

Help Guide Behavioral Health in San Diego County!

We Want to Hear From You!

Behavioral Health Services (BHS) invites you to attend upcoming opportunities to provide input to support the development of the first Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Integrated Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2029. Community members are invited to join an upcoming virtual input sessions to share your insights and recommendations on important behavioral health topics. Input will help inform specialty mental health and substance use disorder treatment services, priorities, and future investments, ensuring local programming reflects the needs and voices of San Diego County communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS*

**04
Nov**

Crisis Services

- Morning Option: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
- Evening Option: 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

**03
Dec**

Behavioral Health Workforce

- Morning Option: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
- Evening Option: 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

**12
Nov**

Housing Interventions

- Morning Option: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
- Evening Option: 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

**09
Dec**

Early Intervention

- Morning Option: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
- Evening Option: 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

**19
Nov**

Substance Use Disorder Services

- Morning Option: 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.
- Evening Option: 5:30 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Scan the QR Code or visit the link below to Register:



- Visit bit.ly/BHSEngagement to register for one of the sessions listed.
- Registration is required.

To find out more about BHSA/Prop 1, share your thoughts on BHSA planning, review past engagements, and more, visit:

bit.ly/BHSA_BHS

***All sessions held via Zoom.**



Questions?

Please email Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov with any inquiries about the planning session.

Disability-related accommodations, language interpretation (including American Sign Language), and written materials in alternative languages and formats are available upon request. Please submit your request at least 72 hours in advance of the event to Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov or by calling (619) 854-1363.



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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES (BHS)

Transforming Behavioral Health Services Together:

Crisis Services

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT OVERVIEW
& COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION**

BHS Communication & Engagement Unit

Kat Casabar Briggs, MPH, Chief

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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- **Background & Context**
 - Behavioral Health Care in California
 - About the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA)
 - BHSA Integrated Plan and San Diego County's Community Planning Process
- **BHS Crisis Services Overview**
- **Input Session**
- **Next Steps**



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Why Today's Conversation?



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- Under BHSA, counties must identify how communities would like to see funds prioritized when it comes to specialty behavioral health services – including crisis care, early intervention, and housing, among others.
- Care for behavioral health crises is part of the services County BHS provides as a Specialty Behavioral Health Plan.
- BHSA and other California Behavioral Health Transformation efforts aim to ensure people receive help in the least restrictive, most community-based setting possible.

Your insights and recommendations will help County BHS strengthen its services and help guide development of the region's first BHSA Integrated Plan for 2026-2029.

Behavioral Health Care in California



- In California’s Medi-Cal system, care is divided between:
- Managed Care Plans (MCPs), which cover **mild-to-moderate** behavioral health needs; and
 - County Behavioral Health Plans (BHPs), which cover **moderate-to-severe or complex** behavioral health needs (also known as specialty behavioral health services).

If someone’s needs are...	Care typically starts with...	County BHS steps in when...
Mild Examples: Stress, early anxiety, grief, burnout	Doctor or other primary care provider through MCP	Symptoms persist, worsen, or begin to interfere with daily life
Moderate Examples: Persistent depression, trauma, substance misuse	Therapist, psychiatrist, case manager covered by MCP or private insurance	A person needs specialty treatment, multiple supports, or crisis help
Severe or complex Examples: psychosis, suicidality, overdose risk, homelessness	-----	County BHS provides or coordinates full specialty care

Behavioral Health Care in California



Managed Care Plans (MCP) <i>Blue Shield Promise, Community Health Group, Kaiser Permanente, Molina Healthcare</i>	Specialty Behavioral Health Plan (BHP) <i>County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short-term or lower-intensity outpatient care, such as brief therapy or medication management• Collaborate with BHP for care transitions and warm hand-offs when a person’s needs become more complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide or coordinate specialty and intensive services, such as crisis stabilization, residential substance use disorder (SUD) care, case management and recovery supports• Collaborate with MCP to step people down to lower-intensity supports once stabilized

Navigating between these systems can be complex — new State policies, including BHSA, are intended to make transitions smoother for people seeking care.

