



FRESNO COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

Wednesday, **March 18, 2026**, at 3:30pm

Hope Plaza Event Center

380 W. Ashlan Ave. Clovis, CA 93612

Minutes

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</u>	<u>MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC</u>
Brooke Frost Elizabeth Kus Carolyn Evans Mary Lou Brauti-Minkler David Thorne Debbie Xiong Kyle Pennington Blanca Meyer Samira Maldonado Gobinder Pandher	Susan L. Holt <i>Director of Behavioral Health /Public Guardian</i> Alicia Corona Jeannette Dominguez	Fidel Garibay Alicia Townsend Ana Monreal Monique Rivera Breanna Rodriguez Joshua Rivas Karina Hernandez Leah Zubiato Joshua Huerta Anthony Moreno
<u>BOARD OF SUPERVISORS</u> Supervisor Luis Chavez – absent Yahaira Figueroa Chief of Staff - present		
<u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u> Angel Lopez Marcus Fuller		

I. **Welcome**

Called to Order at 3:31 PM

II. **Review of meeting agenda**

III. **Approval of the February 18th Behavioral Health Board (BHB) Meeting draft Minutes**

The drafted minutes from the February 18th meeting were approved

IV. **Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Update; *Director Susan Holt***

- A. General Updates:** DBH Events, Board of Supervisors (BOS) Items and Legislation
Board of Supervisors Items of Note

March 17th

- Approval of DBH to participate in a health and wellness fair pursuant to the new administrative policy 80
- Approved amendment to the Agreement with Youth Leadership Institute to increase max compensation for Friday Night/Club Live Program
- Budget Resolution to increase appropriations for intergovernmental transfers

Legislative Timeline

- Introduction deadline was February 20th, and had a total of 1800 new bills which was 550 less than last year and the lowest number introduced for the past 20 years
- Most Bills don't have any information available to be briefed on
- Without any information to share from within the bills, Director Holt chose to share some themes recognized
 - Mental Health Diversion Bills
 - Murphy Conservatorship bills
- As the Department closely watches the legislative process, Director Holt will provide a follow-up on Bills with added information moving further along into the legislative cycle

B. 2025 Annual data summary on suicide

- 102 total suicides -reminder that numbers are subject to change due to pending coroner reports
- Gender breakdown reveals 82 males and 20 females
- Age group varying from 15 yrs through 65+
- Data that included race, manners and deaths according to zip codes was included
- DBH participation in suicide prevention activities
 - Proclamations
 - Community Outreach
 - Veterans Suicide Prevention Conference
 - Multi-County Suicide Prevention Summit
 - Fresnocares.org

2025 Suicide Collaborative Recap is attached

C. CARE Act Governor Press Report

- The Governor designated ten communities with high per capita petition rates as "CARE Champions"
- "Improvement and Coordination Unit" intended to strengthen implementation through targeted support/technical assistance
- Fresno was short 6 petitions from being considered a care champion
 - Fresno will receive targeted support from the state for counties with low numbers

CARE Act Resource page attached

D. Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Update

- New Portal process with a standardized template for writing the integrated plan
- Director Holt will complete her final review and add finishing touches prior to handing it off to CAO for review next week
- The draft of the Plan must be submitted to DHCS by March 30th
- Receive comments from DHCS and possibly make edits/revisions within 30 days

- prior to Public Comment period starting and will last for 30 days
- Public Hearing is anticipated to occur in May
- Once Public Hearing is completed the Plan will be presented to the BOS for consideration and approval for submission to DHCS by June 30th
- BHSA change with Workforce education and training (WET) funding
 - No category of funding dedicated at the local level
 - 3% of total allocation dedicated through statewide efforts
 - Produced a 5-year plan identifying workforce needs specific to BH
- Director Holt selected to participate in the BHSA WET Plan review panel on behalf of County BH Directors and the central valley critical needs

V. Public Comment

None

VI. Board Member Announcements

- Reminder of changes to meeting locations for all meetings.
- For the remainder of 2026 these BHB meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month will take place at the Betty Rodriguez Library, BRR meeting room, 3040 N. Cedar Ave
- BHB Chair announced that she submitted a letter of support regarding statutory clarification confirming that non-profit public benefit corporations are eligible to enroll in Provider Application and Validation for Enrollment (PAVE) system (one of the first steps in a process for approval of reimbursement for Medi-CAL group providers
letter of support attached

VII. Old Business

- Site visit to the Veterans Center on February 27th, 2026 – A very broad oral report was given by the Chair explaining that the Veterans Center fulfills the role of support assisting Veterans in accessing the services available to them

VIII. New Business

- **Site Visit request to the Resiliency Center Pending**
 - Update - March 20th at 2:00 is the confirmed date for site visit to occur
- **Action Item: Annual Report**
 - The Chair gave an oral summary of the Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors
 - All members were encouraged to share any thoughts they'd like to discuss and all comments or concerns to were welcomed regarding recommendations within the report
 - All members agreed on a few minor corrections to sentence structure
 - BHB Chair asked Director Holt if she could clarify whether the training that the employees at the Department are receiving will also be extended to the network of contract providers? Director Holt confirmed that the training material will be shared

