

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
AND RECORD OF ACTION**



November 18, 2008

FINAL

**FROM:** ALLAN RAWLAND, Director  
Department of Behavioral Health

*Handwritten signatures and initials*  
#90

**SUBJECT:** CALIFORNIA COUNTIES' MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 1) Approve the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement creating the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority.
- 2) Approve San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health's (DBH) participation in the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority in order to jointly develop and fund mental health services and education programs as determined on a regional, statewide, or other basis.
- 3) Authorize the Director of the Department of Behavioral Health to sign the Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement and act as the representative of San Bernardino County in the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority.

(Affected Districts: All)

(Presenter: Allan Rawland, Director, Department of Behavioral Health, 382-3133.)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Approval of this item will allow the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) to enter into the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority (Authority) in order to jointly develop and fund mental health services and education programs as determined on a regional, statewide, or other basis.

The State has identified five Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Projects as statewide projects for which they have reserved funding for counties that is separate from and does not impact the ongoing base funding for the PEI programs developed by individual counties. In addition, the State has supported the development of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) for the administration of one of the statewide projects: Training, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building. Article 1, Chapter 5, Division 7, Title 1 of the California Government Code (the "Joint Exercise of Powers Act", Government Code section 6500 *et seq.*) permits two or more public agencies by agreement to exercise jointly powers common to the contracting parties. In order to more efficiently develop and fund, regional and statewide, PEI mental health services and education programs under the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), a number of California counties are proposing a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement creating the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority, allowing each participating member county the opportunity to collaborate with all other members for the administration of the statewide Training, Technical



Assistance and Capacity Building project. Each member county shall have a representative on the Authority's Board of Directors who shall have the authority to attend, participate in and vote on actions of the Board of Directors. The agreement will become effective when executed and returned to the Authority by the approved number of counties in California. The Authority will notify all member counties, in writing, of the effective date and shall continue in effect until terminated by a three-fourths vote of the total voting membership of the Authority.

The Department of Behavioral Health is requesting approval to become a participating member in the Authority in order to act jointly with other counties to maximize the MHSA funding reserved for counties for the development and implementation of the statewide PEI projects. Through counties acting jointly, local needs can be identified and connected with like local needs in potentially different regions of the state. Together, resources can be maximized for the most efficient use of purchasing products, and developing requests for proposals and contracts with providers to accomplish the agreed upon goals. A centralized entity would be capable of negotiating cost effective rates with various subcontractors statewide and greatly reduce the cost of overhead administration. In addition, counties can increase cost efficiency in administration by centralizing compliance with reporting requirements, resulting in cost avoidance. A centralized entity would also be better suited to house, share and disseminate research, and information and specific strategies that are the most effective and quality assured.

The development and implementation of training and technical assistance resources, workforce skill-building, and strategies to increase the capacity of contractors for service delivery is the first area identified for joint implementation by counties. Using a Joint Powers Agreement to provide cost effective training and technical assistance is an appropriate immediate focus, but having such a vehicle in place is critical as the future of the MHSA evolves. A Joint Powers Agreement in place creates a centralized county "voice" before the Legislature, the Department of Mental Health, the Oversight and Accountability Commission and other parties regarding this vital source of funding for county public mental health services, and provides the counties with an alternative to the assignment of the county MHSA funds to the state department and state legislature to implement regional and statewide MHSA projects.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Approval of this item will not impose any additional County local cost and will allow DBH to enter into a working agreement with participating member counties of the California Counties' Mental Health Services Authority. Participation in the Authority will not impose any additional County costs as funding for the statewide PEI projects has been reserved for counties by the state and is separate from and does not impact the ongoing base funding of the counties for the PEI programs developed by individual counties. Upon approval of specific mental health programs by the Authority, counties may then elect to finance the statewide, PEI projects through the funding allocated by the state for statewide PEI projects. At this time the State has not released the amount of funding that is reserved for counties for the implementation of the Training, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building statewide project.

#### **REVIEW BY OTHERS**

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This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Frank Salazar, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5442) on November 17, 2008 and the County Administrative Office (Trudy Raymundo, Administrative Analyst, 387-3986) on November 05, 2008.