



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

405 W. 5th Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701
TEL: (714) 834-5481
MHB Website:

<http://ochealthinfo.com/bhs/about/mhb>

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Doug Chaffee, Chairman
Fourth District

Katrina Foley, Vice Chairwoman
Fifth District

Janet Nguyen
First District

Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Donald P. Wagner
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Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

Meeting Location:

601 N. Ross St., Santa Ana, CA 92701
Hybrid Option for members of the Public:

<https://zoom.us/j/95862491099>

Meeting ID: ID: 958 6249 1099

Call In: +1 301 715 8592

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BHAB MEMBERS

Alan V. Albright, LMFT
Chair

Frederick Williams, LMFT
Vice Chair

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Adela Cruz

Michell Fernandez

Stephen McNally

Linda Smith

Duan Tran, MSW

Chase Wickersham

Members Present: Alan Albright, Frederick Williams, Linda Smith, Duan Tran, Stephen McNally, Chase Wickersham, Cielo Echegoyen

Members Absent: Carla DiCandia, Michell Fernandez, Danielle Sena, Supervisor Sarmiento, Michelle Fernandez, Danielle Sena, Ethan Truong

Staff Present: Ian Kemmer, Anthony Padilla, Karla Perez, Gabriela Saldana, George Varela, Mark Lawrenz, Anthony Lee, Dawn Smith, Jennifer Dinicola, Tracy Ernt, Eric Negron, Lydia Hayes, King Nguyen

Call to Order

Alan Albright

- The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Alan Albright who then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Fred Williams

- Linda Smith motions to approve December 3, 2025, General meeting minutes. Chase Wickersham seconds. Minutes approved (7/0).
- Chase Wickersham motions to approve the January 28, 2026, General Meeting minutes. Linda Smith seconds. Minutes approved (7/0).
- Duan Tran motions to approve January 28, 2026, BHAB retreat minutes. Fred Williams seconds. Minutes approved (7/0).

Behavioral Health Services Update:

Ian Kemmer provided an overview of the County-wide budget challenges, including a ten percent cut in net County costs due to the airport fire. He emphasized the importance of drawing down federal financial participation revenue, which has increased to \$75 million dollars.

The group discussed the older adult PIVOT Project alignment with Prop 1 objectives, with Linda expressing concern about potential changes to the project's focus. Ian clarified that the primary objective was to improve complex care management for



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Ian Kemmer, LMFT
Director
Behavioral Health Services

Karla Perez
Staff Specialist
Behavioral Health Services

individuals with both primary serious mental illness and neurocognitive disorders, not to provide housing. Ian included an update of the Project, which is currently in progress with QMS, as well as the Behavioral Health Integrated Plan that has been posted for public review.

The BHAB inquired on the status of the Project Kinship contract ASR; Ian confirmed Project Kinship is moving forward.

Prop 36 Overview and Update:

Tracy Ernt provided an overview and update on Proposition 36. Proposition 36 was approved by California voters in November 2024, allows individuals found in possession of illegal drugs to be charged with a “treatment mandated felony” rather than a misdemeanor in certain circumstances. The measure applies specifically to the possession of substances such as fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine. Individuals who successfully complete the mandated treatment program would have their charges dismissed.

Proposition 36 Census Update:

- **261** participants currently in program
- **144** participants active in Treatment
- **84** in Outpatient Treatment
- **60** in Residential Treatment
- **22** participants pending exit from program
- **118** not active in treatment: out to warrant, pending court date with new charges, no-showing for appointments-pending warrant at next court date, pending admit dates

Next Steps:

- Submit application for funds by February 27, 2026
- Hiring of additional Behavioral Health Clinicians
- Recruit for Service Chief in March

New Business:

- **BHSA Fiscal Update-** Anthony Lee provided his quarterly update on the MHSA Fund-Fiscal update and summary. Fiscal Year 2025-26 expenses have been updated to reflect Fiscal Year 2025-26 actuals through January and updated Fiscal Year 2025-26 projections. Fiscal year 2025-26 revenue has been updated to reflect latest Fiscal Year 2025-26 projections. The ending balance of Fiscal year 2025-26 is projected to end at \$240.2 million dollars.

HCA and County Budget & Finance continue to meet regularly with the State’s consultant, Mike Geiss, to review and update projected amounts and to plan for a range of potential future outcomes.



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BHAB in the Community:

Alan addressed the SB 43 Forum held on February 11, 2026. Updates on the senate bill provided a broader understanding of the overall process. The audience consisted of community members and a large law enforcement presence from the Orange County Sheriff's Department and Santa Ana Police Department. The presentation offered a clear and comprehensive overview of SB 43. Most questions focused on procedural aspects raised by attending officers. Alan inquired whether it would be possible to identify which police departments participated in the SB 43 trainings. BHS will follow up with Vanessa Thomas to determine whether this information can be shared.

Linda Smith and Alan Albright met with staff from Supervisor Wagner's office. The staff expressed strong interest in learning more about the BHAB's activities and requested additional information on several topics currently under discussion.

Chase Wickersham shared that on March 5, 2026, the general meeting for The Collaborative for Veterans and Military Families would be taking place at The Turney Center at 2:30 p.m.

Stephen McNally shared his attendance at The Orange County Collaborative. The recurring topic is the 400 certified peers in Orange County and how they are going to get employed.

Steve shared an SB 43 Forum in Los Angeles County taking place on February 11, 2026.

Karla Perez shared that Meeting of The Minds Mental Health Conference will take place at the Anaheim Marriot on Friday, May 22, 2026, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. She shared that BHAB will have an exhibitor table and asked the members to please email her should they need their registration processed.

Public Comment:

Fred Williams

Keith Torkelson-

Mr. Torkelson spoke about public housing, noting that despite ongoing funding efforts, the County remains far from resolving its housing challenges. He emphasized that a dedicated, specialized phone line could provide direct, expert guidance for individuals navigating complex housing issues. A housing support line for disadvantaged residents is feasible at an estimated \$3 million dollars per year. Keith also stressed the importance of expanding housing related-related programs to better meet community needs.

Marlee Chen-

Mr. Chen from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities shared that his agency is working to bridge service silos and expand support to agencies beyond those focused solely on developmental disabilities. He also announced that on March 17th, the agency will host a zoom training at 6:00 pm.



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Lydia-

Lydia from Coastline ROP in Costa Mesa announced a new course they are offering in Mental Health. They are inviting anyone interested to participate in the Mental Health Advisory meeting they will be hosting on March 13, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The goal is to bring together mental health professionals, college professors, and the instructor to review the curriculum and help ensure students are informed about current workforce trends in the field.

Announcements:

Fred Williams

BHSA Public Hearing will be held on April 15, 2026, at 601 N Ross Street, Sant Ana, CA 92701.

The next BHAB General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 601 N. Ross Street, MPR Room

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM by Alan Albright

Officially submitted by: Karla Perez ** *Note copies of all writings pertaining to items in these BHAB meetings are available for public review in the Behavioral Health Services Advisory Board Office, 405 W. 5th St., Santa Ana, CA 92701, 714.834.5481 or Email: OCBHAB@ochca.com* **