



California Behavioral Health Planning Council

ADVOCACY • EVALUATION • INCLUSION

AGENDA

October 20, 21, 22, and 23, 2026

[Embassy Suites San Francisco Airport-South San Francisco](#)

250 Gateway Blvd, South San Francisco, CA 94080

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 **October 5, 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, October 20, 2026

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

Wednesday, October 21, 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, October 22, 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, October 22, 2026

COUNCIL GENERAL SESSION

Room: Northrop-Stanley

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

Meeting ID: 935 5434 7903 **Passcode:** 036985

1:30 p.m. Welcome and Introductions

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

1:35 p.m. Local Behavioral Health Services Overview

Tab A

Todd Schirmer, PhD, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services (BHRS) Director, Marin County

- Presentation (30 minutes)
- Council Member Question & Answer (10 minutes)
- Public Comment (5 minutes)

2:20 p.m. Success Over Stigma

Tab B

Kontrena McPheter, Peer Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator, Interim Inc.

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Stories of Success (30 minutes)
- Council Member Discussion (10 minutes)
- Public Comment (5 minutes)

3:15 p.m. 15-Minute Break

3:30 p.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 Question & Answer (5-7 minutes)
- Public Comment (4-5 minutes)

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, October 23, 2026

COUNCIL GENERAL SESSION

Room: Northrop-Stanley

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

Meeting ID: 935 5434 7903 **Passcode:** 036985

8:30 a.m. Welcome Back, Re-Introductions & Announcements

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

8:40 a.m. Council Member Appointment and Acknowledgments

Jenny Bayardo, Executive Officer and Tony Vartan, Chairperson

- Council Member Term Expirations Announcements
- Acknowledgments and Appreciation

9:15 a.m. 2027 Areas of Focus

Tab C

Tony Vartan, Chairperson and Susan Wilson, Chairperson Elect

9:30 a.m. Integrated Plans Presentation

Tab D

- DHCS Overview of BHSA Integrated Plans: *Marlies Perez, Chief, Community Services Division, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) (20 minutes)*
- County Presentations of Local Integrated Plan (45 minutes): *Imo Momoh, Director of Managed Care, San Francisco County Department of Public Health Behavioral Health Services Department and Jei Africa, Behavioral Health Director, San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services*
- Council Discussion and Next Steps (15 minutes)
- Public Comment (10 minutes)

11:00 a.m. 20-Minute Break

11:20 a.m. Public Forums Report Out

Tab E

Performance Outcomes Subcommittee #2: Susan Wilson and Uma Zykovsky and Jenny Bayardo, Executive Officer

- Lessons Learned (10 minutes)
- Council Member discussion (10 minutes)

11:40 a.m. General Public Comment

11:55 a.m. Closing Remarks

Tony Vartan, Chairperson

12:00 p.m. Adjourn

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

2027 Council Meeting Schedule

- **January 19-22, 2027: San Diego, CA**
- **April 13-16, 2027: Folsom, CA**
- **June 15-18, 2027: Marina Del Ray, Los Angeles CA**
- **October 19-22, 2027: Greater Bay Area**

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Thursday, October 22, 2026

Agenda Item: Local Behavioral Health Services Overview

Enclosures: None

Background/Description:

The California Behavioral Health Planning Council is mandated in Welfare and Institutions Code 5772 to review and evaluate the effectiveness of California's public behavioral health services. Behavioral Health directors from areas surrounding Council meetings are invited to present to the Council's full membership. Marin County Behavioral Health will provide a general overview of the behavioral health services they provide.

Marin County Behavioral Health Director Bio:



Dr. Todd Schirmer leads Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) for Marin County. He oversees mental health and substance use services for Marin residents who have Medi-Cal or no insurance. He also manages crisis services for everyone in Marin, no matter their insurance status.

Dr. Schirmer took on this role in August 2022. Before that, he led BHRS programs that support people in crisis, those involved with the justice system, and people returning to the community after incarceration. His work helped build a strong system of care for people at risk of or affected by incarceration. Under his leadership, Marin County

was named a Stepping Up Initiative Innovator County and received a California State Association of Counties Challenge Award in 2021.

