

# Behavioral Health Executive Council Summary of Budget Recommendations - Senate

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Method of Financing	2020-21 Base	2022-23 Recommended	Biennial Change (\$)	Biennial Change (%)
General Revenue Funds	\$4,614,925	\$7,547,259	\$2,932,334	63.5%
GR Dedicated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
<i>Total GR-Related Funds</i>	<i>\$4,614,925</i>	<i>\$7,547,259</i>	<i>\$2,932,334</i>	<i>63.5%</i>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%
Other	\$15,988	\$1,776,000	\$1,760,012	11,008.3%
<b>All Funds</b>	<b>\$4,630,913</b>	<b>\$9,323,259</b>	<b>\$4,692,346</b>	<b>101.3%</b>

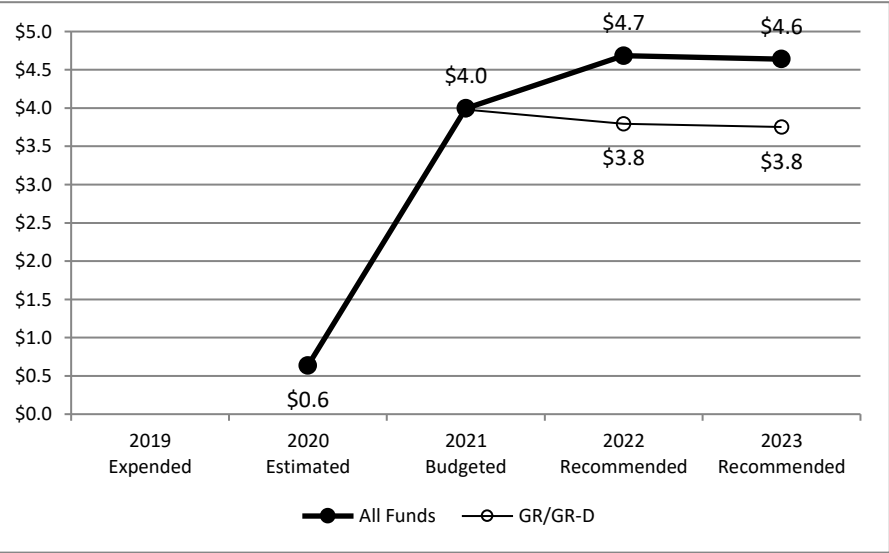
	FY 2021 Budgeted	FY 2023 Recommended	Biennial Change	Percent Change
FTEs	64.0	64.0	0.0	0.0%

## Agency Budget and Policy Issues and/or Highlights

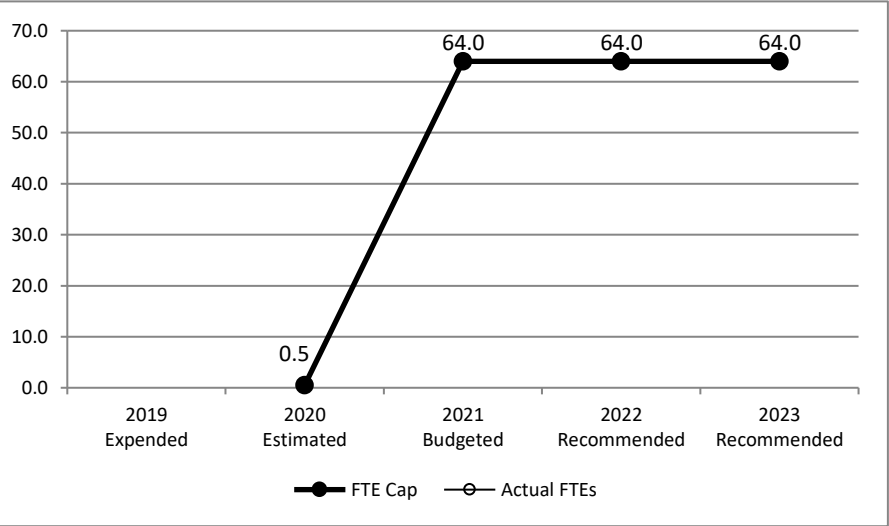
The 2020-21 base includes funding for start-up costs in part of fiscal year 2020 and the agency's first full year of operations in fiscal year 2021. Recommendations include two full years of funding for agency operations, less start-up costs, with behavioral health expenditures exempt from the five percent reduction.

