

Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	The Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy (BBHT) is responsible for regulating certain professions that provide mental health and substance use counselling services in Minnesota. BBHT licenses individuals who practice professional counseling, professional clinical counseling, and alcohol and drug counseling. BBHT's duties include establishing standards for professional conduct, accepting and acting on complaints, and issuing disciplinary actions.
Original Evaluation Questions	To what extent are licensing requirements for mental health professionals appropriate? How do these licensing requirements affect the supply of mental health professionals in Minnesota? To what extent do requirements improve or restrict Minnesotans' access to care?
Revised Questions	To what extent are requirements for mental health professionals appropriate? To what extent do requirements improve or restrict Minnesotans' access to care? How well does BBHT address complaints?
State Resources <i>Low</i>	BBHT is primarily funded by state appropriations. The Legislature appropriated about \$1.3 million to BBHT for Fiscal Year 2026.
State Control <i>High</i>	BBHT and its responsibilities are established in state law, as are licensure requirements for the professions it regulates. The board consists of 13 members who are appointed by the governor.
Impact <i>High</i>	BBHT's regulatory responsibilities protect the safety and well-being of Minnesotans who seek care from professionals the board licenses. BBHT reported that it issued over 1,200 new licenses and renewed at least 5,600 licenses in Fiscal Year 2024.
Timeliness <i>High</i>	In recent years, some stakeholders have raised concerns about access to mental health care and availability of mental health professionals in Minnesota, particularly in rural parts of the state. The availability of mental health professionals has also been an area of legislative interest, as a 2024 law directed BBHT to implement an interstate compact that would allow certain mental health professionals to practice in participating states.
Feasibility <i>Medium-High</i>	OLA could likely complete this evaluation using standard evaluation techniques, although our ability to thoroughly answer research questions would depend on the existence of accepted standards and availability of necessary data.
Balance <i>High</i>	The Legislature established BBHT in 2003, and OLA has never evaluated the board. OLA conducted an internal control and compliance audit of BBHT in 2008.
Discussion	BBHT serves an important role in oversight of mental health professions in Minnesota. Given recent concerns about a lack of mental health services, an evaluation focused on BBHT's regulatory and oversight activities could be useful.

Department of Human Services

Adult Day Services Licensing

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	Adult day services support adults with disabilities or older adults with identified health, social, and nutritional needs. Services must aim to maintain or improve participants' capabilities for self-care and may include training and supervision. The licensing division within the Department of Human Services' (DHS's) Office of Inspector General (OIG) is responsible for licensing adult day services, including ensuring services meet legal, health, and safety requirements.
Original Evaluation Questions	How well has DHS overseen adult day services? To what extent does the licensing process ensure that adult day services providers have appropriate programming and services?
Revised Questions	How well has DHS managed the adult day services licensing process? To what extent does the licensing process ensure that adult day services providers have appropriate programming and services?
State Resources <i>Low-Medium</i>	DHS OIG budgeted roughly \$43 million for all of its activities in Fiscal Year 2026; a small portion of that total would be dedicated to adult day services licensing.
State Control <i>Medium</i>	State law establishes licensing requirements for adult day services, although providers must also comply with federal Medicaid requirements.
Impact <i>High</i>	Individuals with needs related to aging, mental illness, developmental disability, or substance use disorder may rely on adult day services for their safety and well-being. DHS reported that 8,165 Minnesotans received adult day services in Fiscal Year 2025. DHS also reports that 186 providers currently hold active licenses for adult day services.
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	DHS recently implemented a 24-month licensing pause for adult day services centers—effective February 1, 2026—to align with Governor Walz's Executive Order 25-10, <i>Empowering State Agencies to Continue Combatting Fraud</i> . This pause may affect our ability to review certain activities but may also provide a window in which we could provide useful information.
Feasibility <i>High</i>	If we focus the evaluation on adult day services licensing as proposed, OLA can complete this evaluation using standard techniques such as data analysis, surveys, and document reviews.
Balance <i>Low</i>	OLA has not evaluated DHS's licensing of adult day services specifically. However, OLA evaluated the DHS licensing division's support to counties in 2024, and we will begin evaluating DHS OIG investigations in Summer 2026.
Discussion	The proposed evaluation is feasible and timely given DHS's current licensing pause and associated concerns regarding state agencies' roles in combatting fraud. However, two concurrent evaluations may be overly burdensome for DHS OIG.

