



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS)

# **Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Overview & Input Session at HASD&IC Behavioral Health Workgroup Meeting**

*Friday, October 17, 2025, 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM*

**BHS Communication & Engagement (C&E) Unit**

*Kat Casabar Briggs, MPH, Operations Chief*

*Danny Romero, MA, Community Engagement Manager*

# Land Acknowledgment



“

We acknowledge that the San Diego County region is made up of the traditional lands of the Kumeyaay, Luiseño/Payómkaichum, Cahuilla and Cupeño/Kuupangaxwichem Peoples.

We acknowledge the harmony that existed among the land, nature, and its original Peoples, who have since endured displacement, persecution, and systemic oppression.

We pay our respect to the unceded territory and homelands of the 18 federally recognized tribes in our region.

We honor the ancestral grounds and sovereignty of the Tribal Nations, whose resilience and strength inspire forward movement towards more equitable and sustainable programs, policies, and practices.

”



# Today's Session



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- **Welcome & Background**
  - BHSA Overview
  - Community Planning Process
- **Input Session**
- **Next Steps**

# About BHSA



- Part of Proposition 1; takes effect July 1, 2026
- Modernizes the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) passed by CA voters in 2004
- No additional funding introduced, but brings new components, requirements, and restrictions for how revenue derived from millionaire's tax may be used by counties for behavioral health programs/services

**Learn More**

[bit.ly/BHSA\\_BHS](https://bit.ly/BHSA_BHS)



SanDiegoCounty.gov Home

## Behavioral Health Services

GET HELP NOW I WANT TO FIND MENTAL HEALTH SUBSTANCE USE

### Behavioral Health Services Act

The Behavioral Health Services Act, also known as BHSA, is a state law passed by voters in March 2024. BHSA updates the [Mental Health Services Act \(MHSA\)](#) by:

- Expanding service access to include treatment for people with substance use disorders,
- Prioritizing care for people with the most serious mental illness,
- Providing ongoing resources for housing and workforce development, and
- Continuing investments in prevention, early intervention, and innovative behavioral health pilot programs.

BHSA aims to close service gaps and ensure equitable access to quality care across the state. New BHSA requirements will also enhance oversight, transparency, and accountability at the state and local levels.

To learn more about BHSA:

- [Behavioral Health Transformation \(DHCS\)](#)

To receive updates about BHSA, subscribe to these statewide sites:

- [Department of Health Care Services \(DHCS\)](#)
- [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#)

### Community Planning

BHSA requires counties to look at their whole behavioral health system of care through a formal Community Planning Process (CPP). The CPP supports the County of San Diego's goal to involve communities in meaningful conversations and decision-making about local behavioral health services to ensure programs reflect their unique needs and voices.

#### Share Input via Our Online Form

Access this online form to share insights and recommendations with BHS to help guide the development of San Diego County's first BHSA Integrated Plan for Fiscal Years 2026–2029.

#### Participate in Upcoming Activities

View upcoming and past engagement activities hosted by the department, including community workshops, town halls, and input opportunities to help inform the BHSA Integrated Plan for Fiscal Years 2026–2029.

- Broadens scope of behavioral health funding to include standalone substance use disorder treatment services, housing interventions, and bolsters oversight and transparency
- Mandates data-driven reporting and more rigorous population-level outcome tracking – much more rigorous than MHSA
  - Behavioral Health Outcomes, Accountability, and Transparency Report **NEW**
- Mandates stronger stakeholder engagement
- Emphasis on supporting high-need and at-risk populations, evidence-based and community-defined practices, the behavioral health workforce, and health equity

# Key BHSA Populations



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## Eligible adults/older adults who are:

- Chronically homeless or experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.
- In, or are at risk of being in, the justice system.
- Reentering the community from prison or jail.
- At risk of conservatorship.
- At risk of institutionalization.

## Eligible children and youth who are:

- Chronically homeless or experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.
- In, or are at risk of being in, the juvenile justice system.
- Reentering the community from a youth correctional facility.
- In the child welfare system.
- At risk of institutionalization.

