

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2024-A076  
**Title:** Strengthening of Churchwide Training in Mental Health First Aid  
**Proposer:** Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness  
**Topic:** Health

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### **Directly Related:** (Attached)

2022-A108 Authorize, Fund and Recommend Training in Mental Health First Aid  
2022-A109 Create New Curriculum to Train Clergy in Mental Health Pastoral Care

### **Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2022-A110 Expand the Task Force on Ministry to Individuals with Mental Illness  
2018-C034 Create a Task Force on Mental Illness

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).*

# A076 - Strengthening of Churchwide Training in Mental Health First Aid

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness

**Has Budget Implications:** Yes

**Cost:** \$324,800.00

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib:** No

**Directs Dfms Staff:** No

**Directs Dioceses:** No

**Directs Executive Council:** No

**HiA:** No House Assigned

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** No Committee Assigned

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church authorize and fund the training of additional Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) instructors in the Episcopal Church to provide local, diocesan, and provincial trainings in both Adult, Youth, and Teen-2-Teen Mental Health First Aid, to expand the existing MHFA trainer pool and thus increase access to training for clergy and lay leaders across all Provinces of the Episcopal Church, with training to be completed by May 2027, so that they will become available as resource trainers for the dioceses in each Province; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate \$102,000 from the Episcopal Church triennium budget appropriation for the funding of this work; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention recommend the exploration of MHFA International resources with the intent to expand MFHA training into non-English-speaking countries to provide trainer coverage as needed for all Provinces; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention authorize and fund the deployment of MHFA instructors, including basic travel-related support, across the next three trienniums to train all active priests and deacons by 2033 for an estimated cost of \$159,000; and be it further

*Resolved*, That the 81st General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate \$53,000 for that work in this triennium; and be it further

*Resolved*, That \$10,800 be allocated for the generation of printed instructional resources for the diocesan MHFA trainings.

## **Explanation**

Building on the work of the prior Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness, we continued the focus on the provision of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), which provides consistent training with resources that are easily adopted on a large scale. MHFA training helps people develop the skills to assist individuals experiencing mental health crises and link them to appropriate professionals and supportive networks. The training helps clergy and lay leaders to understand some of the experiences of those with mental illness and helps to destigmatize the realities living with of mental illness.

Recognizing the importance of training in MHFA, in 2022, the 80th General Convention passed resolution 2022-A108, which called for the authorization and funding for at least 15 regional trainers. The work of the Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness in this most recent triennium resulted in the training of 11 Adult MHFA instructors covering 8 provinces. While this was an excellent move forward, additional trainers are required to provide more thorough provincial coverage, as well as to offer instruction in Youth and Teen-2-Teen MHFA.

This resolution calls for the training of additional Mental Health First Aid instructors in the Episcopal Church to provide local, diocesan, and provincial trainings in Adult, Youth, and Teen-2-Teen Mental Health First Aid, and for funding to support their training and provide basic travel-related support for all instructors' deployment.

The funding request for additional trainers will cover 14-16 instructors in each of Adult, Youth, and Teen-2-Teen MHFA, at a cost of \$34,000 for each track (including travel) or \$102,000 in total. This will yield a total of 53-59 instructors trained specifically for instruction in the Episcopal Church, to be joined by other Episcopal MHFA instructors already trained and active, who together will offer MHFA certification trainings across the church. Per year, their trainings will yield 2500-3500 Episcopalians certified in MHFA; per triennium, 7500-10,500 certified Episcopalians; and by the end of three trienniums, up to 31,500 certified Episcopalians.

The funding of travel-related expenses in deployment of MHFA instructors for active clergy and postulant training and other diocesan or ministry setting trainings will significantly reduce the cost per trainee for each certification course. The deployment of MHFA instructors over the next three trienniums includes roughly 213 trainings for the approximately 4,000 priests and 2,400 deacons, as well as all active bishops, comprising all

active clergy by 2033. More trainings offered by instructors will equip lay members with the same fundamental knowledge and skills. The funding request for this deployment is \$53,000 per triennium, or \$159,000 in total.

Modest funding is also requested to support and reimburse instructors for production of supplementary printed materials to aid in the training being offered.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-A108  
**Title:** Authorize, Fund and Recommend Training in Mental Health First Aid  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention authorize launch of training people in dioceses, congregations, schools, seminaries, and other entities of the Episcopal Church in the forming of caring relationships with people with mental illness and their families, in recognizing possible mental health crises and interacting in healthy and supportive ways with people in crisis, and in advocacy and bridge-building support, using the resources and training processes of Mental Health First Aid and the National Alliance on Mental Illness, as well as the Interfaith Network on Mental Illness, WISE for Mental Health, and other helpful organizations and networks; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention authorize and fund the training of at least 15 regional trainers in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) for the sake of providing basic MHFA training in the Provinces of the Episcopal Church, drawing as well upon the expertise of MHFA trainers who are part of the Union of Black Episcopalians along with other Episcopal MHFA trainers, with training to be completed by May 2024, so that they will become available as resource trainers for the dioceses in each Province; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention recommend training in Mental Health First Aid and general awareness of mental health and illness for all active clergy and lay staff in the church entities of each diocese, with issuance of certifications; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$35,000 to help fund the training of the regional trainers for the Provinces.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 851.



**Resolution Number:** 2022-A109  
**Title:** Create New Curriculum to Train Clergy in Mental Health Pastoral Care  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention authorize the creation and launch of new curriculum to train all Episcopal ordained clergy, candidates, and postulants in mental health and mental illness awareness that emphasizes pastoral care, the forming of caring relationships, and effective advocacy. This new curriculum will incorporate and expand upon a range of resources including Mental Health First Aid, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the Interfaith Network on Mental Illness, WISE for Mental Health, and other helpful organizations and networks; and be it further*

*Resolved, That it is recommended that all those to be ordained from January 2024 onward be trained in this new curriculum that will include training in Mental Health First Aid and in the advocacy work of the National Alliance on Mental Illness; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention recommend the training of all active priests, deacons, and bishops in this curriculum for mental health and mental illness awareness; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$15,000 to support curriculum development for this training of clergy.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 852.