

02/20/2025

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division: Oregon Psilocybin Services Budget

Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share information on the Oregon Psilocybin Services budget, within the Public Health Division at the Oregon Health Authority.

My name is Kristine Solis and I work as a facilitator support person and service center manager at Drop Thesis which is located in Bend, Deschutes County. Passed in 2020 by the voters, Measure 109 was designed to create a state licensed and regulated psilocybin therapy program, allowing access for individuals with mental health needs, and strong safeguards for clients, workers, and the community. Since May of 2023 when the first services were delivered, estimates show that approximately 9,000 people have now been served by the program.

Anecdotally, many individuals seek out psilocybin therapy for unresolved mental health challenges, including PTSD, depression, anxiety, and addiction. Many of the clients the program serves are new to psilocybin, and are specifically looking for a safe, supportive, and comfortable environment to experience psilocybin. As a facilitator support person, I've seen countless individuals find renewed hope from their psilocybin experience, with effects lasting up to a year with just one session.

One of our clients struggled with alcoholism and depression for years. She has spent the better part of 3 years in therapy, AAA and in and out of detox clinging to sobriety with no avail. This client scheduled 3 consultations with me where she canceled one, attended one but didn't follow through. When I saw her 3rd consultation booking I knew she was ready. She decided it was time to book her journey at Drop Thesis and for the first time in years, feels so much love and gratitude for her life and the people in it. Finally being free of her guilt and shame she has been able to embrace life with the ability to stay sober and is ready to fully show up in her life for herself and her family. What a beautiful thing to obtain. A second chance at life.

The Oregon Psilocybin Services program has a number of rules in place to ensure safety, including:

- Clients over the age of 21 are only allowed access to consume psilocybin in a state licensed service center, under the supervision of a trained and licensed facilitator.
- All clients must first be screened by service centers to ensure services are a good fit for their health background.

- Service centers cannot be located within 1,000 feet of a school.
- Adverse events must be reported to the state when emergency services need to be called – of all the clients served, less than .12% have had emergency services.

However, less than two years in, the Oregon Psilocybin Services program is still in its infancy. As the first-of-its-kind, programs like this need time and support to reach their full potential. Importantly, 2025 will be the first year there will be access to comprehensive data on the program thanks to Senate Bill 303, passed in 2023. Major research initiatives studying the impacts and outcomes of psilocybin services are also underway; this information will provide invaluable insights into how psilocybin services can be optimized to address Oregon's mental health crisis.

This year, the Oregon Psilocybin Services (OPS) program is at a pivotal moment. A \$3.5 million shortfall within the OPS budget threatens to undermine its ability to provide equitable access to care, which would double licensing fees. For service centers with \$10,000 licensing fees, this is not a change that could be easily absorbed. **This shortfall threatens to undermine Measure 109's core promise to deliver state-regulated psilocybin therapy, and the state's leadership in mental health innovation.** At the same time, House Bill 2387, the Psilocybin Services Program Improvement Bill, offers a path forward to strengthen the program's foundation, improve client safety, and better integrate psilocybin services into Oregon's healthcare and behavioral health systems.

In the coming year, psilocybin therapy is likely to play a stronger role in supporting Oregon's goal to decrease mental health and substance use disorders, but without your support, this innovative mental health initiative could falter before it has the chance to fully demonstrate its impact. **I urge you to champion funding for Oregon Psilocybin Services for the program at this important juncture in the program's development.**

Oregon has the opportunity to lead the nation in addressing mental health challenges with compassion and innovation. Let's give this program the time and resources it needs to establish itself as a model for others to follow, and honor the will of the voters to make this program a success.

Sincerely,

Kristine Solis
Kris@drophesis.com
206-580-5089