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



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 funding to include standalone substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services and housing interventions; bolsters oversight and transparency
- Mandates data-driven reporting and population-level outcome tracking
 - Behavioral Health Outcomes, Accountability, and Transparency Report^{NEW}
- Mandates increased stakeholder engagement (approx. three-fold increase)
- 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.

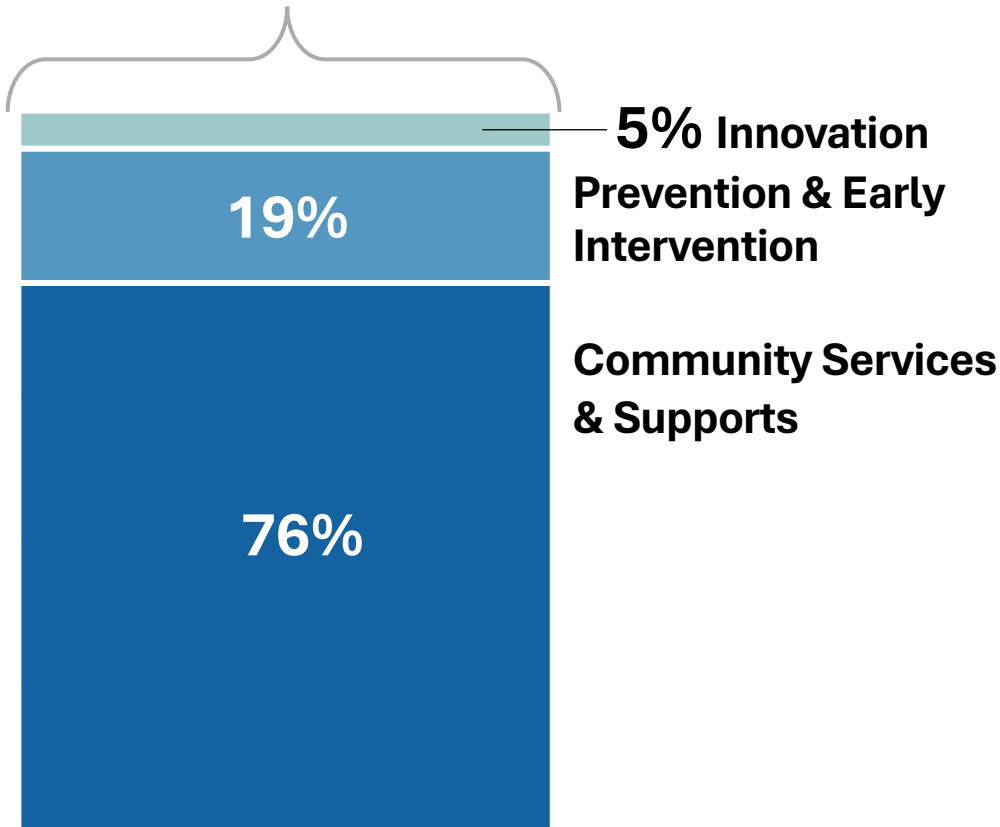


BHSA Components



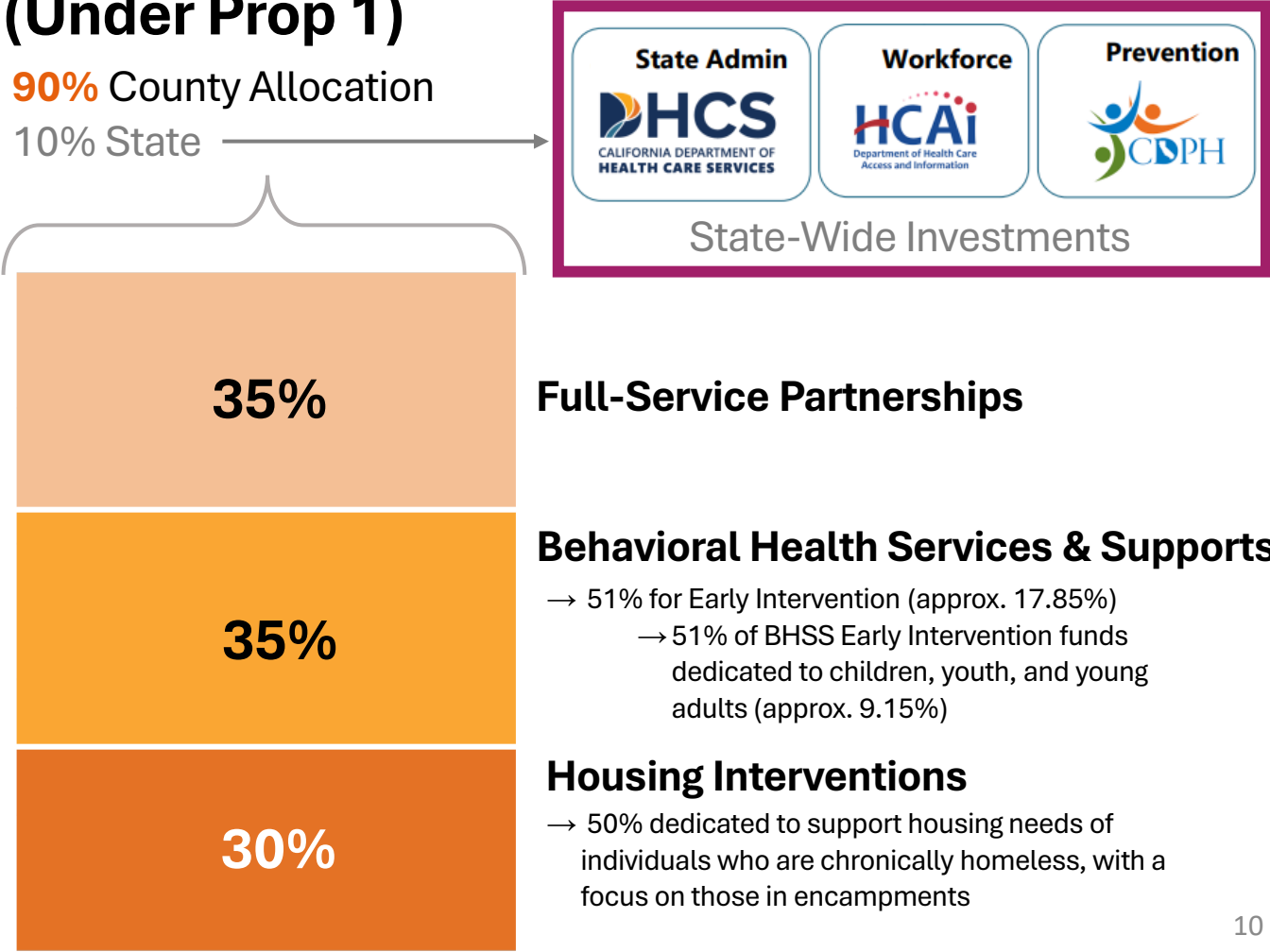
County Allocation of MHSA Dollars (Before Prop 1)

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 “whatever it takes” support for people with serious behavioral health needs, focusing on recovery, whole-person care, and family partnerships.
- **Behavioral Health Services and Supports (BHSS)** – includes treatment and recovery services like therapy, case management, medication support to promote wellness across all ages.
- **Housing Interventions** – helps people with behavioral health needs find and maintain stable housing through supports like rental assistance and housing navigation 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 Components



- **BHSS dollars may only support activities that align with counties' roles as BHPs, i.e.,** programs and services for people showing early signs of MH/SU challenges; programs that identify and link individuals to care early, early treatment and recovery supports to prevent crisis or hospitalization; crisis and stabilizations services; housing, workforce, and treatment investments that serve specialty populations

