

Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law

***JHPPL* Call for Paper Proposals: The Politics of Mental Health**

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Deadlines: For proposals: November 2, 2026; for articles: February 15, 2027

The *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law* invites proposal submissions for a special issue on “The Politics of Mental Health.” Over the past decade, and especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, research has increasingly documented a relationship between politics and mental health. How citizens and elites think about and engage with the political process is influenced by their mental health, while mental health and mental health care are shaped by political institutions, political attitudes, public policy, and public discourse. More fundamentally, scholarship has come to recognize that mental health itself has long been and continues to be a politically contested concept.

Yet, there is much more to learn about the relationship between politics and mental health. Research to date, while innovative and fruitful, has largely coalesced around a narrow set of topics, such as the influence of mental health on political participation, and a narrow set of cases, most especially the United States and other advanced Western democracies. Moreover, given the interdisciplinarity of this topic, what we know remains fragmented across journals in the health, psychological, medical, and social sciences, creating unique challenges to synthesizing existing knowledge and generating new knowledge.

This special issue seeks to advance the study of mental health and politics by bringing together scholars across disciplines who are asking big questions and seeking big answers on this topic. *JHPPL* invites proposals (500 words or fewer) for full research articles (9,000 words or fewer) from scholars working in political science, psychology, public health, psychiatry, sociology, economics, and related fields. We welcome research employing quantitative, qualitative, experimental, mixed-methods, or theoretical approaches, as well as comparative and international perspectives.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- The influence of politics on how citizens perceive mental health, experience symptoms of mental illness, and cope with poor mental health
- The effect of mental health on political engagement, including voting, participation, and efficacy, especially in global contexts which are underrepresented in the literature
- The role of political institutions and public discourse, including debates around mental health, in shaping mental health, mental health care, and/or mental health policy
- The way politics shapes the utilization of mental health care among ordinary citizens and the provision of mental health care by mental health professionals
- How mental health and health care interest, advocacy, professional, and industry groups shape electoral politics, policymaking, and the provision of care
- The mental health of political elites, and how their mental health shapes their position-taking, decision-making, and more
- The political construction of mental health concepts, conditions, and categories

Submission Instructions

The special issue process will proceed in **two stages**. Proposals describing the manuscript should be submitted by **November 2, 2026**. Proposals for empirical research articles should be submitted as a structured abstract with the following sections: Authors and Affiliations, Research Objective(s), Motivation/Theory, Research Design, Preliminary Results, and Implications. **All proposals must be a maximum of 500 words.**

Proposals must be submitted via *JHPPL*'s ScholarOne site at <https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/dup-jhppl>. Please select the "proposal" article type and complete all submission steps to submit. Should you have any questions about the submission process, please contact *JHPPL*'s managing editor, Jed Cohen, at jhppl-editor@duke.edu.

The special issue co-editors will review all submissions and extend invitations for full papers by November 16, 2026. Invited submissions (full papers) will be due by **February 15, 2027**.