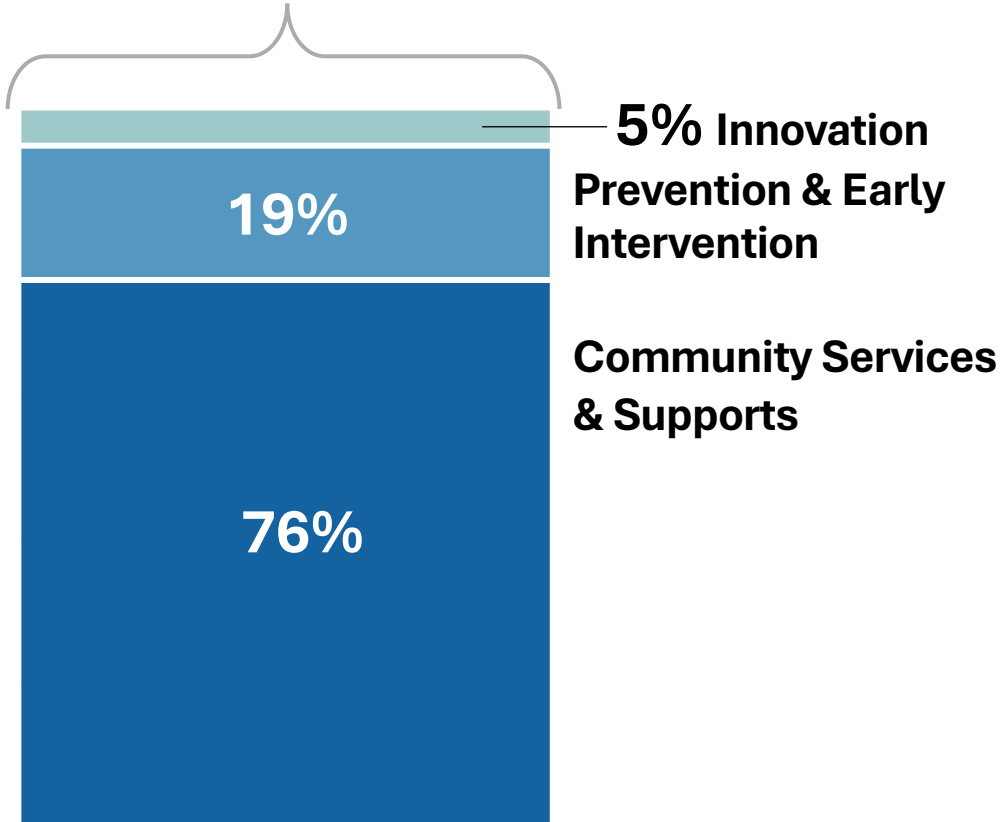


# BHSA Components



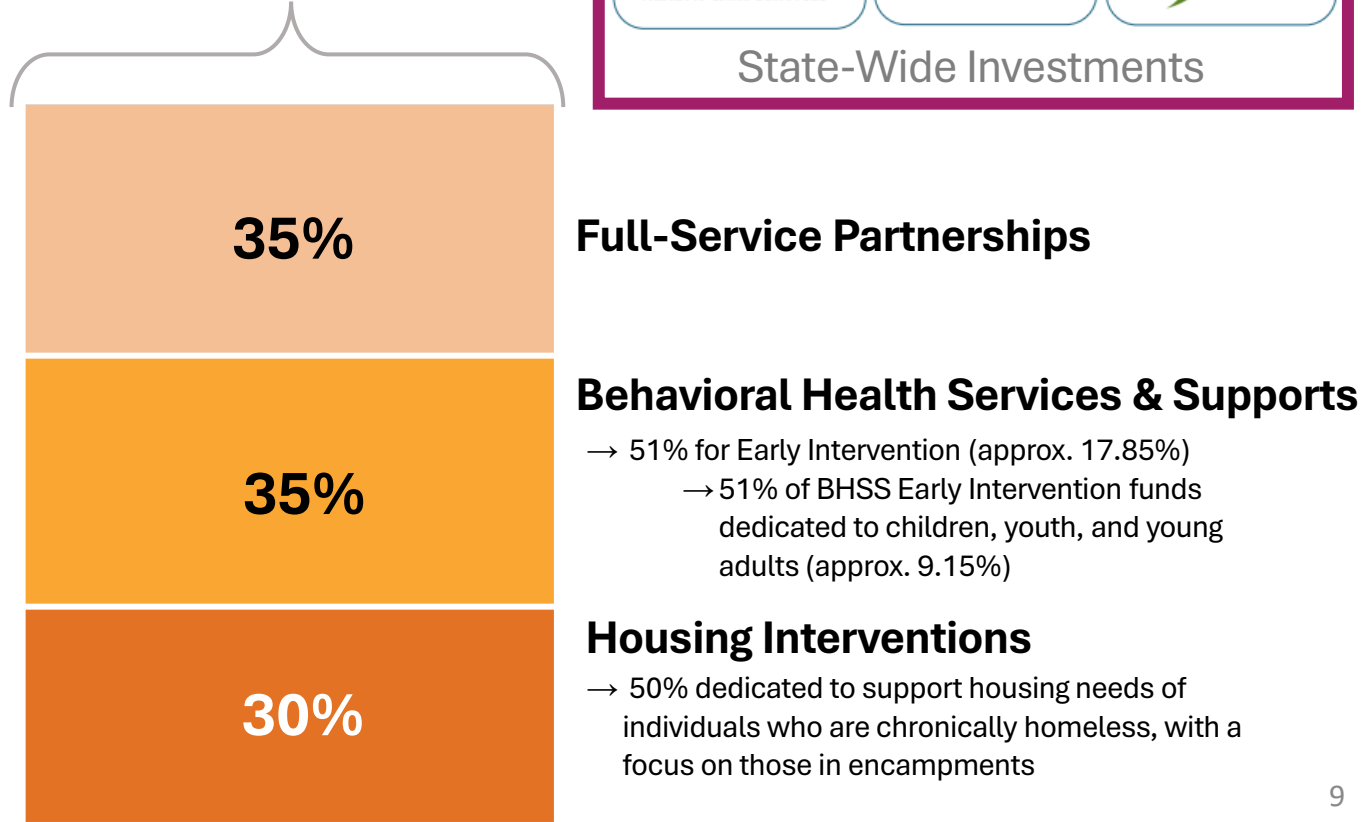
## County Allocation of MHSA Dollars (Before Prop 1)

95% County Allocation  
5% State



## County Allocation of Proposed BHSA Dollars (Under Prop 1)

90% County Allocation  
10% State





# BHSA Components



- **Full Service Partnerships (FSPs)** – provides team-based support for people with serious behavioral health needs using a “whatever it takes” approach. Services focus on the whole person, offering help that’s recovery-focused, age-appropriate, and delivered in partnership with families and natural supports.
- **Behavioral Health Services and Supports (BHSS)** – includes treatment and recovery supports that help people of all ages access behavioral health care—like therapy, case management, medication support, and other services that promote wellness and recovery.
- **Housing Interventions** – focuses on helping people with behavioral health needs find and keep stable housing through supports like rental assistance, housing navigation, and ongoing services.

## **BHSS**

- *Children’s, Adult, and Older Adult Systems of Care*
- *Outreach & Engagement*
- *Workforce Education and Training*
- *Capital Facilities and Technological Needs*
- *Early Intervention Programs*
- *Innovative Behavioral Health Pilots and Projects*



# BHSA Integrated Plan (IP)



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**Counties' first BHSA Integrated Plan will cover  
Fiscal Years 2026-2029 and be due to DHCS by June 30, 2026.**

## **All counties given template by state to provide:**

- County Demographics and Behavioral Health Needs
- Plan Goals and Objectives
- **Community Planning Process (CPP)**
- Comment Period and Public Hearing
- County Behavioral Health Care Continuum Capacity
- Services by Total Funding Source
- Behavioral Health Services Fund Programs
- Workforce Strategy
- Budget and Prudent Reserve




**Section 3  
County  
Integrated  
Plan**



<https://policy-manual.mes.dhcs.ca.gov/behavioral-health-services-act-county-policy-manual/V1.0.0/3-county-integrated-plan>