The bill pattern for this agency (2022-23 Recommended) represents an estimated 100.0% of the agency's estimated total available funds for the 2022-23 biennium.

Historical Funding Levels (Millions)



Historical Full-Time-Equivalent Employees (FTEs)



**Behavioral Health Executive Council**  
**Summary of Funding Changes and Recommendations - Senate**

**Section 2**

Funding Changes and Recommendations for the 2022-23 Biennium compared to the 2020-21 Base Spending Level (in millions)		General Revenue	GR-Dedicated	Federal Funds	Other Funds	All Funds	Strategy in Appendix A
<i><b>SIGNIFICANT Funding Changes and Recommendations (each issue is explained in Section 3 and additional details are provided in Appendix A):</b></i>							
A)	Increase to fund two full years of agency operations, less start-up costs.	\$2.8	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$1.8	\$4.6	A.1.1, A.1.2, B.1.1, B.1.2, C.1.1
B)	Increase to cover cost increases for Health Professions Council services.	\$0.1	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.1	A.1.1, B.1.1
<b>TOTAL SIGNIFICANT &amp; OTHER Funding Changes and Recommendations (in millions)</b>		<b>\$2.9</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$0.0</b>	<b>\$1.8</b>	<b>\$4.7</b>	As Listed
<i>SIGNIFICANT &amp; OTHER Funding Increases</i>		\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	As Listed
<i>SIGNIFICANT &amp; OTHER Funding Decreases</i>		\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	As Listed

NOTE: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

**Behavioral Health Executive Council  
Selected Fiscal and Policy Issues - Senate**

1. **Licensing Backlog from HHSC.** The agency reports that a licensing backlog for the counseling and social work programs transferred from the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to BHEC as of September 1, 2020. The backlog was due to: significant HHSC staff attrition (approximately 50%), a delay in issuing laptops to staff for remote work until late June 2020, inability to access the regulatory database remotely, and health issues among the HHSC staff that resulted in long absences. As of February 2021, the agency reports it has 103 unreviewed and 577 pending counseling applications and 61 unreviewed and 2,702 pending social work applications.

In an effort to help with the workload related to the **social work** applications, BHEC contracted with the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB, a private contractor) for processing all requests for exam eligibility by social work applicants to help with the backlog in that program. Once ASWB clears an applicant for the exam and the applicant passes the exam, BHEC reviews the application for licensure. The agency reports that most of the backlog related to the social work program is from applications that were originally deficient (required additional information) and were resubmitted to HHSC but HHSC did not have capacity to go back to review those. BHEC staff are working through the backlog and the ASWB contract helps minimize some of the workload for that program.

The agency reports that the backlog in the **counseling program** is primarily related to the volume of applications received compared to the staff available to process those applications. In fiscal year 2020, the ratio of licensing specialist full-time equivalent (FTE) positions to the number of applications received, by program were 1:1,266 for counseling, 1:1,166 for social workers, 1:679 for psychologists, and 1:832 for marriage and family therapists. BHEC reassigned 2 FTEs from other programs to the counseling program in FY2021.

The agency reports that these programs remain understaffed. The agency's first exceptional item request is for an additional \$288,320 in General Revenue Funds for 4.0 FTEs (three licensing specialists and one administrative assistant). These new positions would help process incoming applications, address the licensing backlog, and help respond to the high volume of emails and phone calls received. Recommendations do not include funding for this exceptional item.

