



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
Third District

Wednesday, September 24, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Meeting Location:

601 N. Ross St., (MPR Room) 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

MINUTES

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Members Present: Alan Albright, Frederick Williams, Supervisor Sarmiento's Office, Adela Cruz, Linda Smith, Chase Wickersham, Danielle Sena, Ethan Truong, Michell Fernandez

Members Absent: Carla DiCandia, Stephen McNally, Duan Tran,

Staff Present: Ian Kemmer, Linda Molina, Helen Cameron, Karla Perez, Amy Nguyen, Flor Yousefian Tehrani, Mark Lawrenz, Dawn Smith, Tim Sigafos, Erika Punchard, Frank Congine, Letty Luna-Pinto, Jennifer Santillan

BHAB MEMBERS

Alan V. Albright, LMFT
Chair

Frederick Williams, LMFT
Vice Chair

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Hector Bustos

Adela Cruz

Carla DiCandia

Michell Fernandez

Stephen McNally

Danielle Sena

Linda Smith

Duan Tran, MSW

Ethan Truong

Chase Wickersham

Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Alan Albright who then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

- August 27, 2025: Chase motioned to approve the minutes, Danielle to second. Minutes approved (Yes 9/No 0)

BHS Chief's Report

Ian Kemmer provided an update on initiatives within BHS. The SB 43 website will be released soon. On the website, there will be resources for community members, BHS staff, law enforcement, and hospital partners. Ian addressed challenges that will come up as part of the implementation of SB 43 and how they have been working with partners to stand up facilities that can receive individuals diagnosed solely with a substance use disorder (SUD), and the staffing and treatment that would be provided. In other counties, the increase in the number of people getting placed on holds for SUD is not significant. Orange County is slated to implement SB 43 on January 1, 2026.

The Prop 36 program has seen a steady increase in numbers. BHS applied for a Prop 47 grant for additional funding to assist with staffing needs; however, it was not awarded. Currently, the team is looking at more strategic ways to provide timely assessments to get individuals into treatment, some of which included working with



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Karla Perez
Staff Specialist

Behavioral Health Services

partners in the criminal justice system to do more assessments in the jail and allowing individuals who are out of custody that need assessment to schedule their appointments.

Ian shared that BHS will opt in to CalAim and further explained one of the components that BHS will be opting into, which will increase opportunities for payment. If six evidenced-based practices are stood up, then the county is eligible to draw down federal dollars to help pay for inpatient bed days. A future presentation can be share with BHAB.

Danielle Sena inquired regarding Prop 36, she asked if a partnership could be established with the public defender's office to decrease the demand on BHS staff. Ian shared that those conversations are happening with parties involved in the court process, so that the individual would like to be a part of the program to ensure individuals opt-in once an assessment has been completed. Danielle requested to know the number of assessments that are being done are with in-custody folks and out-of-custody folks. Ian responded that that information can be provided after the meeting. Chase Wickersham inquired if a state reporting program was available that allowed public access to numbers of 5150s that are issued within a county. Ian confirmed the information is being gathered but would need to confirm if it is available to the public.

Ian also provided a brief update about the Jail to Community Re-Entry Program, which is targeted for individuals who are being discharged from jails and transitioning to treatment programs. Jail in-reach and the ability to bill for services are being developed. Danielle requested data for the number of individuals who get referred, number that show up to treatment, and number of individuals that are lost. This information will be provided to the BHAB.

Linda Smith requested clarification about BH Connect, specifically how to opt in to certain components. Ian confirmed that BHS will be opting in to all components. Linda also requested a presentation about CARE Court. Linda also requested an update regarding the BHAB's role in BHSA. Ian confirmed that BHAB must abide by the new BHSA regulations, not the previous MHSA regulations. Ian clarified that the language between the WIC codes in BHSA has changed, but the WIC for the Behavioral Health Board has not been updated as of yet. The State has confirmed that the BHSA guidelines are what will be regulated. Alan added that despite BHAB's role change in approving the community planning process, they still have a role in providing comments and recommendations.

Linda also asked for an update on the board item regarding the Tracey Lacey. Ian clarified that the item has not been deleted but will be going back to the Board of Supervisors (BOS) for approval. The contract is in the process of being revised for clarity.

Adela Cruz requested clarification about public understanding of services and the relationship between providers, partners, and Be Well Centers and courses of action.



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Ian clarified that the only new service Be Well Centers will be providing is an adolescent Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU). He suggested a person in crisis should call OC Links to request a CAT dispatch. CAT staff are trained to de-escalate the crisis and help figure out where an individual should go for assistance if needed. Adela asked who is responsible for determining if an individual should be placed on a hold. Ian and Linda clarified an LPS-designated clinician would be responsible to make that decision. Alan suggested Adela lead a workgroup about the crisis response systems in the county to explore the topic. Adela highlighted the complexity of navigating the system as part of the public experience. Once the workgroup is established, they will submit questions, at which point the BHS staff can provide data and clarification.

Vasila Ahmad commented that Supervisor Sarmiento's office has also been considering the complexity of navigating resources and services as a community. In partnership with CEO, the county website will be updated for the public to have a better understanding.

