

Sangamon County Mental Health Board

What is a Mental Health Board?

A Mental Health Board, also known as a community mental health board, is a locally appointed body that oversees funding for mental health, substance use, and developmental disability services. More than 90 counties and townships across Illinois have already established mental health boards under the Community Mental Health Act. Mental Health boards are authorized under Illinois law to levy a dedicated property or sales tax, the current recommendation for Sangamon County is a 0.5% sales tax (5¢ per \$10 purchase). These funds would then be used to support local programs and providers in Sangamon County. As a public body, the board gives residents a voice in reviewing and guiding how these funds are allocated.

What Has Sangamon County Done So Far?

- **Created a Mental Health Commission:** The Sangamon County Board formed a Mental Health Commission to study the need for a Mental Health Board.
- **Expert Analysis Completed:** The Mental Health Commission gathered input from medical professionals, mental health providers, law enforcement, educators, and community organizations, and conducted a full review of current gaps in services and coordination. Their findings and final recommendation were delivered to the County Board
- **Approved a binding Referendum for March 2026:** The County Board approved a binding referendum on the March 2026 Primary ballot, allowing residents to decide whether to create and fund a Mental Health Board dedicated to improving local mental health and addiction services.

Key Dates & Timeline

- **February 5, 2026:** Early voting begins.
- **March 17, 2026:** Election Day. Voters will decide whether to establish a Mental Health Board in Sangamon County.

What Could a Mental Health Board Fund?

If approved by voters, a Sangamon County Mental Health Board could help support:

- **Expanded mental health services** for children, adults, and seniors.
- **Substance use treatment programs** to address prevention and recovery needs.
- **Crisis response and suicide prevention services.**
- **Support for developmental disabilities services.**
- **Partnerships with law enforcement** to improve crisis intervention and reduce repeat encounters.
- **Community-based initiatives** that keep people healthier and reduce pressure on emergency rooms, jails, and schools.

Citizen Efforts to Approve the Mental Health Board

A citizen-led campaign committee, “Vote Yes for Mental Health,” has been formed to advocate for the approval of a Sangamon County Mental Health Board. The committee is led by Satch Pecori, of Hanson Professional Services, and Ryan Croke, who serves in the Governor’s Office. The group plans to host community events and lead public education efforts to inform voters about the benefits of a mental health board.