



**Gina M. Raimondo,  
Governor**

**State of Rhode Island and  
Providence Plantations  
Fiscal Year 2018  
Budget**

**Volume II – Health and Human  
Services**

# Agency

---

## Office Of The Mental Health Advocate

---

### Agency Mission

To ensure the legal, civil, and special rights of people with mental illness in Rhode Island.

To protect the liberty interests and treatment rights of individuals subjected to involuntary commitment and to the involuntary administration of medication in psychiatric facilities, including penal inmates.

To protect the legal rights of clients of the mental health system by means of direct legal representation and/or referral to appropriate resources.

To monitor and evaluate the quality of services available to clients of the mental health system, and to investigate incidents. To address shortcomings and gaps in the services and programs administered by the mental health providers.

To address stigmatizing legal inequities and social barriers that impact upon the lives of individuals with mental illness by means of legislative advocacy, litigation, education, support for the mental health consumer movement, and by outreach to the public at large.

### Agency Description

The Office of the Mental Health Advocate accomplishes its mission by providing legal representation at involuntary commitment proceedings, monitoring procedures and policies at in-patient treatment facilities and community-based mental health programs, proposing and evaluating legislation, and litigating civil rights and treatment rights disputes. The Office also provides counsel to clients of the mental health system who bring complaints involving mental health issues and other issues vital to maintaining quality of life, such as housing and protection from creditors. The Office is also charged to protect the treatment rights of criminally insane persons and prison inmates in the forensic hospital (patients who are under criminal process) and to provide legal representation for indigent persons receiving in-patient substance abuse treatment.

### Statutory History

The Office of the Mental Health Advocate was created in 1975 when the legislature re-wrote and reformed the Mental Health Law of Rhode Island. This reform was part of a national movement toward deinstitutionalization of mentally ill individuals, a movement which began in the 1950's and became a centerpiece of public policy in the 1970's after the United States Supreme Court declared that all states must provide Constitutional Due Process and legal counsel to individuals subjected to involuntary hospitalization. The original statute authorizing the Mental Health Advocate is codified at RI General Laws, Sections 40.1-5-13, 40.1-5-22 and 24 (Public Laws 1974, Ch. 119).

# Budget

## Office Of The Mental Health Advocate

	FY 2015 Audited	FY 2016 Audited	FY 2017 Enacted	FY 2017 Revised	FY 2018 Recommend
<b>Expenditures By Program</b>					
Central Management	504,149	545,220	542,009	549,273	549,563
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$504,149</b>	<b>\$545,220</b>	<b>\$542,009</b>	<b>\$549,273</b>	<b>\$549,563</b>
<b>Expenditures By Object</b>					
Personnel	492,119	526,869	530,915	534,341	537,354
Operating Supplies and Expenses	12,030	10,574	11,094	11,709	11,709
<b>Subtotal: Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>504,149</b>	<b>537,443</b>	<b>542,009</b>	<b>546,050</b>	<b>549,063</b>
Capital Purchases and Equipment	-	7,777	-	3,223	500
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$504,149</b>	<b>\$545,220</b>	<b>\$542,009</b>	<b>\$549,273</b>	<b>\$549,563</b>
<b>Expenditures By Funds</b>					
General Revenue	504,149	545,220	542,009	549,273	549,563
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$504,149</b>	<b>\$545,220</b>	<b>\$542,009</b>	<b>\$549,273</b>	<b>\$549,563</b>
<b>FTE Authorization</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>

# The Agency

Office of the Mental Health Advocate

---