# BHSA: CPP Timeline



<b>Phase 1</b> Receive New State Guidance for Planning	 <b>Phase 2</b> <b>Conduct Community Education &amp; Engagement</b>	<b>Phase 3</b> Develop IP (Fiscal Years 2026-2029)	<b>Phase 4</b> Review & Approve IP	<b>Phase 5</b> Submit IP to State
<b>Summer 2025-Fall 2025</b>	<b>Fall 2025-Winter 2026</b>	<b>Winter 2026-Spring 2026</b>	<b>Spring 2026-Summer 2026</b>	<b>By June 30, 2026</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review BHSA County Policy Manual (finalized June 2025) and evaluate new requirements for counties from the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS).</li> <li>• Attend DHCS webinars for counties on Integrated Plan (IP) development and the Community Planning Process (CPP) to structure BHSA CPP engagement activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide BHSA education through informational handouts and presentations at public meetings.</li> <li>• Facilitate outreach, listening sessions, focus groups, and other opportunities at community events and convenings for stakeholders to provide input.</li> <li>• Document key learnings and stakeholder recommendations to support community priorities and system needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department synthesis of stakeholder input, fiscal data, and program assessments.</li> <li>• Draft San Diego County's IP for Fiscal Years 2026–2029.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post IP draft for public comment and feedback.</li> <li>• Present proposed IP to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board).</li> <li>• Incorporate public comments and finalize IP language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board-approved IP provided to State (DHCS) through their BHSA County Portal.</li> <li>• Prepare for official implementation of BHSA funding and reporting requirements on July 1, 2026.</li> </ul>

# Learnings from Past Engagement



**Overarching goal:** Continue to build upon learnings from past years' CPP and community engagement activities

## Topics frequently identified through MHSA CPP/other input opportunities:

1. Accessibility
2. Care coordination and navigation
3. Community outreach and education
4. Crisis response services
5. Culturally appropriate and affirming care
6. Support for people experiencing homelessness
7. Services for youth and transition age youth
8. Workforce capacity and diversity

## Community members indicated a desire for more tailored activities and materials to:

1. Promote awareness and health literacy of local behavioral services and resources
2. Bolster socio-emotional competence and wellness (more skill-building)
3. Prevent deaths by suicide
4. Prevent social isolation
5. Promote substance use prevention
6. Promote overdose prevention
7. Engage and support youth and transition age youth
8. Support behavioral health workforce training and development

# **Input Session Overview**

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# Input Session Overview



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## Questions:

1. From the hospital perspective, what are the greatest challenges or priorities when it comes to behavioral health in our region? Why?
  2. Given new BHSA components and no added funding, what should the County prioritize to best reduce hospital strain and improve patient care?
  3. What barriers or gaps remain when it comes to connecting patients to supports upon discharge and what promising practices or partnerships could make transitions and crisis diversion efforts more effective?
- 
1. With BHSA's focus on youth, TAY, and people experiencing homelessness, what challenges stand out and what system-level solutions could address them?
  2. What workforce challenges are you seeing most acutely, and what kinds of partnerships or strategies could help both hospitals and the County?

# Input Session

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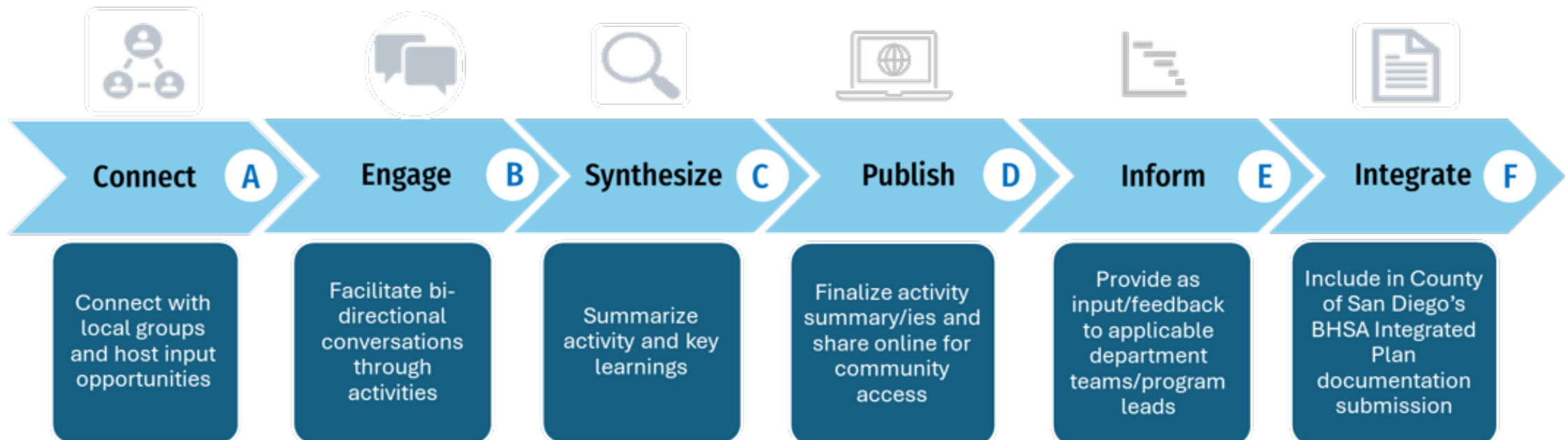
# Next Steps