BHSA Component	Focus	Examples of Fundable Uses
Full Service Partnerships (35%)	Intensive, “whatever it takes” care for people with serious behavioral health conditions	Multidisciplinary teams, housing and employment supports, recovery planning, peer services
Behavioral Health Services & Supports (35%)	Prevention of worsening symptoms, early intervention, and treatment supports for all ages	Outreach and linkage programs, early treatment, crisis services, workforce training, recovery supports **NO GENERAL PREVENTION/EDUCATION (State)
Housing Interventions (30%)	Housing for people with behavioral health needs	Rental subsidies, housing navigation, tenancy support, behavioral health services linked to housing

BHSA Integrated Plan



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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



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

BHSA: CPP Activities



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- BHS is conducting engagement and education activities thru various mechanisms
 - Activities include input sessions, focus groups, interviews, tabling exchanges at outreach events, as well as informational BHSA workshops
- Input opportunities during this baseline year for BHSA are focused on hearing stakeholder insights and recommendations related to key topics which are new components and/or have heightened focus under BHSA, including:
 - Crisis response services – *sessions 11/04/2025*
 - Housing interventions – *sessions 11/12/2025*
 - Substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services – *sessions 11/19/2025*
 - Behavioral Health Workforce – *sessions 12/03/2025*
 - Early intervention for youth and young adults – *sessions 12/09/2025*

BHS Crisis Services Overview

The bottom of the slide features three overlapping, wavy horizontal bands. The top band is a medium blue, the middle band is a lighter teal, and the bottom band is white. These bands create a sense of movement and depth at the base of the presentation.

When someone is struggling or in crisis, help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Intent and design of services is that anyone, anywhere in San Diego County can get help at any time.

- County BHS oversees a connected network that helps people of all ages through:
 - Phone and chat support for anyone needing to talk or seeking help with finding resources
 - Mobile response teams that come to you in the community
 - Walk-in crisis centers for short-term stabilization
 - Hospital-based care for people who need a higher level of support
- Together, services are meant to:
 - Provide a response quickly and compassionately when someone is in crisis
 - Connect people to ongoing treatment and recovery supports once immediate crisis has passed

988/San Diego Access & Crisis Line



The San Diego Access & Crisis Line (ACL) is San Diego County's local crisis call center and first recommended point of contact for help. People can reach the ACL using the national three-digit dialing code: **9-8-8**. Full phone number is also active: **888-724-7240**.

- The ACL is free, confidential, and available in 200+ languages
- Trained counselors provide:
 - Emotional support and crisis counseling
 - Referrals to mental-health or substance-use services
 - Connection to in-person crisis response, such as a Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT)
- The ACL is a bridge between someone asking for help and the right kind of response — whether that's someone to talk to, a team coming out, or a place to go for stabilization. Callers may be supported on the phone, connected to ongoing care, or linked directly to a Mobile Crisis Response Team for an in-person visit (if appropriate).

Mobile Supports



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Sometimes the best support involves going and meeting people where they are.

- **County Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT)** offer a non-law enforcement, clinical response to behavioral health crises—anywhere in the County, 24 hours a day.
 - Teams include a clinician, case manager, and peer support specialist
 - Respond within about an hour (on average 24 minutes) and can often stabilize situation on-site
 - Most people MCRT supports can stay safely in their community without hospitalization
 - If additional help is needed, MCRT can transport directly to a Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) or other care
- **Psychiatric Emergency Response Teams (PERT)**
 - Pairs a licensed clinician with a specially trained law-enforcement officer
 - Dispatched through 9-1-1, available 6 a.m.–midnight
 - Respond to situations that include a safety concern or require a law-enforcement presence



