

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Dylan A. Fernandes

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act to support men's mental health.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Dylan A. Fernandes

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Plymouth and Barnstable

SENATE No.

By Mr. Fernandes, a petition (accompanied by bill) (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Dylan A. Fernandes for legislation to support men's mental health. Mental Health, Substance Use and Recovery.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act to support men's mental health.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section and the following sections the following terms
2 shall have the following meanings:

3 “MassMen Program”, the program tailored to male suicide prevention and mental health
4 needs as developed by the Division of Violence and Injury Prevention, within the Bureau of
5 Community Health and Prevention within the Department of Public Health within the Executive
6 Office of Health and Human Services.

7 “Circumstances that increase suicide risk”, as defined by the United States Centers for
8 Disease Control and Prevention, history of depression and other mental illnesses, serious illness
9 such as chronic pain, criminal or legal problems, job or financial problems or loss, impulsive or
10 aggressive tendencies, substance use, current or prior history of adverse childhood experiences,
11 sense of hopelessness, violence victimization or perpetration, bullying, family or loved one's
12 history of suicide, loss of relationships, high conflict or violent relationships, social isolation,

community risk factors, lack of access to healthcare, suicide cluster in the community, stress of acculturation, community violence, historical trauma, discrimination, stigma associated with help-seeking and mental illness, easy access to lethal means of suicide among people at risk, and unsafe media portrayals of suicide.

SECTION 2. (1) Massachusetts agencies with direct online or in-person constituent service interfaces that serve men known or likely to have a higher propensity to develop mental health conditions or suicidal ideation, as indicated by the circumstances that increase suicide risk, shall within 9 months of the passage of this act, (a) clearly display MassMen resources on online and material constituent service interfaces in a way that is most accessible to the public including publishing the MassMen Program website for use by constituents and (b) communicate best practices derived from MassMen resources to staff members and relevant community partners. The agencies tasked with formulating such a plan will include, but not be limited to: all agencies supporting those with a history of depression or mental illness such as all facilities run by the department of mental health; all agencies supporting those who are victimized by violence or perpetrate violence such as the Massachusetts Parole Board within the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, the Victim and Witness Assistance Board within the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance and the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services; all agencies supporting those with a history of or likelihood to engage in substance use including the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services within the Department of Public Health, as overseen by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services; all agencies supporting those with likely histories of occupational trauma including programs within the Executive Office of Veterans Affairs; and all agencies supporting those experiencing job loss or financial insecurity including the Department of Unemployment

Assistance within the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the Department of Transitional Assistance within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.

2) The Department of Public Health shall have the authority to, within three months of the passage of this act, promulgate resources as to how to best incorporate MassMen resources into other agencies as outlined above.

SECTION 3. (1) Subject to appropriation, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Department of Public Health shall conduct a publicity campaign to promote the materials and resources of the MassMen program. These funds can be used for facilitating the connections described above or for a broader publicity campaign.