

COMPLIANCE BULLETIN

Fresno County Behavioral Health

Publication Date: 02/26/2025

POLICY NOTICE

❖ Policy Being Summarized
Certification Requirements for
SUD Programs Under AB 118

❖ CB-040

❖ Effective date:
02/26/2025

❖ Policy created by:
Bulletins and News,
Compliance Bulletins

❖ This notice is intended for:

- ☐ DBH Operated MH Programs
- ☒ DBH Operated SUD Programs
- ☒ DBH Administration
- ☐ Contract MH Providers
- ☒ Contract SUD Providers
- ☐ Prescribers

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has implemented new certification requirements for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) programs under [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 118](#), expanding oversight to improve the health and safety of persons served. Previously, outpatient SUD programs operated without mandatory certification, but they are now required to obtain DHCS certification. Per [BHIN 25-003](#), this policy establishes clear regulatory standards, reporting requirement of critical events, and introduces penalties for noncompliance, ensuring greater accountability in SUD treatment programs.

Previously, outpatient SUD treatment programs operated without mandatory certification, but AB 118 now requires all such programs offering treatment, recovery, detoxification, or medication for addiction treatment (MAT) services to obtain DHCS certification. The enclosed "[DHCS Certification for Alcohol and Other Drug Programs](#)" outlines the new requirements. While certification remains voluntary for licensed residential SUD facilities, driving-under-the-influence programs and narcotic treatment programs licensed by DHCS, it is now mandatory for outpatient programs, **effective immediately**. Indian Health Care Providers enrolled in Medi-Cal are exempt from certification if they meet federal standards.

AB 118 also expands on various regulatory provisions, including certification and renewal processes, administrative actions, and reporting obligations for incidents such as person served deaths, serious injuries, communicable disease cases, and natural disasters. Certain facilities, such as state-licensed health clinics, community care facilities, correctional institutions, and public schools, are exempt from mandatory certification but may apply voluntarily. SUD facilities that are not exempt from certification and fail to obtain certification may be subject to an assessment of civil penalties of two thousand (\$2,000) dollars per day.

More information on DHCS Licensing and Certification functions may be found on the Licensing and Certification Division [website](#). Questions regarding this information notice should be directed the Substance Use Disorder Licensing and Certification Section by email at LCDQuestions@DHCS.CA.gov.