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## How will input from today's meeting be utilized by the department?

*Input will inform specialty mental health and substance use disorder treatment services priorities, investments, and recommendations included in the first BHSA Integrated Plan scheduled for presentation to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in Summer 2026.*







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**[bit.ly/BHSA\\_BHS](https://bit.ly/BHSA_BHS)**


## SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

The County of San Diego's Behavioral Health Services Department invites you to share your ideas and recommendations for behavioral health programs and services as California counties prepare to implement the Behavioral Health Services Act on July 1, 2026.

The Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) modernizes the Mental

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SUBSTANCE USE \

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### Share Input via Our Online Form

## Participate in Upcoming Activities

View upcoming and past engagement activities hosted by the department, including community workshops, town halls, and input opportunities to help inform the BHSA Integrated Plan for Fiscal Years 2026–2029.

Select from the list below to populate response boxes:

- ## About You

Which of the following best describes you and/or the agency or organization you represent? \*

(Mark all that apply)

- ☐ Adult or older adult with lived mental health or substance use experience
- ☐ Youth or young adult with lived mental health or substance use experience
- ☐ Family member of someone with lived mental health or substance use experience
- ☐ Mental health, substance use, or social services provider
- ☐ Public or government agency

# Stay Connected



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## Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

## Planned Engagement Activities

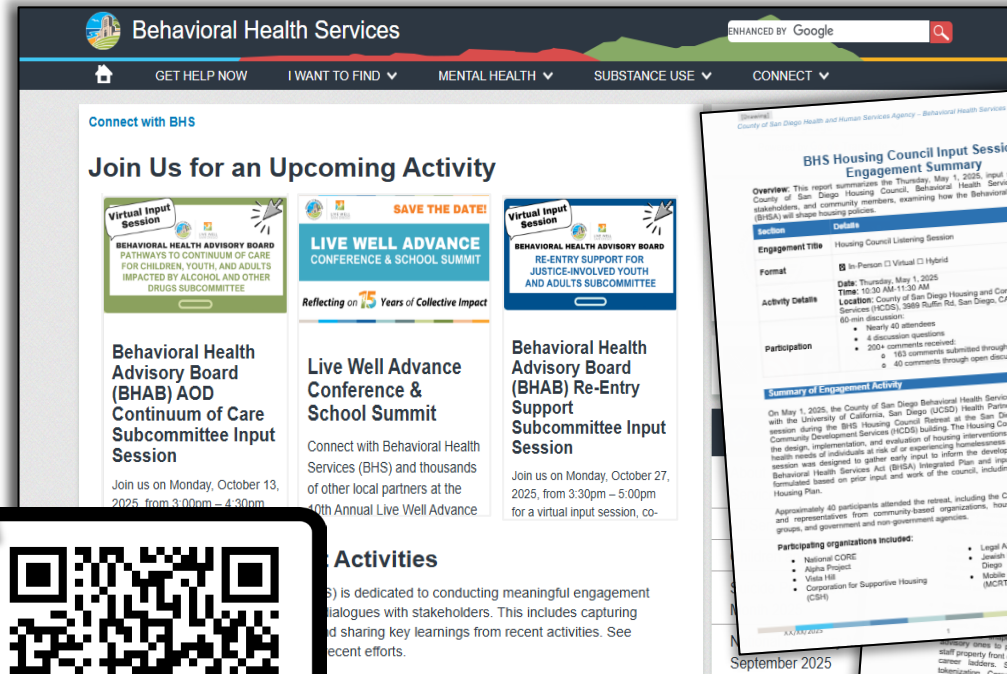
## Past Activity Materials

SCAN ME



*Contact Us*

Communication & Engagement Unit: [Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov)



# Thank You!



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