Before joining Marin County, Dr. Schirmer worked for 10 years at Napa State Hospital. His roles there included staff psychologist, forensic specialist, and supervisor. Since 2010, he has also had a small private practice in clinical and forensic psychology.

Dr. Schirmer has a PhD in clinical psychology from Rosalind Franklin University, a master's degree from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University.

He is a licensed clinical psychologist and a certified correctional health professional. In his free time, he enjoys hiking Marin's trails with his son and rescue dog.

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Thursday, October 22, 2026

Agenda Item: Success Over Stigma

Enclosures: None

Background/Description:

Success Over Stigma is a community advocacy and educational outreach program designed to combat the three most prevalent forms of stigma: community perception, internal stigma and external stigma. The program works to increase understanding and reduce harmful stereotypes through mental health stigma reduction efforts that center education, dialogue, and recovery.

Success Over Stigma engages the community through workshops and outreach as part of a broader community mental health education effort. This is accomplished by recruiting and training mental health clients to share their successful stories of recovery with their peers and the community.

By addressing stigma directly, the program supports mental health awareness and recovery while strengthening understanding across the community.

Presenter Bios:

Kontrena McPheter



Kontrena McPheter is the Coordinator for Success Over Stigma Monterey County at Supportive Education and Employment Services (SEES). Her position was created in 2009 under Interim Inc., a nonprofit mental health agency established in 1975. Interim Inc.'s mission is to provide mental health services and affordable housing to help people build productive and satisfying lives.

Kontrena uses her lived experience with mental illness, addiction, and homelessness to advocate for others and promote a "Whole Person" approach

to mental health treatment. She has been an influential leader in her community, helping raise awareness about mental health and reduce stigma.

Throughout her career, Kontrena has led several community efforts, including Monterey County's first consumer-led Mental Health Fair and a movement to improve conditions in local Board and Care Homes. She also helped organize donations for residents and encouraged mental health training for staff. Her work has earned her several awards, including the Kristian Hart Memorial Award, Outstanding Consumer Award, and United Way's Unsung Heroine Award.

As Coordinator, Kontrena recruits, trains, and supports more than 50 mental health clients in sharing their recovery stories with schools, organizations, and agencies. Her work helps reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness while empowering people to share their experiences and advocate for themselves and others.

Robert Stefani



"I, Robert Stefani, am a graduate of Creating New Choices, a court-ordered probation program for patients of Monterey County Behavioral Health.

Monterey County's program is aimed at eligible applicants with specific qualifying psychiatric diagnoses, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, or bipolar disorder. It functions alongside other local collaborative programs like Drug Treatment Court and Veterans Treatment Court.

I am a Peer Advocate for mental Health with Interim's Keep it Real and Success over Stigma programs.

This has allowed me the opportunity to share my story; I have learned how to take care of myself better than ever before."

Victor Rowe



“My name is Victor Lynell Rowe. I’m 41 years old and originally from Chicago, Illinois. I’m a father of four, and being a father is one of the most important parts of who I am.

On February 12, I was given an opportunity to participate in a diversion program. Over the next eight months, I completed mental-health, reentry, and substance-abuse classes, attended NA and AA meetings, and worked with therapists, counselors, and mental-health professionals. Through this experience, I learned to take accountability and recognize that I needed to heal mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Today, I am grateful for the opportunity to rebuild my life. Prayer, patience, faith, and accountability have brought me to where I am today. I recently signed my first lease and am continuing to work toward becoming a better father, person, and member of my community.”

<https://www.interiminc.org/programs/success-over-stigma/>

**California Behavioral Health Planning Council
General Session**

Friday, October 23, 2026

Agenda Item: 2027 Areas of Focus

Enclosures: None

Background/Description:

The Officer Team proposed Areas of Focus that the Executive Committee members voted to adopt in October of 2025. The committee made additional edits in January and April of 2026. The Areas of Focus are intended to guide the work of General Session and the committees. The Executive Committee agreed to create new areas of Focus each October in preparation for the coming year.