Walk-In & Facility-Based Care



- **Crisis Stabilization Units (CSUs)** provide immediate, short-term care (up to 24 hours) in a calm, therapeutic environment. Services include crisis intervention, mental health assessment, medication support, peer engagement, and connection to follow-up within 72 hours
 - 6 County-funded sites – five for adults and one for children and youth; 7th CSU is planned to open in 2026
 - Open 24/7 for walk-ins, no appointment needed; many people arrive at a CSU through MCRT or PERT and others walk-in on their own
- **San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital**
 - 24/7 psychiatric emergency and inpatient care for adults
 - Includes the Emergency Psychiatric Unit, Crisis Stabilization Unit, and Crisis Recovery Unit
 - Care teams coordinate with families and connect people to community supports after discharge
 - Services provided regardless of ability to pay, with interpretation in 200+ languages
- **County Behavioral Health Clinics**
 - Care in an office setting to help treat and manage ongoing mental health or co-occurring conditions for adults 18+
 - Offers appointments and walk-in hours, including support for people who are experiencing a crisis

California's Behavioral Health Transformation is changing how crisis and treatment services work together across the state.

- BHSA brings prevention, crisis, treatment, housing, and workforce efforts under one coordinated framework.
- Related State efforts, such as CalAIM, 9-8-8 Expansion, and Proposition 1, direct county BHPs to align services and funding to create a more connected system of care.
- Crisis services are a key part of the County's specialty behavioral health system, and your feedback will help shape how these services evolve to better serve our communities.

Input Session Questions



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1. What would help people feel safer reaching out to crisis services earlier, before things become an emergency?
2. What kinds of navigation or coordination help do people need to find and connect with ongoing care after a crisis?
3. What would help people stay engaged in follow-up care or recovery supports after a behavioral health crisis?
4. What challenges make follow-up supports like case management or outpatient care hard to use or continue?
5. How could County-funded crisis and treatment services coordinate more effectively to support people after a crisis?
6. Anything else you would like to share with BHS for the BHSA Integrated Plan?

Input Session Overview

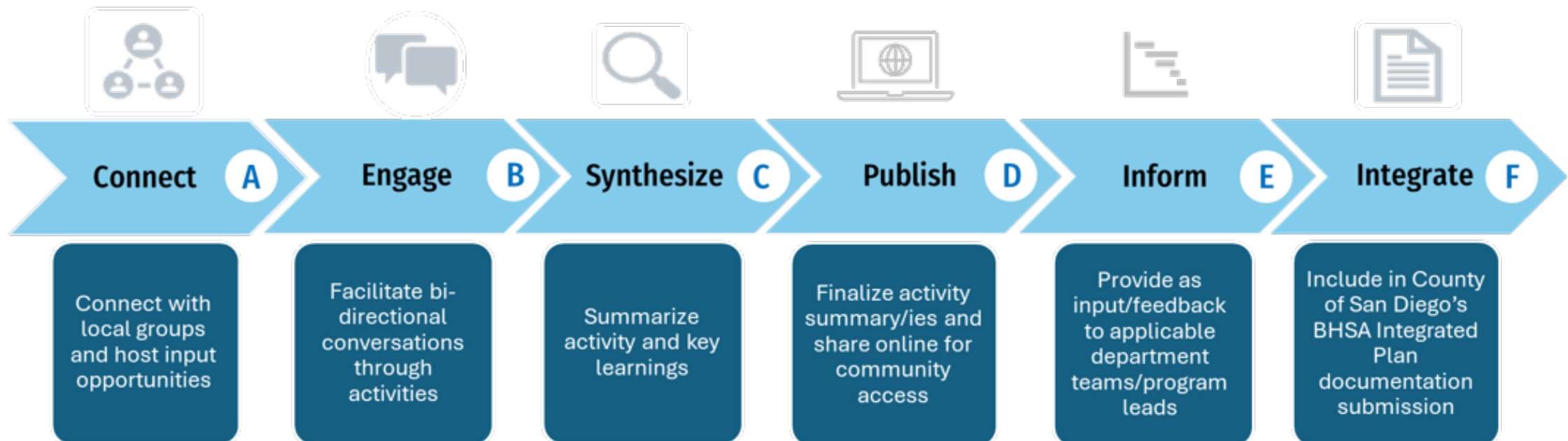
Next Steps



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How is info from CPP input sessions being utilized by the department?

