



California Behavioral Health Planning Council

ADVOCACY • EVALUATION • INCLUSION

AGENDA

June 16, 17, 18, and 19, 2026

[Marriott Riverside at the Convention Center/Riverside Convention Center,](#)
Riverside, CA

Notice: All agenda items are subject to action by the Council. Scheduled times on the agenda are estimates and subject to change. If Reasonable Accommodation is required, please contact the Council at 916-701-8211 by **June 1, 2026** to meet the request. All items on the Committee agendas posted on our website are incorporated by reference herein and are subject to action.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

2:00 p.m. [Performance Outcomes Committee](#)

Wednesday, June 17, 2026

8:30 a.m. [Executive Committee](#)

10:30 a.m. [Patients' Rights Committee](#)

12:00 p.m. LUNCH (on your own)

1:30 p.m. [Workforce and Employment Committee](#)

1:30 p.m. [Legislation and Public Policy Committee](#)

Thursday, June 18, 2026

8:30 a.m. [Housing and Homelessness Committee](#)

8:30 a.m. [Systems and Medicaid Committee](#)

12:00 p.m. LUNCH (on your own)

Thursday, June 18, 2026

COUNCIL GENERAL SESSION

Conference Call: (669) 900-6833 (Listen Only)

Meeting ID: 971 8700 9182 **Passcode:** 458600

Location: Riverside Convention Center

3637 5th Street, Riverside, CA. 92501

2:30 p.m. Welcome and Introductions

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

2:40 p.m. CBHPC External Partners Representation Updates

Tab U

Uma Zykofsky, 988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group

Monica Caffey, Black Health Equity Advisory Group

3:10 p.m. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Tab V

Administration (SAMHSA) Community Mental Health Services Block Grant Annual Implementation Report

CA Department of Health Care Services, Federal Grants Branch

3:45 p.m. 15-Minute Break

4:00 p.m. Committee Report-Outs

- **Performance Outcomes:** Noel O'Neill, Chairperson
- **Executive:** Tony Vartan, Chairperson
- **Patients' Rights:** Mike Phillips, Chairperson
- **Legislation and Public Policy:** Javier Moreno, Chairperson
- **Workforce and Employment:** Bill Stewart, Chairperson
- **Housing and Homelessness:** Maria Sierra, Chair-Elect
- **Systems and Medicaid:** Karen Baylor, Chairperson

4:50 p.m. General Public Comment

5:00 p.m. Recess

Public Comment: Limited to a 2-minute maximum to ensure all are heard.

Friday, June 19, 2026

COUNCIL GENERAL SESSION

Conference Call: (669) 900-6833 (Listen Only)

Meeting ID: 971 8700 9182 **Passcode:** 458600

Location: Riverside Convention Center

3637 5th Street, Riverside, CA. 92501

8:30 a.m. Welcome Back & Announcements

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

8:40 a.m. 2026 Conference Sharing

Deborah Starkey, Maria Sierra, Susan Wilson, Karen Baylor, Marina Rangel, and Javier Moreno

Tab W

9:00 a.m. Commission for Behavioral Update

Al Rowlett, Chair/Commissioner

- Presentation (10-15 minutes)
- Council Member Discussion (5-10 minutes)

9:30 a.m. Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Update

Paula Wilhelm, Deputy Director, Behavioral Health, CA Department of Health Care Services

- *Presentation (20 minutes)*
- *Council Member Discussion (5-7 minutes)*
- *Public Comment (4-5 minutes)*

10:00 a.m. 20-Minute Break

**10:20 a.m. Council Overview and Approval of HCAI 2026-2030
Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five-Year Plan
(Action)**

Tab XYZ

*Libby Abbott, MPH, Deputy Director, Health Workforce Development
Sharmil Shah, MA, Psy.D, Branch Chief, Behavioral Health & Policy
Angela Brand, Section Chief, Behavioral Health & Policy*