The proposed 2027 Areas of Focus developed by the Executive Committee at the October Executive Committee meeting will be shared with the full Council.

California Behavioral Health Planning Council General Session

Friday, October 23, 2026

Agenda Item: Integrated Plans Presentation

Enclosures: None

Background/Description:

The Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) requires counties to explain how they will use available behavioral health funding to address local mental health substance use disorder (SUD) services and strengthen services across the care continuum, improve access to care, reduce disparities, coordinate programs and funding sources, and meet state and local outcomes goals. Every three years, each California county develops an Integrated Plan, which is a county roadmap for behavioral health services, programs, and investments. Each county must develop its plan through a transparent Community Planning Process. The plan is reviewed locally, approved by the county board of supervisors, and submitted to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) in accordance with [Welfare and Institutions Code §5963.02](#).

The California Behavioral Health Planning Council (CBHPC) is statutorily required to advise DHCS on behavioral health policies and priorities the state should pursue in developing its behavioral health and substance use disorder systems and advocate for children and adults with mental health and substance use disorder conditions. The CBHPC hosted several community forums to educate the public about the BHSA Integrated Plans and gather feedback regarding stakeholder experiences with the Community Planning Process. It is important for the Council to receive information on the state and counties' development of the BHSA Integrated Plans and their planning process. This information will assist the Council with making recommendations that improve access and quality of care for individuals served by the public behavioral health system.

Marlies Perez, the Chief of the Community Services Division at DHCS, will provide an overview of the BHSA Integrated Plans (IP). The overview will include the purpose of the IP, the IP template development process, how the IPs intend to achieve California's transparency goals, and how DHCS will use the information received from the IPs. Marlies will also speak about the challenges, successes, and lessons learned from the

state's process of reviewing and approving the IPs, and she will describe the actions taken by DHCS from the state's stakeholder feedback process.

Questions for DHCS Presentation:

1. Can you describe the purpose of the Integrated Plans?
2. How did DHCS develop the IP template, and what elements did the state prioritize in the creation of the template?
3. Did the IPs achieve the state's transparency goals?
4. How is DHCS using the information received from the IPs?
5. What actions were taken because of stakeholder feedback from the state's IP stakeholder process?
6. What are the identified strengths of the IPs that were submitted to the state?
7. What were the challenges in reviewing and approving the IPs? i.e.) Were the timeframes set up to review the IPs and give feedback challenging?
8. What were the barriers and lessons learned from this process?

Jei Africa, the Behavioral Health Director for San Mateo County Health Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Division, and Imo Momoh, the Director of Managed Care in the Alameda County Behavioral Health Services Department, will then present on the planning, design, and implementation of their local Integrated Plans. The presentations will include information on how the counties worked with the BHSA funding allocations, how the county chose their performance measures, and lessons learned from their local stakeholder processes. Additionally, the counties will discuss how they assessed the unmet needs for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, how populations with the greatest disparities were identified, and how the county used the publicly available data provided by DHCS.

Questions for County Presentation:

1. How did your county work with the new BHSA funding allocations?
 - How did the funding buckets impact your planning?
 - Did your county choose to transfer the 7% from one funding bucket to another?
 - Which funding buckets did your county change?
2. How did your county choose your performance measures and why?

3. From your stakeholder process, what did you learn that you were not aware of before creating the IP?
4. What information would you have liked to include in your IP that was not included?
 - Did the template format limit you from fully reflecting your county's needs?
5. How does your county assess the unmet needs of individuals with substance use disorder (SUD)?
 - What barriers exist that prevent individuals from accessing SUD treatment?
 - How do the Integrated Plans intend to address these barriers?
6. How did your county determine where the greatest disparities exist regarding access and outcomes for historically underserved communities?
 - What prevents these populations from access to behavioral health services and evaluating client outcomes?
7. How useful was the publicly available data that DHCS supplied in your county's IP development process?
 - Was the data helpful for local implementation?
 - In what instances was the data not helpful?
 - What were the strengths of utilizing this data?
8. Given the tight timelines to complete the IP, how did your county approach conducting outreach for stakeholder engagement?
 - What were the challenges in outreach?
 - What feedback resulted in your county's actions toward policy and program changes?
9. How do you feel this process can be improved?