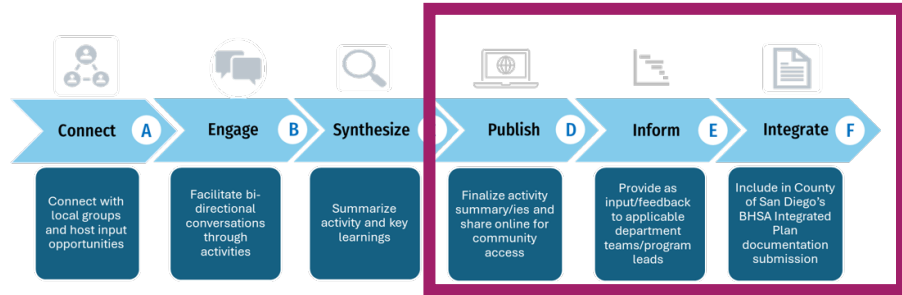
Input will inform specialty mental health and substance use disorder treatment services priorities, investments, and recommendations included in the first BHSA Integrated Plan scheduled for presentation to the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in Summer 2026.



Activity Summaries



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County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency - Behavioral Health Services

BHS Housing Council Input Session Engagement Summary

Overview: This report summarizes the Thursday, May 1, 2025, input session between the County of San Diego Housing Council, Behavioral Health Services (BHS), housing stakeholders, and community members, examining how the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) will shape housing policies.

Section	Details
Engagement Title	Housing Council Listening Session
Format	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In-Person <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid
Date	Thursday, May 1, 2025
Time	10:30 AM-11:30 AM
Location	County of San Diego Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS), 3899 Bollen Rd, San Diego, CA, 92123
Activity Details	60-min discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly 40 attendees 4 discussion questions 200+ comments received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 153 comments submitted through Mentimeter 40 comments through open discussion
Participation	

Summary of Engagement Activity

On May 1, 2025, the County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services (BHS), in collaboration with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Health Partnership, hosted a listening session during the BHS Housing Council Retreat at the San Diego County Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS) building. The Housing Council provides guidance on the design, implementation, and evaluation of housing interventions to address the behavioral health needs of individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. This session was designed to gather early input to inform the development of the County's first Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Integrated Plan and input session questions were formulated based on prior input and work of the Council, including the 2022-2027 Strategic Housing Plan.

Approximately 40 participants attended the retreat, including the Council's 10 voting members and representatives from community-based organizations, housing developers, advocacy groups, and government and non-government agencies.

Participating organizations included:

- National CORE
- Alpha Project
- Vista Hill
- Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
- Legal Aid Society
- Jewish Family Services of San Diego
- Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) Exodus Recovery
- San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC)
- Clavinda
- Wakeland Housing and Development Corporation
- Housing Innovation Partners (HIP)

10/09/2025 1

Key Learnings

- Rigid Policies Create Barriers to Stable and Accessible Housing**
Barriers include eligibility rules, funding limits, and a mismatch of services when complex health needs exist. Eligibility rules like Coordinated Entry Systems (CES) matching, Housing and Urban Development restrictions, and felony exclusions all prevent access. Funding limits further narrow eligibility: for example, Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI) excludes board and care for high-need individuals. Service mismatch makes housing waits too long for clients with specialized care needs that require access to Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), and Full-Service Partnership (FSP).

Audience Recommendations

- Dedicate Funding for Capital Development**
Participants recommended the County dedicate the full 25% allowable under the BHSA 30% Housing Intervention Component to capital development projects. Maximizing this investment would be essential to expand the supply of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) and meet needs of individuals with serious behavioral health conditions at risk or experiencing homelessness. Recapitalization of "No Place Like Home," in collaboration with County Housing and Development Services was also suggested.

- Activity Summaries approved by BHAB on 09/04/25
- Overview of activity, participants, discussion(s) held, including questions proctored
- Three primary uses once finalized



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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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MENTAL HEALTH ✓

SUBSTANCE USE ▼

CONNECT ▼

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.

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.

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.

