



## Iowa Mental Health Parity Statutes given a failing grade

Today, on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the federal parity law, the Kennedy-Satcher Center for Mental Health Equity just released several [new reports and guides](#) on the current state of parity across the country, including:

- Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes: State Report Cards
- Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes: A Technical Report
- What is Mental Health Parity? A Consumer Guide to the Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes Report

The state report cards give each state a letter grade on their state statutes, or laws, on parity coverage of mental health and addiction care.

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# Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes

## STATE REPORT CARD

# IOWA



### What is Parity?

The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, also known as the Federal Parity Law, requires insurers to cover illnesses of the brain, such as depression or addiction, no more restrictively than illnesses of the body, such as diabetes or cancer.

### How Do Iowa's Statutes Measure Up?

**50** out of **100** points

Grade:



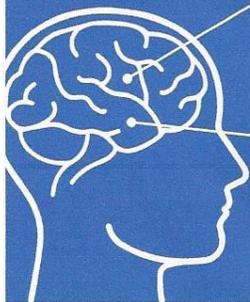
### Why Grade State Statutes?

In advance of the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Federal Parity Law, we examined how states enact strong parity statutes in order to ensure that state regulators have a full set of tools to make parity a reality and to hold both health plans and state officials accountable.

### Key Issues

The promise of parity remains elusive for many individuals directly impacted by mental illness and substance use disorders. They are denied care when they need it most and have few resources to advocate on their own behalf. Based on deficiencies found in our analysis of state statutes, Iowa should consider:

- How mental health and addiction conditions are covered
- How compliance with the parity law is monitored and enforced



### Relevant Stats

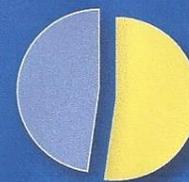
#### In Iowa...

OVER **1 in 6** adults have a mental illness  
(national average over 1 in 6)

OVER **1 in 11** adults with mental illness are uninsured  
(national average over 1 in 7)

NEARLY **1 in 11** youth have a mental illness  
(national average approximately 1 in 12)

NEARLY **1 in 12** youth have private insurance that does not cover mental health  
(national average 1 in 13)



**54%** of residents are covered by employer-based health insurance  
(national average 49%)

Sources: Mental Health America (2018); The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (2016)

Douglas, M., Wrenn, G., Bent-Weber, S., Tonti, L., Carneal, G., Keeton, T., Grillo, J., Rachel, S., Lloyd, D., Byrd, E., Miller, B., Lang, A., Manderscheid, R., Parks, J. Evaluating State Mental Health and Addiction Parity Statutes: A Technical Report. The Kennedy Forum; 2018.

Nguyen, T., Hellebuyck, M., Halpern, M., & Fritze, D. (2018). The State of Mental Health in America 2018. Alexandria, VA: Mental Health America, Inc. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation (2016). Health Insurance Coverage of the Total Population.

Visit [ParityTrack.org/Anniversary](http://ParityTrack.org/Anniversary) to access the Technical Report and all State Report Cards.

## Resources

We encourage you to visit [www.paritytrack.org/anniversary](http://www.paritytrack.org/anniversary), and note that model parity legislation is available under the Resources menu.

Parity—covering mental health and addiction care at the same level as other health care—has been a priority issue throughout NAMI’s history. NAMI fought successfully for the federal parity law and on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its passage, we call on elected officials in our state to fulfill the promise of equal treatment under the law.

This new report highlights what we’ve been saying all along, that people are still being denied mental health care when they need it the most. You wouldn’t deny a person with diabetes insulin or kick a heart patient out of their hospital bed because they’ve reached an arbitrary limit.

We hope this will be a wake-up call to the leadership of our state and we look forward to working with them to ensure greater enforcement of the federal parity law.

No one should be denied health care simply because their illness is related to mental health or addiction.

NAMI fought successfully for the federal parity law and on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its passage, we appreciate the efforts of the Kennedy Satcher Center for Mental Health Equity to evaluate our state on parity.

We will continue to work with our partners to build better lives for the people in our state affected by mental illness.

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# Are you ready to



# this November?

Subject: Pledge to [#Vote4MentalHealth](https://www.paritytrack.org/anniversary) this November

The 2018 elections are fast approaching. Help us make mental health part of the conversation. Join us and take the pledge to [#Vote4MentalHealth](https://www.paritytrack.org/anniversary) this year. While you are there:

- Learn about the issues
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- Find out about ways to educate candidates about mental health
- Register to vote
- Get tools to mobilize other mental health voters
- Know your voting rights

Today's candidates are tomorrow's elected officials. And elected officials—from district attorneys and county commissioners to governors and members of Congress—play a role in deciding what mental health services and supports are available in our community.

From now until Election Day on November 6, reach out to all candidates and ask them about their positions on issues related to mental health. Share information about the importance of investing in mental health. When candidates hear from you about the importance of mental health care, they will listen. Your efforts to develop relationships with candidates of every political party helps us work together to improve mental health in America.

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Remember, if you want **Amazon to donate to National Alliance On Mental Illness of Greater Des Moines**, you need to **start each shopping session at the URL <http://smile.amazon.com>**. You need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation.

Choose: **National Alliance On Mental Illness Of Greater Des Moines**



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