



## Minimum Wage and Behavioral Health

A Funding Mandate Secures Access to Treatment

In the last 23 years, Maryland has made nine inflation increases to reimbursement rates for publicly-funded behavioral health services, for a total of 19.9%. Over the same period of time, CPI inflation has cumulatively grown 61%.

**In inflation-adjusted dollars, the purchasing power of community behavioral health providers has shrunk by 37% in the last two decades**, while demand and need for treatment has increased.

Every year, costs rise. Like any other business, behavioral health providers face rising rent, healthcare premiums, and staff salaries. Behavioral health providers also face unfunded mandates to purchase expensive electronic health records but, unlike most other sectors of healthcare, were excluded from federal incentive funds.

Poor salaries are overwhelmingly identified by staff in behavioral health settings as their main concern, and turnover rates have accelerated as providers have struggled to secure adequate funding to improve salaries. Staff vacancies are, in turn, a major driver for extending wait times to access services.

Ensuring that behavioral health providers are included in the minimum wage will give providers the sources to address the workforce crisis and to reduce wait times for accessing addiction and mental health treatment.

	Inflation Adjustments to Rate
FY97	0%
FY98	0%
FY99	0%
FY00	0%
FY01	0%
FY02	0%
FY03	0%
FY04	0%
FY05	0%
FY06	0%
FY07	4%
FY08	2%
FY09	2%
FY10	0%
FY11	0%
FY12	0%
FY13	0.88%
FY14	2.54%
FY15	1%
FY16	0%
FY17	2%
FY18	2%
FY19	3.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19.9%</b>

***Support access to addiction and mental health treatment in your community.***

***Support behavioral health reimbursement in the minimum wage bill.***