Department of Human Services and County Service Approvals and Provision

(Focused on a Specific Program)

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	The Department of Human Services (DHS) and social services agencies in Minnesota’s 87 counties share responsibility for administering programs that many Minnesotans rely upon, including medical, housing, and child care assistance programs, among others. For certain programs, county social services agencies are responsible for determining program eligibility and authorizing service provision, while DHS oversees the work of counties.
Original Evaluation Questions	How well do DHS and county social services agencies coordinate to process requests for social services determinations and services? To what extent are requests for social services determinations and services processed consistently across counties?
State Resources <i>High</i>	DHS and counties administer programs that cost billions in state and federal funds. DHS’s total spending across all funds in Fiscal Year 2023 was more than \$24.5 billion.
State Control <i>Medium</i>	DHS and counties administer programs that are defined in state and federal law. Many programs, including Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare, require DHS and counties to meet federal requirements to receive funding.
Impact <i>High</i>	DHS and counties share responsibility for administering key social services programs that provide important medical, mental health, housing, and other services to more than one million Minnesotans. For example, nearly 1.4 million people received coverage through Medical Assistance, Minnesota’s Medicaid program, in Fiscal Year 2023.
Timeliness <i>High</i>	Legislators and other stakeholders have expressed concerns that county social service agencies do not consistently approve individuals for services or provide services. There have also been high-profile cases of alleged fraud in programs that DHS and counties administer. Further, Governor Walz has recently proposed a plan to shift some Medical Assistance eligibility determinations from counties to DHS.
Feasibility <i>Low</i>	It is not feasible for OLA to evaluate DHS and county coordination across all social services programs they administer due to the number, size, and complexity of the programs. It is also not feasible for OLA to review work across all 87 counties. To be feasible, OLA would focus on a specific program, such as Adult Day Services, Integrated Community Supports, or Substance Use Disorder Services , within a sample of counties.
Balance <i>Medium</i>	OLA last evaluated DHS’s coordination with counties in the 2024 evaluation, <i>Department of Human Services Licensing Division: Support to Counties</i> . OLA has also published several reports related to DHS in the past three years.
Discussion	DHS and counties share responsibility for administering key social services programs that Minnesotans rely on, and it is important that these programs are administered consistently across counties. The topic is timely but would require OLA to focus on a specific program to be feasible. If selected, OLA would appreciate direction from the Legislative Audit Commission on the focus of this evaluation.

Minnesota Department of Health

Mortuary Science Program

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	<p>The Minnesota Department of Health’s (MDH’s) Mortuary Science program regulates mortuary science services by licensing or registering those involved in providing such services, such as funeral directors and morticians. Program staff also inspect facilities that provide mortuary science services, including funeral establishments and crematories. In addition, program staff receive complaints related to licensure and licensed or unlicensed activities, and take action when regulated entities are out of compliance.</p>
Evaluation Questions	<p>How well does MDH manage the licensing process for funeral establishments and morticians? To what extent does MDH’s complaint handling approach reflect best practices? How consistently has MDH applied disciplinary actions to establishments?</p>
State Resources <i>Low-Medium</i>	<p>The Mortuary Science program is within MDH’s Health Regulation Division, which completes licensing, complaint, and enforcement activities for a range of health care providers and organizations. In Fiscal Year 2024, the Division spent about \$62 million on all activities, of which a portion was spent on the Mortuary Science program.</p>
State Control <i>High</i>	<p>Minnesota statutes outline mortuary science licensure and registration requirements, complaint reporting obligations and information MDH is to provide to complainants, and circumstances in which MDH may take certain disciplinary actions.</p>
Impact <i>Medium</i>	<p>Properly licensing individuals and regulating entities involved in mortuary science supports and protects public health. In 2023, MDH reported that 1,130 individuals were licensed either as morticians, interns, or funeral directors. At that time, MDH reported there were 545 funeral homes and 80 crematories.</p>
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	<p>While there has been interest in this topic recently, there is no urgent reason to evaluate the Mortuary Science program this year. Our ability to analyze data on facilities conducting natural organic reduction may be limited because licenses for operating such facilities have been required only since July 2025.</p>
Feasibility <i>High</i>	<p>OLA could complete this evaluation using standard evaluation methods, such as surveys, document reviews, and interviews.</p>
Balance <i>Low-Medium</i>	<p>OLA has never evaluated the Mortuary Science program. However, we are currently evaluating MDH’s Health Regulation Division’s licensing of assisted living facilities and will be evaluating its licensing of nursing homes.</p>
Discussion	<p>Properly overseeing individuals and facilities in the mortuary science field helps to protect the public and their health. An OLA evaluation could help determine how effectively MDH manages mortuary science licensing requirements and addresses any issues that arise. However, consecutive evaluations may be overly burdensome for MDH’s Health Regulation Division.</p>