2. **Office of the Governor's Fee Reduction Initiative.** In October 2019, the Office of the Governor sent a letter to executive branch agencies to develop plans to reduce occupational license fees to at least 75 percent of the national average for comparable or equivalent licenses. BHEC estimates that reducing license fees for their licensees would result in a loss of revenue of \$2.0 million in the 2022-23 biennium. The agency's estimated revenue collections (without the fee reduction) would result in an excess of \$2.8 million in the biennium, therefore the agency would still be able to cover the full appropriation if license fees are reduced. The agency includes this information as exceptional item #3 but does not request any funding related to the item.
3. **Health Professions Council Database Upgrade.** Recommendations include an increase of \$87,425 in General Revenue Funds for increased costs associated with an update to and an additional full-time equivalent position for the shared regulatory database used by BHEC via the Health Professions Council (HPC). BHEC is also absorbing a base cost increase for HPC within existing resources. The base cost for HPC increased for all participating agencies because of certain changes that occurred in the 2020-21 biennium. The biggest cause of the base cost increase was the growth from the approximately 5,000 psychologist licensees to the more than 69,000 licensees at BHEC in the shared regulatory database.

**Behavioral Health Executive Council  
Rider Highlights - Senate**

**Deleted Riders**

2. **Lump Sum Annual Leave Payout.** Recommendations delete this rider which required the agency to lapse certain funds if the funds were not used for retirement payouts due at the time of agency employees' retirement. This change would not impact the agency's ability to continue to make lump sum payments as necessary.

Behavioral Health Executive Council  
Items Not Included in Recommendations - Senate

		2022-23 Biennial Total					
		GR & GR-D	All Funds	FTEs	Information Technology Involved?	Contracting Involved?	Estimated Continued Cost 2024-25
Agency Exceptional Items Not Included (in agency priority order)							
1)	Additional Staff for Licensing Programs (4 FTEs)	\$288,320	\$288,320	4.0	Yes	No	\$0
2)	Capitol Complex Move to Bush Building: New workstations and office furniture	\$95,000	\$95,000	0.0	No	No	\$0
3)	Fee Reduction Initiative - Loss of General Revenue	\$0	\$0	0.0	No	No	\$0
4)	Increase Accountant from part-time to full-time in FY 2023 to help with implementation of CAPPS Financials	\$12,000	\$12,000	0.0	No	No	\$24,000
TOTAL Items Not Included in Recommendations		\$383,320	\$383,320	4.0	\$0		

**Behavioral Health Executive Council**  
**Appendices - Senate**

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\* Appendix is not included - no significant information to report

**Behavioral Health Executive Council**  
**Funding Changes and Recommendations by Strategy - Senate -- ALL FUNDS**

Strategy/Goal	2020-21 Base	2022-23 Recommended	Biennial Change	% Change	Comments (Optional)
LICENSING A.1.1	\$2,117,280	\$5,126,081	\$3,008,801	142.1%	Includes biennialized funding for agency operations and an increase in Appropriated Receipts of \$872,012 compared to 2020-21 related to professional fees paid by licensees
TEXAS.GOV A.1.2	\$135,244	\$272,000	\$136,756	101.1%	
<b>Total, Goal A, LICENSURE</b>	<b>\$2,252,524</b>	<b>\$5,398,081</b>	<b>\$3,145,557</b>	<b>139.6%</b>	
ENFORCEMENT B.1.1	\$2,339,789	\$3,858,378	\$1,518,589	64.9%	
<b>Total, Goal B, ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>\$2,339,789</b>	<b>\$3,858,378</b>	<b>\$1,518,589</b>	<b>64.9%</b>	
INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION C.1.1	\$38,600	\$66,800	\$28,200	73.1%	
<b>Total, Goal C, INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>\$38,600</b>	<b>\$66,800</b>	<b>\$28,200</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	
<b>Grand Total, All Strategies</b>	<b>\$4,630,913</b>	<b>\$9,323,259</b>	<b>\$4,692,346</b>	<b>101.3%</b>	The 2020-21 base includes funding for start-up costs in part of fiscal year 2020 and the agency's first full year of operations in fiscal year 2021. Recommendations include two full years of funding for agency operations.

**Behavioral Health Executive Council  
FTE Highlights - Senate**

<b>Full-Time-Equivalent Positions</b>	<b>Expended 2019</b>	<b>Estimated 2020</b>	<b>Budgeted 2021</b>	<b>Recommended 2022</b>	<b>Recommended 2023</b>
Cap	NA	0.5	64.0	64.0	64.0
Actual/Budgeted	NA	1.0	64.0	NA	NA

**Schedule of Exempt Positions (Cap)**

None.