

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 25

SUBJECT: RECEIVE UPDATE ON SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER OPTIMAL CARE PATHWAYS MODEL, AUTHORIZE AND ADOPT A RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR THE BOND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM, AUTHORIZE EXPANDED USE OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BRIDGE HOUSING GRANT FUNDS, AUTHORIZE AGREEMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES, AND AUTHORIZE DESIGNATION OF MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS TO PERFORM FUNCTIONS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 5150 AND 5585.50 OF THE WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On March 4, 2025 (1), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) held a Board Conference and received information from the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Services on the Substance Use Disorder Optimal Care Pathways (SUD OCP) model. Building on the original Mental Health OCP model, the SUD OCP model seeks to increase capacity within the substance use system of care to improve access to treatment and support services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries by identifying additional capacity needs to improve care pathways for people with substance use conditions. The March 4, 2025 Board Conference presented background on the SUD OCP model and a high-level analysis of capacity needed to achieve an ideal future state. Today's action requests the Board receive an update on all activities to date including actions that have enhanced capacity across substance use treatment services.

Additionally, today's action requests the Board authorize a Resolution to apply for Round 2 of Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program funding that, if awarded, would further expand access to substance use treatment services. The action also requests the Board authorize the expanded use of Behavioral Health Bridge Housing funding to include increased access to short-term bridge housing, and authorize agreements with the Department of Health Care Services for the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System and Mental Health Plan.

On September 10, 2019 (9), the Board approved a resolution authorizing certain medical professionals to perform functions under California Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 5150 and 5585.50. To align with expanded hold criteria under Senate Bill 43, today's action requests the Board authorize the Director of Behavioral Health Services to update and revise the criteria for determining who can perform functions under California Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 5150 and 5585.50. Such revisions would focus on optimizing operations and improving the flow of patients from emergency departments to appropriate treatment settings.

These actions support the County vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically left behind, as well as our ongoing commitment to the regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This will be accomplished through further strengthening the continuum of behavioral health services by expanding substance use disorder care in San Diego County and updating the guidelines that support these critical services.

RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Receive the update on the Substance Use Disorder Optimal Care Pathways model.
2. Pursuant to Board Policy B-29, authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to submit a Bond Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP) Round 2: Unmet Needs competitive grant application to support behavioral health capital infrastructure, including substance use and/or mental health services.
3. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO AND PARTICIPATION IN THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (“BHCIP”) to authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, to execute the Bond BHCIP Round 2: Unmet Needs competitive grant application, program funding agreement, and related documents.
4. Authorize expanded utilization of one-time Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Round 1 grant funding accepted by the Board on July 18, 2023 (15) to include short-term bridge housing for individuals experiencing homelessness and living with serious mental illness and/or substance use conditions, and authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to execute all required documents, upon receipt, including any annual extensions, amendment, or revisions that do not materially impact or alter the services.
5. Approve and authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to execute the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Intergovernmental Agreement with the California Department of Health Care Services with an effective date of July 1, 2025, to December 31, 2026. Approve and authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to execute future amendments, extensions and renewals to the DMC-ODS Intergovernmental Agreement with the California Department of Health Care Services.
6. Approve and authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to execute the Standard Agreement for the Mental Health Plan with the California Department of Health Care Services with an effective date of July 1, 2025, to December 31, 2026. Approve and authorize the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Health and Human Services Agency, or designee, to execute future amendments, extensions and renewals to the Standard Agreement for the Mental Health Plan with the California Department of Health Care Services.
7. Pursuant to California Welfare & Institutions Code Section 5121 and notwithstanding prior Board related actions, authorize the Director of Behavioral Health Services or designee to develop and update as needed procedures for the County of San Diego's designation and training of professionals who will be designated to perform functions under California Welfare & Institutions Code Sections 5150 and 5585.50.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) is the delivery system for substance use care for Medi-Cal eligible residents, aiming to ensure services are accessible, culturally responsive, aligned with the needs of diverse populations, and equitably distributed to reach those most in need. Expanding capacity through the Substance Use Disorder Optimal Care Pathways (SUD OCP) model is a critical step toward delivering client-centered, evidence-based care that is responsive to communities disproportionately affected by substance use.

According to data from the California Department of Health Care Access and Information, in 2023, there were 16,521 discharges from San Diego County emergency departments with a primary diagnosis of substance use disorder, with rates significantly higher among Non-Hispanic Black residents and individuals living in lower income ZIP Codes. Additionally, data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health highlights a persistent treatment gap. In 2023, an estimated 19% of the United States population needed substance use treatment in the past year, yet only 1 in 4 received treatment, with young adults between the ages of 18 to 25 and individuals who identified as Non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native or Multiracial reporting the greatest need for substance use treatment.

Locally, the SUD OCP model aims to close these treatment gaps and strengthen the capacity of the County's substance use system of care, advancing health equity given the longstanding disparities in substance use outcomes across our communities. It is aligned with the BHS vision to achieve a transformational shift from a model of behavioral health care driven by crises to one driven by chronic or continuous care and prevention. This is achieved through the equitable distribution and coordination of resources to keep people connected, stable, and healthy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today's actions support the County of San Diego (County) Sustainability Goal #2 to provide just and equitable access to County services. The Substance Use Disorder Optimal Care Pathways (SUD OCP) model aims to expand access to substance use treatment by building a more integrated system of care to ensure that services reach historically underserved communities. These actions also support Sustainability Goal #4 to protect the health and well-being of everyone in the region. By shifting the focus from crisis-driven services to prevention and ongoing care, the SUD OCP model promotes long-term rehabilitation and reduces strain on emergency services, creating a more sustainable system of care.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation 1

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

Recommendations 2 and 3

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. Due to the unknown costs that may impact capital projects from new federal policies, the initial estimate for this project is ranging from \$120 - \$150 million. If grant funding is awarded, the department will return to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) at a future date with additional recommendations for consideration and approval. At this time, there will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Recommendation 4

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-27 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency for the provision of short-term bridge housing for individuals experiencing homelessness and living with serious mental illness and/or substance use conditions. If there are any future fiscal impacts associated with this recommendation, the department will return to the Board with additional recommendations for consideration and approval. At this time, there will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

Recommendations 5 and 6

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2025-27 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency to support the operationalization of the agreements with DHCS to provide services to Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health and Drug Medi-Cal clients. The agreements authorize reimbursement of costs incurred when providing services to clients. All eligible county claims will be reimbursed in accordance with the terms of the contract and applicable law. There is approximately revenue of up to \$197.0 million in Drug Medi-Cal and \$311.5 million in Short Doyle Medi-Cal budgeted in Fiscal Year 2025-26 to support estimated activities as it relates to services provided on behalf of these agreements. The funding source is the California Department of Health Care Services. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Recommendation 7

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ACTION:

ON MOTION of Supervisor Lawson-Remer, seconded by Supervisor Montgomery Steppe, the Board of Supervisors took action as recommended, and adopted Resolution No. 25-089 entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AUTHORIZING APPLICATION TO AND PARTICIPATION IN THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONTINUUM INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (“BHCIP”).

AYES: Aguirre, Anderson, Lawson-Remer, Montgomery Steppe, Desmond

State of California)
County of San Diego) §

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Original entered in the Minutes of the Board of Supervisors.

ANDREW POTTER
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



Signed
by Andrew Potter

AUGUST 26, 2025