

HB 199: Health Data Amendments

Unlocking Utah's health data: driving better policy, lowering costs, and improving care.

Utah Health Data Authority: Modernizing access to Health Data

A recent review by OLAG found that while Utah collects valuable healthcare data, it isn't being used to its full potential to help shape public policy. In response, the Utah Legislature is considering H.B. 199 (2026) to modernize how we handle this information.

This bill makes several key updates to ensure our health data works better for Utahns:

- **Keeps the Program Running:** It moves the sunset date for the Health Data Authority to **July 1, 2036**. This ensures the state can continue to track healthcare costs and quality for the next decade.
- **Better Data Sharing for Public Health:** Currently, there are barriers to sharing data between offices and programs within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). This bill allows DHHS to share data internally and with local health authorities so they can better address community needs (like tracking chronic disease or mental health trends).
- **A Clearer Game Plan:** Requiring a strategic plan ensures that the state's health data is being actively used to meet specific goals.

Why does this data matter?

By looking at healthcare claims and facility data together, Utah can lower costs by assessing where Medicaid or private insurance might be overpaying for services, improve access by finding parts of the state where there aren't enough doctors or clinics, and measure quality by using data to see which hospitals and plans are performing best.

Robust Privacy

Minimum necessary policy, **HIPAA Safe Harbor** de-identification and limited data standards, **small cell suppression** policies.

Patient opt-out provision

Secure data: Data is housed in an audited, high-security system.

Independent oversight:

The Health Data Committee (including patient advocates, business, and privacy experts) advises the department on the data's use.

Strict legal limits: Data is only released under binding **data use agreements** to prevent misuse.