In reference to Section B.3.1.2 on Presumptive Eligibility Requirements for Full-Service Partnerships in the BHSA County Policy Manual (see excerpt below), what is the local impact of changes to presumptive eligibility given your county's current staffing ratios and existing FSP capacity?

Council members will have the opportunity to ask questions after the presentation. The Members will also have the opportunity to discuss next steps for the Council's scope of work for the BHSA Integrated Plans.

To learn more about the Integrated Plans, please visit the [BHSA Integrated Plans Webpage](#).

Presenter Bios:

Marlies Perez



Marlies Perez has been a Division Chief with the California Department of Health Care Services since May 2013 and at the state level in behavioral health since 2001. Marlies is the Project Executive and DHCS lead for Behavioral Health Transformation. Currently, Ms. Perez also leads the Community Services Division (CSD) which is charged with policy development, oversight, compliance, and monitoring of approximately \$10 billion in behavioral health prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery services, housing and infrastructure projects and services. Ms. Perez is also California's Single State Authority on Substance Use Disorders for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Ms. Perez has a bachelor's degree in international relations and master's degree in organizational management.

Jei Africa



Jei Africa is the director of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. The division provides services for children, youth, families, adults, and older adults for the prevention, early intervention, and treatment of mental illness and/or substance use conditions. Services include outpatient, inpatient, residential, rehabilitation, detoxification, medication-assisted treatment, and other services for individuals who are eligible for Medi-Cal.

Africa was most recently director of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services for the County of Marin, where he focused on expanding community outreach to underserved communities, expanded the continuum of care for justice-involved clients and led the acquisition of several critical residential facility projects for those with mental health and substance abuse conditions.

Prior to that role, he served for over a decade as the director of the Office of Diversity and Equity within San Mateo County Health. Africa, the first openly transgender county behavioral health director in the United States, was instrumental in the opening of a transgender health clinic and spearheaded development of the first multi-disciplinary behavioral health LGBTQ+ community center in San Mateo County.

Imo Momoh



Imo Momoh is the Director of Managed Care for the Behavioral Health Services division of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. As a part of the executive team, Imo sets the vision and priorities for San Francisco's Behavioral Health Managed Care Plan as well as administer and support plan operations including: the behavioral health access programs, Office of Care Coordination, member services, utilization and quality management. Central to his mission is promoting equity, timely access, and person-centered care, while supporting compliance with Medi-Cal requirements.

Before his current role, Imo served as the deputy director and plan administrator for the Alameda County Behavioral Health Department. In Alameda County, his work spanned a portfolio of programs including quality improvement/management, information systems, financial services, data services, and the Mental Health Services Act.

A champion for mental health programs and reaching marginalized communities, Imo has dedicated the last 20 years of his career to improving health outcomes across county behavioral health systems in California. He's served in various capacities, including program planning, research and evaluation, finance, quality improvement, workforce development, policy analysis, and equity. Throughout his work, he has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to promoting access and advancing equity in the community and workforce.

**California Behavioral Health Planning Council
General Session**

Friday, October 23, 2026

Agenda Item: Public Forums Report Out

Enclosures: [Behavioral Health Services Act Integrated Plan Public Forum Summary Report](#)

Background/Description:

The California Behavioral Planning Council hosted a series of public forums to gather input from persons with lived experience and their family members on the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Integrated Plan process. In-person events were held in Riverside (June 18) and Oakland (July 30), and a virtual event took place on July 22.

A background document and summary report on the forums were written that include stakeholder feedback and recommendations for improving the integrated plan community planning process. Members of the Performance Outcomes Sub Committee #2 responsible for stakeholder engagement will provide highlights of the public forum events for the committee.