

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026**

MINUTE ORDER NO. 6

SUBJECT: ADOPT AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING ARTICLE XV OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE REGARDING THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND ADDING ARTICLE XVII REGARDING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On August 26, 2025 (24), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the establishment of an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Social Safety Net and Behavioral Health Systems Transformation (Subcommittee) to explore, study, plan and recommend actions to support and strengthen the County of San Diego's social safety net and behavioral health system. The Subcommittee was tasked with, among other efforts, advising the Board on transforming the Behavioral Health Services (BHS) department into a distinct organization.

To establish BHS as a distinct organizational structure, County Administrative Code must be amended. Today's action brings forward an ordinance to repeal and replace County Administrative Code Article XV related to the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) to remove the duties and responsibilities of BHS, as defined by applicable laws and regulations, and establish a new County Administrative Code Article XVII that sets out the duties and responsibilities of BHS as a standalone organizational structure distinct from HHSA. The proposed action requires two steps. Today's first action requests the Board to approve the introduction of an Ordinance amending the County Administrative Code relating to HHSA and adding a new Administrative Code article related to BHS (first reading). If the Board approves today's recommended action, then on April 21, 2026, the Board is requested to consider and adopt the Ordinance.

If approved, these actions will advance the transformation of BHS into a distinct organization and support a more optimal operational structure that is positioned to support better health outcomes, a better experience of care for beneficiaries, and more efficient use of resources.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

On March 24, 2026:

1. Approve the introduction of the Ordinance (First Reading):
AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING ARTICLE XV OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE REGARDING THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND ADDING ARTICLE XVII REGARDING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

If, on March 24, 2026, the Board takes action within recommendation #1 above, then on April 21, 2026:

1. Consider and adopt the Ordinance (second reading):

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING ARTICLE XV OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE REGARDING THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND ADDING ARTICLE XVII REGARDING THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The County of San Diego (County) Behavioral Health Services (BHS) serves as the specialty mental health plan for Medi-Cal eligible residents, providing a comprehensive system of care for mental health and substance use needs. BHS strives to ensure services are accessible, culturally responsive, and aligned with the unique needs of San Diego’s diverse communities, while equitably distributing resources to reach those most in need.

In 2023, nearly one in three San Diegans were Medi-Cal eligible, with Hispanic/Latino residents having the highest eligibility rate at 38%. For Medi-Cal members experiencing serious mental illness or substance use challenges, BHS delivers care through County-operated and contracted programs, designed to address social determinants of health. As a specialty mental health plan, BHS is re-organizing internally to strengthen its ability to allocate resources equitably and design services that are impactful and responsive to community needs by maintaining and expanding access to treatment and care for populations historically underserved by behavioral health systems.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Today’s actions support to the County of San Diego (County) Sustainability Goal #2 to provide just and equitable access to County services and Sustainability Goal #4 to protect the health and well-being of everyone in the region. These goals will be advanced by strengthening the behavioral health system of care to ensure long-term sustainability of accessible and culturally responsive services. By transforming into a distinct organization, BHS is building a more optimized organizational structure for delivering mental health and substance use services. This will allow for more efficient allocation of resources, enhanced care coordination, and greater capacity to reach historically underserved communities.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. 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 Anderson, seconded by Supervisor Montgomery Steppe, the Board of Supervisors took action as recommended, on Consent, and took action to further consider and adopt the Ordinance on April 21, 2026.

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