Minnesota Paid Leave

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	The 2023 Legislature created the Minnesota Paid Leave (MPL) program to provide payment and job protection to eligible individuals so they can care for themselves or family members. MPL pays workers a portion of their wages while they take time away from work to care for their own health or the needs of family members. Employers covered by the program contribute a percentage of employee wages to a statewide MPL fund; they may pass up to a specified portion of that obligation on to employees. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) oversees the program, including processing benefits applications and payments from the statewide fund.
Original Evaluation Questions	To what extent does Minnesota’s paid leave program include effective mechanisms to deter, identify, and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse?
Revised Questions	To what extent does MPL include appropriate mechanisms to deter, identify, and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse? How well has MPL met program goals?
State Resources <i>High</i>	The 2023 Legislature transferred more than \$668 million from the general fund to establish a dedicated fund for MPL. MPL benefits and DEED administrative costs are expected to be funded on an ongoing basis by employer and employee contributions.
State Control <i>High</i>	While Minnesota’s MPL program must comply with federal law, including the Family and Medical Leave Act, it was created by the Minnesota Legislature. That body has the authority to amend the program’s benefits and requirements.
Impact <i>High</i>	From November 2025 through February 2026, DEED reported approving more than 20,000 applications for MPL. A large portion of employed Minnesotans are required to contribute to the fund that pays for MPL, and millions of Minnesotans may become eligible for benefits.
Timeliness <i>Low</i>	Legislators and members of the public have raised questions about the program’s effectiveness, fraud controls, and costs to employers and taxpayers. At the same time, the MPL program has been operating for less than one year, having begun paying benefits in January 2026. This would greatly limit the data available for review.
Feasibility <i>Medium-High</i>	OLA could answer the revised questions using standard evaluation techniques, including reviewing DEED’s processes and testing a sample of applications to determine whether applicants were eligible for MPL.
Balance <i>High</i>	OLA has not evaluated MPL. OLA last evaluated DEED programs in 2025, <i>DEED Grants Management</i> , and 2022, <i>Unemployment Insurance Program: Efforts to Prevent and Detect the Use of Stolen Identities</i> .
Discussion	While questions raised related to the MPL program are important, it will be valuable to have at least one year of data available to complete analysis. Therefore, it would be prudent to reconsider this topic in Fall 2026 or Spring 2027.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Feedlot Permitting

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	Livestock operations are important to Minnesota’s economy, but waste from these operations can negatively impact water quality. To protect Minnesota’s natural resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) regulates certain operations, including large feedlots. Feedlots house animals in a confined area where waste may accumulate. In cooperation with 50 of Minnesota’s counties, MPCA registers, inspects, and permits feedlots to ensure these operations are environmentally safe.
Original Evaluation Questions	What factors affect the timeliness with which MPCA processes feedlot permits? How does MPCA’s permit processing compare to processes in other states?
Revised Questions	How well does MPCA manage the permitting and registration processes for feedlots? How does MPCA’s permit processing compare to processes in other states? How well does MPCA monitor environmental effects of feedlots? To what extent has MPCA established appropriate procedures for monitoring feedlot closures?
State Resources <i>Low</i>	In Fiscal Year 2025, MPCA’s Watershed Division spent about \$21 million in state funds for all of its activities, a portion of which was for feedlot permitting.
State Control <i>Medium</i>	Certain feedlots must comply with both state and federal laws, including the federal Clean Water Act and Minnesota feedlot rules. Minnesota has implemented standards for certain feedlots; the state can implement higher standards than those required by federal law, but cannot propose lower standards.
Impact <i>Medium-High</i>	MPCA reports that there are about 18,000 registered feedlots in Minnesota. While they are important to Minnesota’s economy and food security, they can also pose environmental risks to neighboring lands and water.
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	MPCA has recommended changes to feedlot rules, estimating that agency officials will propose amended rules in 2027. Considering the timing of a potential evaluation and the rulemaking process, it is unclear whether the evaluation would be useful or too late.
Feasibility <i>Medium-High</i>	We could complete this evaluation using standard evaluation techniques, although we would likely need to focus on the work of MPCA and a sample of counties. We would also plan to focus on MPCA’s feedlot permitting process, rather than its rulemaking activities.
Balance <i>Medium</i>	OLA evaluated animal feedlot regulation in 1999. We last evaluated MPCA’s work in the 2022 report, <i>Petroleum Remediation Program</i> ; OLA is currently conducting a limited special review at MPCA.
Discussion	An evaluation of feedlot permitting could provide valuable insight into MPCA’s processes at a time when change may be on the horizon.

