



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, July 22, 2026
10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.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

MINUTES

Page 1 of 3

BHAB MEMBERS

Alan V. Albright, LMFT
Chair

Linda Smith
Vice Chair

Supervisor Vicente Sarmiento
Second District

Adela Cruz

Cielo Echegoyen

Michell Fernandez

Stephen McNally

Frederick Williams

Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez

Chase Wickersham

Virginia Arvizu Sanchez

Members Present: Alan Albright, Frederick Williams, Linda Smith, Stephen McNally, Chase Wickersham, Cielo Echegoyen, Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez, Adela Cruz, Frederick Williams, Virginia Arvizu Sanchez, Michelle Fernandez

Members Absent: Supervisor Sarmiento

Staff Present: Karla Perez, Anthony Padilla, Gabriela Saldana, Annette Mugrditchian, Michelle Smith, Vanessa Thomas, Ian Kemmer, Dawn Smith, Azahar Lopez, Jennifer Santillan, Erika, Santillan, Bhuvana Rao, Terri Styner, Anthony Lee, Deana Helmy, Christine Gardea, Grace Lee, Rebecca Miller,

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:

Linda Smith

- Cielo Echegoyen motions to approve June 24, 2026, General meeting minutes. Frederick Williams seconds the motion. Minutes approved (11 yes/ 0 No).

Behavioral Health Services Update:

Michelle Smith provided a Behavioral Health Services (BHS) update, introducing a new one-page highlight format which includes updates and information on BHS such as OC Navigator page views, data on OC Links calls, dispatches, transitional rent benefits, Care Court, Prop 36, community surveys and trainings. Michelle also shared an update on recent DHCS (Department of Healthcare Services) audits, with only minor findings related to adult residential treatment services, highlighting the need for developing policies and procedures for this level of care. Michelle also reported that the Drug Medi-Cal (DMC) Organized Delivery System audit found zero findings across five major categories, which she described as a significant accomplishment reflecting the strength of the County's behavioral health system.



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 2 of 4

HEALTH CARE AGENCY

Dr. Veronica Kelley, LCSW
Agency Director
Healthcare Agency

Karla Perez
Staff Specialist
Behavioral Health Services

In addition, Michelle addressed ongoing concerns about the Be Well program, noting they are limited in sharing information due to an ongoing lawsuit and promising a more comprehensive update next month.

Follow-Up Items:

1. Invest and potentially include data on the percentage of Prop 36 fillings that result in treatment in Orange County.
2. Provide a more comprehensive update on the Be Well campus at next BHAB General meeting.

OC Links Update:

- By: Vanessa Thomas

Vanessa presented on OC Links and the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT), which partners with law enforcement across Orange County and has 17 current partnerships. She shared data showing OC Links received 110,144 calls from January 2024 to June 2026, with 35,888 identified as possible crisis calls and 81% handled by two person teams. Vanessa and her team of staff, also discussed the process for handling crisis calls, explaining how navigators assess situations and determine appropriate responses, including dispatching mobile crisis teams when needed.

Vanessa focused on the Crisis Assessment Team (CAT) operations and entry points for mental health crisis. Vanessa explained that the CAT team receives approximately 4,143 calls monthly through OC Links, which serves as the primary dispatch point for crisis interventions. The teams aim to respond within 60 minutes of dispatch, conducting crisis evaluations and providing appropriate referrals including hospitalization or community services, with follow-up support at hospitals.

Follow-Up items:

1. Work on implementing real-time supervisory oversight of OC Links.
2. Provide date on the outcomes of the new "Transport to alternate destinations" policy for paramedics.
3. Update the dashboard to include timeline information (current month and year-to-date totals) for future reports and adding a separate one-page document to trend date month-by-month for services like OC Navigator and OC Links calls.
4. Look into including data on the number of 5150 holds written out of 900 assessments in future updates.

Old Business:

Alan Albright

Workgroup Updates:

Suicide Prevention: Adela Cruz attended the Suicide Prevention Coalition meeting on July 21, 2026, and recommends that the BHAB align efforts with the Suicide Prevention Coalition Committee.



County of Orange

Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 3 of 4

Law Enforcement Disengagement: Alan attended a meeting with the NAMI California Board of Directors and Law Enforcement Response Workgroup. Alan would like to start a dialogue with other counties to see what their experience has been with Law Enforcement Disengagement. Alan invites interested members to join a work group to discuss and often identify the key data that should be collected over time to understand how Law Enforcement is disengaging, the circumstances and some of the outcomes.

New Business:

Alan Albright

Alan requests that Karla Perez include “Data Notebook” under New Business going forward.

Alan asks Linda Smith to serve as the Data Notebook point person, recognizing her extensive experience and background in the child welfare system and wraparound services.

Alan asks board members to consider taking part in the telephone interview process of a prospective new Board member. Alan asks members to inform Karla Perez if they are interested in assisting with that process.

Linda Smith asks members interested in older adults to consider reviewing an upcoming Request for Proposal (RFP) and being a part of that RFP Panel.

Cielo Echegoyen requested Supervisor Sarmiento’s office to attend a BHAB meeting and provide a summary of a plan for a new facility in Santa Ana.

Linda Smith requested a site visit to Children’s Hospital of Orange County (CHOC).

Public Comment:

Linda Smith

Keith Torkelson:

Mr. Torkelson spoke about the importance of end-of-life planning, its benefits and its challenges.

Announcements:

Linda Smith

Cecilia Vega Gonzalez attended a community event for mental health called “Mental Health, Mental Wellness and Emotions for Children and Families”. The information provided was very informative and over 60 families attended.

Adela Cruz informed the BHAB on a Suicide Prevention Training, AB2003, designed for school districts from K-12.

Steve McNally attended the Orange County Continuum of Care Board and Commission to Address Homelessness meeting on July 21, 2026.

In-person Community Quality Improvement Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 25, 2026. Karla Perez will send meeting information to all in attendance.



County of Orange Behavioral Health Advisory Board

MINUTES

Page 4 of 4

Adjournment:

Alan Albright adjourned meeting at 11:50 am.

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 **

2026 BHAB Attendance Record General Meetings													
	MEMBER	28-Jan	25-Feb	25-Mar	22-Apr	27-May	24-Jun	22-Jul	26-Aug	23-Sep	28-Oct	25-Nov	23-Dec
1	Alan Albright	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
2	Supervisor Sarmiento's Office	A	A	A	A	A	A	A					
3	Stephen McNally	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
4	Cecilia Vega-Gonzalez	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
5	Linda Smith	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
6	Virginia Arvizu Sanchez							P					
7	Frederick Williams	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
8	Chase Wickersham	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					
9	Michell Fernandez	P	A	P	P	P	P	P					
10	Adela Cruz	P	P	A	A	P	P	P					
11	Cielo Echegoyen		P	P	P	P	P	P					

Present: P

Absent: A