to the direct provision of the
5 internship program, as approved by the Department.

6 Section 30. Reporting requirements.

7 (a) Eligible entities shall submit yearly reports to the
8 Department outlining the following:

- 9 (1) number of interns hired;
10 (2) duration of internships;
11 (3) positions of internships; and
12 (4) employment outcomes, such as retention, following
13 internship.

14 (b) The Department shall submit a report to the General
15 Assembly every 2 years outlining the program's outcomes and
16 impact.

17 Section 35. Rulemaking authority. The Department may
18 develop and adopt rules, policies, and procedures to assist in
19 the implementation and administration of this Act.

20 Section 40. Appropriations. The General Assembly may
21 appropriate funds for the purposes of this Act.

22 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,
23 2026.