Office of Cannabis Management

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

Program Overview	In 2023, the Legislature legalized cannabis for personal adult use and established the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) to regulate Minnesota’s cannabis and hemp consumer industries. OCM’s responsibilities include licensing cannabis and hemp businesses, establishing product standards, and ensuring compliance with state requirements, among other duties.
Evaluation Questions	How well has OCM managed the licensing process for cannabis and hemp businesses? How well has OCM managed the process for approving products for sale? To what extent has OCM responded to complaints in a timely and consistent manner?
State Resources <i>Medium</i>	In Fiscal Year 2025, OCM spent an estimated \$44.5 million on its operations.
State Control <i>High</i>	Minnesota has legalized cannabis for adult-use and, as a result, OCM is responsible for regulating cannabis use in Minnesota in accordance with requirements set forth in state law.
Impact <i>Medium-High</i>	In Minnesota, adults age 21 and older may legally use cannabis. Given the potentially large market for cannabis products, OCM’s regulatory activities—such as ensuring compliance with product testing and safety standards—may have a broad public health impact.
Timeliness <i>Medium</i>	While concerns about industry rollout and oversight could indicate a need for review, retail sales began to expand only recently in September 2025. Additionally, ongoing changes to federal regulations may complicate an evaluation at this time.
Feasibility <i>High</i>	OLA could evaluate OCM’s activities using standard evaluation methods, including interviews, document reviews, and data analysis.
Balance <i>High</i>	OLA has not previously evaluated OCM. In 2024, OLA published a preliminary assessment of the process used by the Governor’s Office to appoint the OCM director.
Discussion	OCM is a new state entity with broad regulatory responsibilities and substantial public and legislative interest. An evaluation could provide an independent assessment of how well OCM is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities to regulate the state’s cannabis industry, although it may be prudent to wait until the fall selection process to ensure sufficient data is available.

Postsecondary Enrollment Options

Topic Selection Background Information

May 2026

<p>Program Overview</p>	<p>Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) is a type of dual enrollment program through which, traditionally, high school students earn both high school and college credit by completing courses taught by faculty at eligible Minnesota postsecondary institutions. Students in PSEO apply for admission at the postsecondary institution and are treated as college students but retain rights and supports granted to high school students. Other types of dual enrollment programs may be available to students; the intended participants and funding structures of these programs can differ.</p>
<p>Evaluation Questions</p>	<p>What is the financial impact of PSEO on school districts, postsecondary institutions, and the overall state budget? To what extent have participating entities complied with applicable legal requirements for PSEO? To what extent do all students have equitable access to PSEO? How well does PSEO meet the needs of students?</p>
<p>State Resources <i>Medium</i></p>	<p>The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) pays the postsecondary institutions for costs related to students participating in PSEO. In Fiscal Year 2024, the state paid \$48.6 million to 55 eligible Minnesota postsecondary institutions for roughly 206,000 credits students earned through PSEO.</p>
<p>State Control <i>High</i></p>	<p>Minnesota statutes outline general characteristics of PSEO-eligible postsecondary institutions and courses. Institutions must receive approval from MDE to participate in PSEO. Eligible institutions determine PSEO course offerings and enrollment requirements. Compared to public schools, MDE has less authority to enforce how private schools implement PSEO.</p>
<p>Impact <i>Medium</i></p>	<p>Students in grades 11 and 12, and some in grade 10, may be eligible to participate in PSEO. In Fiscal Year 2024, nearly 14,000 students from public, nonpublic, and home schools participated in PSEO.</p>
<p>Timeliness <i>High</i></p>	<p>The Legislature and members of the public have expressed serious concerns about how dual enrollment programs, including PSEO, are operating in the state. Examples of concerns include the cost of the program and how accessible the program is to students.</p>
<p>Feasibility <i>Medium</i></p>	<p>OLA could conduct an evaluation using standard research methods. However, the evaluation questions are research intensive, so OLA will need to prioritize the questions it can address. Additionally, OLA would likely need to limit aspects of its review to a sample of schools.</p>
<p>Balance <i>Medium-High</i></p>	<p>OLA last evaluated the PSEO program in 1996. We are currently evaluating MDE’s oversight of autism spectrum disorder services in public schools.</p>
<p>Discussion</p>	<p>The Legislature established PSEO to provide high school students with a broader variety of courses and opportunities to pursue higher education. Given recent concerns about how the program is operating, it may be useful to conduct an evaluation of PSEO.</p>