Stay Connected



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Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

Planned Engagement Activities

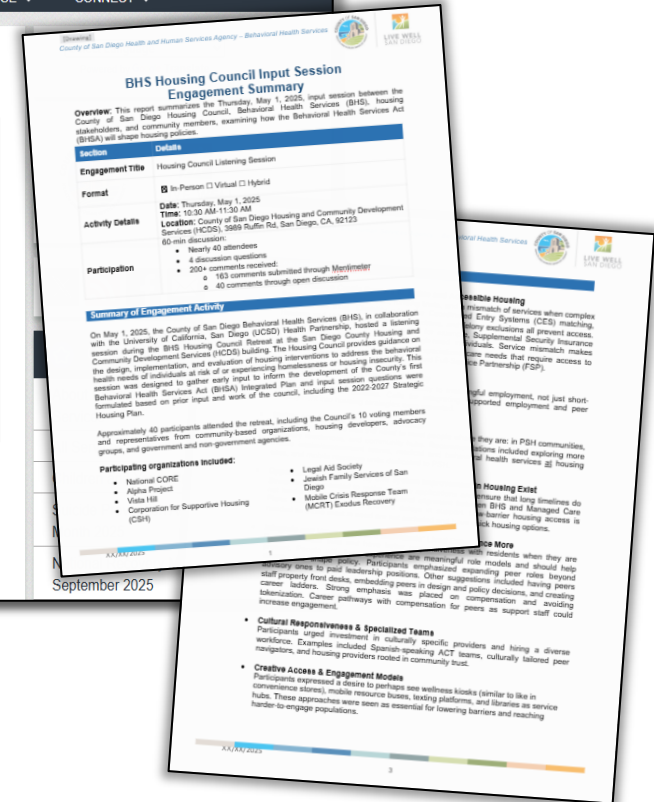
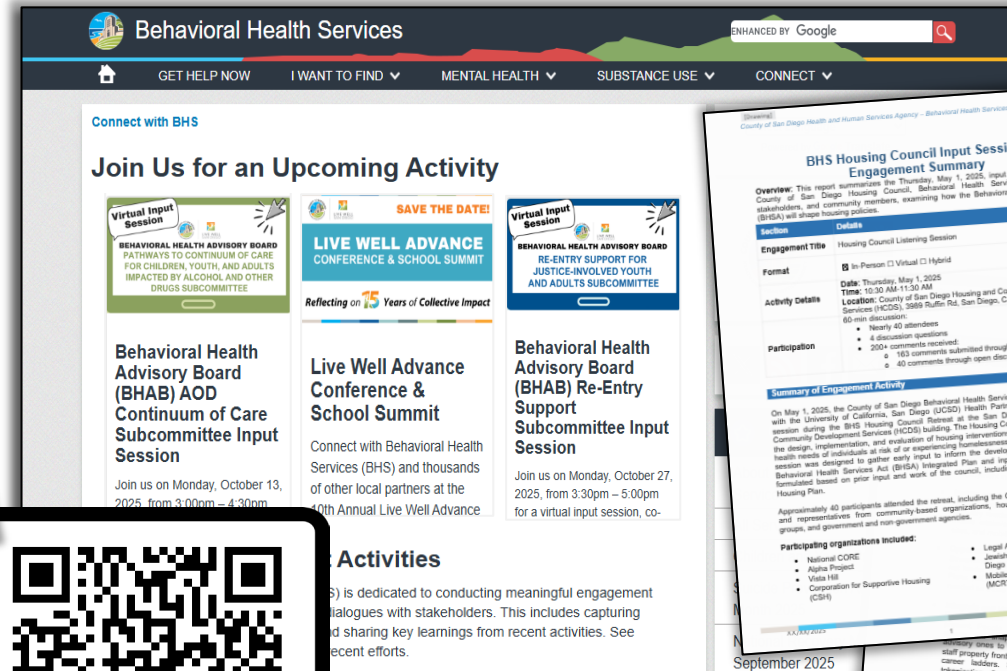
Past Activity Materials

SCAN ME



Contact Us

Communication & Engagement Unit: Engage.BHS@sdcounty.ca.gov



Thank You!



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