- Presentation (60 minutes)
- Council Member Discussion
- Public Comment
- Vote

11:50 a.m. General Public Comment

12:00 p.m. Closing Remarks & Adjourn

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

Public Comment: Limited to a **2-minute maximum to ensure all are heard.**

2026 Council Meeting Schedule

- October 20-23, 2026: [Embassy Suites San Francisco Airport-South San Francisco](#), South San Francisco, CA

2027 Council Meeting Schedule

- January 19-22, 2027: San Diego, CA
- April 13-16, 2027: Sacramento, CA
- June 15-18, 2027: Los Angeles Area
- October 19-22, 2027: Bay Area

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Agenda Item: CBHPC External Partners Representation Updates

Enclosures: [Council Member Representation in External Groups Document](#)

Background/Description:

The California Behavioral Health Planning Council participates in other statewide planning groups to make meaningful contributions to the development of behavioral health policies and services in California. Council Members are approved to represent the Council via CBHPC Operating Policies and Procedures 10.2.

10.2 Roles and Accuracy of Planning Council Positions

Individual members may be called upon to represent the Planning Council before the Legislature, state departments, or other groups. In addition, individual members may wish to represent the Planning Council at particular forums. In any forum, members must indicate whether they are representing the Planning Council or are speaking as individuals. Individuals may represent the Planning Council only when authorized by the Chairperson or Executive Officer and are responsible for representing the Planning Council's positions accurately.

During this agenda item, we will receive brief updates on two external groups in which Council members participate: the 988-Crisis Policy Advisory Group and the Black Health Equity Advisory Group. Members may ask questions after the updates.

**California Behavioral Health Planning Council
General Session**

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Agenda Item: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Community Mental Health Services Block Grant Annual Implementation Report

Enclosures: 2024 Mental Health Block Grant Report*

2025 Mental Health Block Grant Report *

2026 Mental Health Block Grant Report *

Background/Description:

This agenda item fulfills the Council's federal requirement to review and comment on the Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) Implementation Report as outlined in Public-Law 102-321. Each year, California submits this report to Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration detailing how MHBG funds were used. The Planning Council is federally mandated to review and provide comments on the report. Council members will have the opportunity to discuss any feedback they wish to submit to the Department of Health Care Services on the final report.

*For a copy of the Mental Health Block Grant Reports, please contact Maydy Lo at maydy.lo@cbhpc.dhcs.ca.gov.

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Friday, June 19, 2026

Agenda Item: 2026 Conference Sharing

Enclosures: None

Background/Description:

The California Behavioral Health Planning Council periodically solicits Council Members to travel to events and conferences on behalf of the Council. The members are expected to share the information gained from these events with fellow members.

The following events were recently attended by Council Members who will provide a report-out:

- Housing California 2026 Annual Conference
 - Deborah Starkey
 - Maria Sierra
- CBHA Spring Policy Forum: Unwavering Advocacy in Turbulent Times
 - Susan Wilson
 - Deborah Starkey
 - Karen Baylor
- CA Alliance 2026 Advocacy in Action: United for Community, Rooted in Justice
 - Karen Baylor
- ASAM 57th Annual Conference-Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science
 - Javier Moreno

The following questions will be addressed in the report-outs:

1. What three things did you learn from this event?
2. How does what you learned relate to the work of the Council and/or your committee?
3. Is there any action the Council should take as a result of the information you learned? (If yes, please explain)

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Friday, June 19, 2026

Agenda Item: Council Overview and Approval of HCAI 2026-2030 Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five-Year Plan (Action)

Enclosures: [CBHPC WET Plan Roles and Responsibilities Fact Sheet](#)

[WEC Feedback Letter for WET Plan Objectives](#)

[HCAI Response to WEC Feedback Letter for WET Plan Objectives](#)

[2026-2030 WET Plan Recommendation Letter \(May 2026\)](#)

[California Alliance HCAI WET Panel Feedback](#)

[California Alliance HCAI WET Plan Public Comment](#)

[California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists \(CAMFT\) Letter
HCAI Behavioral Health Workforce Strategy](#)

[CAMFT National Association of Social Workers \(NASW\) CA HCAI 5-Year
WET Plan Feedback](#)

