



AGENDA STAFF REPORT

Control: 26001083

MEETING DATE: 05/19/2026

LEGAL ENTITY TAKING ACTION: Board of Supervisors

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT(S): All Districts

SUBMITTING AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Health Care Agency

DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSON(S): Veronica Kelley, 714-834-7024
Ian Kemmer, 714-834-2160

SUBJECT: Behavioral Health Integrated Plan for FY 2026-27 to FY 2028-2029

CEO CONCUR	COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	CLERK OF THE BOARD
Concur	No Legal Objection	DISCUSSION
		3 Votes Board Majority

Budgeted: N/A	Current Year Cost: N/A	Annual Cost: N/A
Staffing Impact: No		Sole Source: No
Current Fiscal Year Revenue: N/A	Funding Source: See Financial Impact Section	County Audit in Last 3 years: No
Levine Act Review Completed? N/A		
Prior Board Action: N/A		

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

1. Approve the Orange County Three-Year Behavioral Health Integrated Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-27 through 2028-29 for the provision of Behavioral Health Services Act programs and services.
2. Authorize the Health Care Agency Director, or designee to execute and submit Orange County’s Behavioral Health Integrated Plan to the California Department of Health Care Services, as referenced in the Recommended Action above.
3. Approve expenditures from Behavioral Health Services Act funds for the purpose of assistance such as transit passes, gift cards of nominal value to grocery stores or local food retailers, and meals of nominal value for the purposes of Community Planning, Outreach and Training, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5892 and the California Department of Health Care Services Behavioral Health Services Act County Policy Manual, and authorize the Auditor-Controller to pay upon approval of the Health Care Agency Director or designee.
4. Certify that the County of Orange will meet Behavioral Health Realignment obligations, including compliance with time and distance and appointment wait time standards pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14197.7, and authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to execute the required attestation.

SUMMARY:

Approval of the Orange County Three-Year Behavioral Health Integrated Plan for Fiscal Year 2026-27 through Fiscal Year 2028-29 will allow the County of Orange to implement state-required behavioral health programs and services and submit the plan to the California Department of Health Care Services. This plan represents the County's first Behavioral Health Integrated Plan developed under the Behavioral Health Services Act and reflects the transition from the previous Mental Health Services Act planning framework.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In March 2024, California voters approved Proposition 1, which established the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA), effective July 1, 2026, and replaces the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). The BHSA restructures behavioral health funding and program requirements to strengthen the behavioral health continuum of care, expand housing interventions, and increase access to treatment and services for individuals with serious mental illness, substance use disorders, and co-occurring conditions.

Under the BHSA, counties are required to develop a Three-Year Behavioral Health Integrated Plan (IP) that outlines behavioral health programs, funding allocations, and service strategies across the local behavioral health system of care. Beginning July 1, 2026, the IP replaces the previous MHSA Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan and Annual Update planning process.

The IP for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 through FY 2028-29 provides a comprehensive overview of Orange County's (County) behavioral health system and identifies program investments across the three required BHSA funding categories: Full-Service Partnerships (FSP), Housing Interventions, and Behavioral Health Services and Supports (BHSS). The plan reflects updated state priorities focused on expanding housing stabilization efforts, strengthening access to treatment services, and improving coordination across health, housing, and social service systems. Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5963.03 requires counties to develop the IP through a Community Planning Process (CPP) that includes meaningful stakeholder engagement and public input prior to Board of Supervisors' (Board) approval and submission to the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).

To meet this requirement, throughout FY 2025-26, the Health Care Agency (HCA), through Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and the BHSA Office, conducted an extensive stakeholder engagement process to inform development of the proposed plan. Community engagement activities included educational sessions, community listening sessions, targeted focus groups, key informant interviews, and community forums. The County also convened BHSA implementation workgroups focused on Housing Interventions, BHSS, and FSP. These activities engaged consumers, family members, community-based organizations, behavioral health providers, housing partners, healthcare partners, and other stakeholders to inform program planning and identify community priorities and included the provision of non-monetary assistance to support participation and accessibility in CPP outreach, training, and planning efforts, pursuant to the FY 2025-26 MHSA Plan Update. The requested authorization for non-monetary assistance, in the form of transit passes, meals and gift cards, supports ongoing CPP-related outreach, training, and engagement activities by reducing barriers to participation.

Following completion of the CPP, the draft IP was publicly posted and electronically distributed for the required 30-day public comment period, which began on February 23, 2026, and concluded on March 27, 2026. Public comments received during the comment period were reviewed and responses were prepared by HCA. The Orange County Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) conducted the required public hearing on the draft IP on April 15, 2026, following prior presentations and discussion at regularly scheduled BHAB meetings.

In advance of Board consideration and under new requirements, the County submitted the draft IP to the DHCS on February 20, 2026, for preliminary review, ahead of the state's March 31, 2026, submission deadline. As part of this submission, the County Executive Officer confirmed that the proposed plan budget and requested categorical funding transfer were reviewed and approved in accordance with BHSA requirements. The DHCS conducts this review to ensure county plans comply with statutory funding category requirements and to evaluate requests related to funding transfers or exemptions permitted under the BHSA. Upon approval by the Board, the finalized IP will be submitted to the DHCS in accordance with state requirements.

Consistent with BHSA requirements, counties must also certify within the IP that they are meeting Behavioral Health Realignment obligations, including compliance with time and distance standards and appointment wait time standards pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14197.7. As part of the IP approval process, the Board is asked to confirm that the County will continue to comply with the Behavioral Health Realignment obligations.

The proposed IP reflects state requirements, community input gathered through the CPP, and the County's strategy for implementing the BHSA beginning July 1, 2026.

HCA requests the Board approve the Orange County IP for FY 2026-27 through FY 2028-29 as referenced in the Recommended Actions.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

All expenditures related to the IP will be approved by the Board through separate actions in accordance with County budgeting and procurement processes.

This Agenda Staff Report does not request approval of funds. The IP serves as a planning framework identifying programs and funding strategies consistent with BHSA requirements. Actual program expenditures will be brought to the Board through separate contracts, budget, and procurement actions.

STAFFING IMPACT:

N/A

REVIEWING AGENCIES/DEPARTMENTS:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Behavioral Health Integrated Plan for FY 2026-27 to FY 2028-2029

Attachment B - OC Board of Supervisors Certification 26-29

Attachment C - Welfare and Institutions Code Section 14197.7

Attachment D - Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5892

Attachment E - Welfare and Institutions Code Section 5963.03

Attachment F - Behavioral Health Services Act County Policy Manual-V.1.4.0-20260403