Motion: BHB member Kyle Pennington motioned to approve the draft of the 2026 Annual Report to the BOS with the suggested edits that were mentioned

Second: Member Elizabeth Kus second

Discussion: see above

Vote: 8 votes in favor

Motion passes

DBH Support Staff will begin working with the designated department staff to get the report put on calendar for presentation as an Agenda Item to the BOS

IX. Subcommittee Updates

- Adult Services Committee – Will meet on April 6th and have invited RH Community Builders
- Childrens Services Committee – Meets April 23rd at Turning Point Dragon Fly and will receive information from the Young Adult Institute (YAI) on services for individuals who experience developmental disabilities
- Forensics Services Committee – Meet on June 5th and will discuss the status of the justice involved population for CalAIM with expected attendance of all health plans to participate
- Substance Use Disorder Committee – Met on March 12th and received information from DBH on the Opiate Settlement Funds. The presentation was shared with all BHB members

X. Public Comment

- A member of the BHB made an announcement to make sure that everyone was aware that the outpatient adult BH services moved from the metro site on East Kings Canyon to the Health and Wellness Center at 1925 E. Dakota, Fresno, CA 93726
- Director Holt added that DBH currently has signage, staff and transportation at the metro location to assist individuals who may be unaware
- The need for DBH presence at the old site will be re-evaluated in a couple of weeks

XI. Adjournment

4:41 p.m.

This meeting is open to the public under the Ralph M. Brown Act.

CARE Act Resources

- www.care-act.org/resource/the-care-act-at-a-glance
- www.care-act.org/resource/the-care-process-flow-to-treatment-housing-and-support
- www.care-act.org/resource/care-act-eligibility-criteria-fact-sheet
- www.care-act.org/resource/care-act-resources-for-petitioners
- Video tutorial of Form 100 and 101: www.care-act.org/training-material/petitioning-for-system-partners
- www.careactfresno.com



City of Fresno
Department of
Behavioral Health

2025 Collaborative Recap

- Suicide Prevention Steering Team meets on the 3rd Thursday every month
- Suicide Prevention Collaborative meets the 1st Friday of every even month
- Collaborative presentation topics included:
 - Post Suicide Support Resources
 - LGBTQ Resources and Suicide Prevention
 - Depression and Suicide
 - Cultural Impacts on Traumatic Grief: Machismo, Marianismo, and Traumatic Grief for Latinx Survivors of Suicide Loss
 - Panel Discussion - Individuals with Past Attempt
 - The Impact of Trauma on Suicide



Behavioral Health Board

Advisory Boards and Commissions

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Mia Bonta
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
1020 N. Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2352 (Valencia), Medi-Cal Providers: Nonprofit Benefit Corporation-Support

Dear Chair Bonta,

As a member of the Behavioral Health Board of Fresno County, I express my support for Assembly Bill 2352 by Assembly member Avelino Valencia. If the Board had time to formally approve, I am sure the full Board would do so. This bill clarifies that nonprofit public benefit corporations with 501 (c)(3) status that employ licensed mental health professionals are eligible to enroll in the Provider Application and Validation for Enrollment (PAVE) system as group providers for the delivery of Non-Specialty Mental Health Services.

Despite the absence of a statutory prohibition, nonprofit behavioral health providers have increasingly faced barriers enrolling in the Provider Application and Validation for Enrollment (PAVE) system due to an interpretation that group providers must be organized as professional corporations. This interpretation has created an unintended administrative barrier for nonprofit community-based providers that are legally organized, appropriately licensed, and otherwise qualified to provide Medi-Cal reimbursable services. The consequences of this interpretation are significant. Nonprofit providers have reported losing reimbursement for services already rendered, experiencing disruptions to continuity of care for Medi-Cal beneficiaries, and facing difficult decisions such as reducing services, laying off staff, or closing service locations.

AB 2352 Provides a statutory clarification confirming that nonprofit public benefit corporations delivering non-specialty mental health services are eligible to enroll in PAVE as group providers. The bill does not expand scope of practice, create new provider categories, or weaken program integrity. Instead, it aligns Medi-Cal enrollment policy with existing licensure law and current contracting practices by removing an administrative barrier that threatens access to care. For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support for AB2352.

Sincerely,

Brooke Frost, Chair

Behavioral Health Board Mission

As a liaison between the community and the Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health, our Behavioral Health Board advocates for effective behavioral health programs for all ages and disorders through effective and timely culturally responsive services, elimination of stigma, support for family, caregivers and service providers, community awareness, education and advocacy, assisting the Department of Behavioral Health to ensure it has adequate resources appropriately applied.