[California Behavioral Health Association \(CBHA\) HCAI WET Plan
Comments \(April 2026\)](#)

[California Behavioral Health Association \(CBHA\) HCAI WET Plan
Comments \(May 2026\)](#)

[County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California \(CBHDA\)
Feedback HCAI Workforce Initiatives March 2026](#)

[California Coalition for Behavioral Health \(CCBH\) Letter HCAI April 2026](#)

[California Psychological Association \(CPA\) WET Plan Letter](#)

[Mental Health America of California \(MHAC\) Response HCAI Findings
and Recommendations](#)

[Psychiatric Physicians Alliance of California \(PPAC\) TNT Primary Care
Education and Training Fact Sheet](#)

Background/Description:

The Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five-Year Plan is a Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) program. The California Behavioral Health Planning Council is statutorily required to review and approve the WET Five-Year Plan per Welfare and Institution Code (WIC) § 5820(c)–(e). The Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) released the draft plan for public comment May 19-May 29, 2026.

During this agenda item, the Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) will present the final Five-Year Plan to the full Council for review and approval. The presentation will provide a high-level overview of the plan, explain how stakeholders were engaged throughout the development process, and summarize how HCAI incorporated feedback from the Council, including input from the Workforce and Employment Committee and the Workforce Education and Training Steering Committee.

The Workforce and Employment Committee has submitted two recommendation letters for the draft 2026-2030 WET Plan. Several partner organizations have shared their letters. All letters along with any responses provided by HCAI, are included in this tab.

The final plan will be e-mailed to Council Members on June 9th, 2026, once received from HCAI.

*For a copy of the final 2026- 2030 Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five-Year Plan, please contact Ashneek Nanua at Ashneek.Nanua@cbhpc.dhcs.ca.gov.

Motion: To approve the 2026- 2030 Workforce Education and Training (WET) Five-Year Plan.

Presenter Biographies:

Sharmil Shah, Branch Chief, Behavioral Health & Policy, Health Workforce Development, Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI)

Sharmil Shah, Psy.D., is a child psychologist by training with over 20 years of experience in clinical care, management, outreach, and business development across public and private sectors. She currently serves as Branch Chief of Behavioral Health and Policy for Health Workforce Development at California's Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), leading initiatives to strengthen the behavioral health workforce and expand care access. Previously, she was Chief of Innovation and Program Operations at the Commission for Behavioral Health, overseeing statewide programs and Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) implementation. Dr. Shah began her career as a child therapist and later served as Director of the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Riverside County, reflecting her strong commitment to child and family well-being. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from UC Riverside, an M.A. in Psychology from Chapman University, and a Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) from California Southern University.

Libby Abbott, Deputy Director, Health Workforce Development, Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI)

Libby Abbott joined California's Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) in October 2023 as a Deputy Director to lead the Health Workforce Development team.

Prior to joining HCAI, Libby was the Director of the Health Workforce Program at the Clinton Health Access Initiative, where she led a portfolio of technical assistance to the governments of 12 countries on health workforce planning, programs, and policy. In this capacity she worked closely with the governments of several countries – Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi, and Rwanda – to design and launch national health workforce strategies, including supply and demand modeling to set workforce targets, pre-service scale up plans, and introducing new health professions training programs.

Libby also has a background in research, monitoring, and evaluation.

Libby holds two master's degrees in Public Health and International Affairs from Columbia University.

Angela Brand, Section Chief, Behavioral Health & Policy, Health Workforce Development, Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI)

Angela Brand is a public-sector leader with more than 15 years of experience supporting behavioral health systems through program development, workforce initiatives, and community partnership. She currently serves as a Staff Services Manager II at the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI), where she helps lead statewide efforts to strengthen California's behavioral health workforce and expand pathways into the field for people serving communities across the state. Her work centers on collaboration with counties, providers, educators, and community-based organizations to turn shared goals into practical, sustainable solutions. Angela brings both professional expertise and lived experience navigating behavioral health and education systems, and is deeply committed to advancing equity, access, and support for the workforce and the communities they serve.