

California Behavioral Health Planning Council

Housing and Homelessness Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2026

Council Members present: Susie Baker (virtual), John Black, Jason Bradley, Monica Caffey, Dave Cortright, Erin Franco (virtual), Lanita Mims-Beal, Barbara Mitchell, Don Morrison, Daphne Shaw, Maria Sierra, Deborah Starkey (virtual), Bill Stewart, Arden Tucker (virtual)

Staff present: Jenny Bayardo, Naomi Ramirez, Simon Vue

Meeting Commenced: 8:30 a.m.

Quorum Established: 14 out of 16 members

Item #1 Review and Accept October 2025 Meeting Minutes

The Housing and Homelessness Committee reviewed the October 2025 Draft Meeting Minutes. The minutes were accepted by the committee as written.

Action/Resolution

The October 2025 Housing and Homelessness Committee Meeting Minutes are accepted and will be posted to the Council’s website.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Simon Vue – January 2026

Item #2 Review and Accept Draft 2025-2026 Committee Charter and Work Plan

The Housing and Homelessness Committee reviewed and accepted the final draft of the 2025-2026 Committee Charter and Work Plan as written.

Action/Resolution

The 2025-2026 Committee Charter and Work Plan will be posted to the Housing and Homelessness Committee’s webpage.

Responsible for Action-Due Date

Simon Vue – January 2026

Item #3 Discussion on Time Limits for Transitional Housing: Behavioral Health Services Act versus Federal Standards

The Committee discussed two issues with the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) housing rules:

- **Length of Stay in Transitional Housing:** BHSA Housing Interventions funds can provide 6 months of interim housing for Medi-Cal members who have

California Behavioral Health Planning Council

already used their Transitional Rent benefit or 12 months for those not eligible for Medi-Cal Transitional Rent. After these limits, BHSA funds can only assist with moving individuals into permanent housing. However, federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules and the state Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Program allow up to 24 months in transitional housing.

- **Rent Requirement:** The BHSA Policy Manual states that programs may not charge rent in transitional housing. Barbara noted that this conflicts with federal practice where tenants usually pay about 30% of their income.

Committee Discussion

Barbara suggested that the Committee treat the two issues separately. She emphasized that because permanent affordable housing is scarce, it is critical to identify a suitable placement if people must leave transitional housing sooner than expected. She noted that the state Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Program, which offers up to two years of transitional housing for people with behavioral health needs, will end in mid-2027.

John Black noted that people with conditions like schizophrenia often need many months to achieve stability on medication, and a premature end to housing can push them back into homelessness.

When asked how the rent payment would affect program budgets, Barbara said that if tenants paid nothing, BHSA funds would have to cover all housing costs and reduce the number of subsidized units. She added that the rent payment from tenants would save BHSA funds and allow more units to stay in the program.

When asked whether tenants could afford rent, Barbara explained that the 30% amount is based on actual income. People with zero income pay nothing and someone with \$100/month of income pays \$30. She said programs often provide utility or other supports for those with no income, and rules do not allow programs to deny housing because someone has low or no income.

Motion: Send the two issues to the Officer Team for potential advocacy and a letter to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) with our recommendations to restore a two-year maximum stay for transitional housing and allow tenants to be charged up to 30% of income for rent.

David Cortright moved the motion, and Bill Stuart seconded it. A roll-call vote passed the motion.

Action Item: Council staff will forward the two issues to the Officer Team for potential advocacy.

Item #4 Meeting Adjourn / Travel to TURN to Recovery Program Site

The Housing and Homelessness Committee adjourned at 9:05 a.m.

California Behavioral Health Planning Council

Committee members participated in an off-site tour of the TURN to Recovery, a local recovery housing program in San Diego, California. This outpatient program serves individuals with alcohol use disorders and provides intensive case management, treatment and recovery services, housing support, and recovery residences.