Updates & Presentations:

- **OC Links Dashboard and Update by Timothy Sigafos and Erika Punchard**

Tim Sigafos and Erika Punchard provided an overview of the OC Links Dashboard. Information on the dashboard is updated on a daily basis and the data covers a period starting from January 1, 2024, to September 23, 2025. Tim and Erika explained what data gets collected from calls, outcomes, and law enforcement presence during responses.

Chase requested data regarding trends on a monthly or quarterly basis. Tim shares that that information is not ready for release but could be provided. Michell Fernandez asked if they have seen benefits for the individual in crisis when there is decreased involvement of law enforcement in crisis responses. Erika shared in many cases calls do not require the involvement of law enforcement so it has been beneficial, but there are also cases where law enforcement may be needed due to uncooperativeness, aggression, or history of violence, which teams will clinical discretion to determine if the support is needed. Adela requested clarification about who may be sent out as part of the response team. Erika confirmed there is a licensed behavioral health clinician or licensed wavered clinician, and a mental health specialist or peer support specialist. The clinician is responsible for making decisions; however they will work together as a team to come to the disposition. Service Chiefs are also available for consultation support. Linda asked if tracking was available for repeat callers. Erika confirmed duplicate callers are documented. Tim shared about a quarter of calls are duplicated.

Tim and Erika also addressed other questions submitted by the BHAB about the dashboard. Alan requested that the information be presented in graphs or documentation at a later date. Tim clarified that they are currently waiting on the data dictionary to officially determine what is meant to be included on the dashboard. Alan requested to see that dashboard as well.

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New Business:

- **MHSA Fiscal Update by Anthony Le**

Anthony Le provided a summary of the Fiscal Year 24-25 transactions with actual data and projections for FY 25-26. Actual funding available for FY 24-25 is \$424.3 million. Actual expenses were \$228 million, leaving \$195.4 million that was carried over to FY 25-26. After projected revenue and costs in 25-26, the projected ending balance is \$152.4 million. Anthony also provided a breakdown of the MHSA components of funds that makes up the \$195.4 million.

HCA and the County Budget & Finance Office continue to meet regularly with the State Consultant, reviewing and updating projected amounts and planning for a variety of future potential outcomes. The statewide presentation will be happening in mid-October for updated numbers.

Linda asked for clarification to see expenditures and balances of funds set aside for Community Program Planning (CPP). Anthony provided additional handouts that have further breakdowns of funds, and what Linda was asking for is included as part of the Program and Admin Costs. Anthony shared \$1.7 million was spent on Community Planning, while up to 5% is allocated to CPP and there is no requirement that 5% must be spent on CPP. Anthony also clarified that the numbers provided only reflect MHSA dollars and does not account for Medi-Cal revenue. MHSA funds are used to cover the gap between Medi-Cal revenue and program costs. Medi-Cal revenue information is available in a different report. Anthony noted Medi-Cal revenue from FY 24-25 was about \$116 million, because of the implementation of CalAim which led to the billings from FY 23-24 being submitted in FY 24-25.

Michelle requested clarification regarding the funds spent towards treatment services compared to the funds spent towards outreach. Anthony clarified since the report is only MHSA funds, other funding sources are not factored into the report. Ian clarified the numbers had to be broken down for the reporting, however the actual costs of what programs are doing for access and outreach will differ because programs can do both.

- **Change of Date for November General Meeting**

Board vote to change the meeting date from November 26, 2025 to December 2, 2025. Fred Williams to motion, Danielle Sena to second. Voted by roll call. (Yes 9/No 0)

Old Business

- **Tabling Events:**

- OC Pride 2025 Festival & Parade on September 27, 2025
- Vanguard University Wellness Fair on October 1, 2025

Public Comments

- **Marley Chen**

Mr. Chen with State Council on Developmental Disabilities shared about an opportunity to provide input on a 5-year survey for setting priorities in disability work in the state



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- **Diana Heineck**
Ms. Heineck requested opportunities for part-time positions for certified peer specialists.
- **Keith Torkelson**
Mr. Torkelson provided a presentation on Metrics and Measurement regarding a housing solution bundle applying the BHSA funds. Keith provided several options for housing support systems.

Alan reminded the group that upcoming study meeting will be at Alcove in San Juan Capistrano.

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:48AM.

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 **

| 2025 BHAB Attendance Record | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| General Meetings | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MEMBER | 22-Jan | 26-Feb | 26-Mar | 23-Apr | 28-May | 25-Jun | 23-Jul | 27-Aug | 24-Sep | 22-Oct | 26-Nov |
| Alan Albright | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | | |
| Supervisor Sarmiento's Office | A | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | | |
| Hector Bustos | P | P | A | P | P | A | A | A | | | |
| Carla DiCandia | P | P | A | P | P | P | P | P | A | | |
| Stephen McNally | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | A | | |
| Tuong Chinh Nguyen | P | P | | | | | | | | | |
| Linda Smith | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | | |
| Duan Tran | A | P | A | A | P | P | A | P | A | | |
| Frederick Williams | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | | |
| Chase Wickersham | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | | |
| Michell Fernandez | | P | A | A | P | P | A | P | P | | |
| Danielle Sena | | A | A | P | P | A | P | P | P | | |
| Adela Cruz | | | | | P | A | P | A | P | | |
| Ethan Truong | | | | | | | P | P | P | | |