



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Health Services Agency

Subject: Position Add/Delete for Health Services Manager and Behavioral Health Supervising Client Specialist for Behavioral Health

Meeting Date: January 14, 2025

Formal Title: Approve addition of 1.0 full-time equivalent Health Services Manager and 1.0 full-time equivalent Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist, approve deletion of 1.0 full-time equivalent Behavioral Health Program Manager and 1.0 full-time equivalent Clinical Psychologist to the Health Services Agency's budget for the Behavioral Health Division, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

- 1) Approve addition of 1.0 full-time equivalent Health Services Manager position and 1.0 full-time equivalent Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist position and deletion of 1.0 full-time equivalent Behavioral Health Program Manager position and 1.0 full-time equivalent Clinical Psychologist to the Health Services Agency's budget for the Behavioral Health Division; and
- 2) Direct the Health Services Agency to refer these positions to the Personnel Department for classification, recruitment, and hiring.

Executive Summary

The Health Services Agency (HSA) Behavioral Health Division (BHD) currently has a vacant 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) Behavioral Health Program Manager position (NL6017AA) assigned to BHD Mental Health Services Act (MHSA); however, the position has had two failed recruitments due to limited qualified candidates and interest. HSA BHD requests to delete this position and add a 1.0 FTE Health Services Manager (PJ6999AA) to fill this need. This position is required by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to accomplish work required by and overseen by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC). Additionally, HSA BHD has had multiple vacancies in Adult Therapy Services and there is a need to develop a consistent philosophy and model under one line of clinical supervision and support. To accomplish this, HSA BHD is requesting to delete 1.0 FTE Clinical Psychologist position (SY3284AA) and add 1.0 FTE Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist (SK8999AA). Both added positions are budgeted, and no additional funds are required.

Discussion

HSA BHD is proposing to delete the current vacant Behavioral Health Program Manager position (NL6017AA) and add a 1.0 FTE Health Services Manager (PJ6999AA) to support current work associated with MHSA and additional requirements due to changes under the new Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) launching July 1, 2026. This position is required by DHCS to carry out the requirements associated with the County's plan to expend MHSA funds each year. The MHSA is funded by a 1% tax on personal incomes over \$1 million. The revenue is deposited into the Mental Health Services Fund (MHSF) and then distributed to counties by the State Controller's Office.

Per Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I Code) Section 5847 (a) and (b), counties must prepare and submit a Three-Year Program and Expenditure Plan (Plan) and Annual Updates (Update) for MHSA programs and expenditures to MHSOAC and DHCS. The Plan must be complete and include all MHSA components. Per W&I Code Section 5848, counties are required to collaborate with constituents and stakeholders throughout the planning and development process of the Plan, and the Plan must be adopted by the County Board of Supervisors.

MHSA requires service components in five areas:

Component	Description
<i>Community Support Services (CSS)</i>	Outreach and direct services for serious emotional disturbances or serious mental illness (all ages)
<i>Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)</i>	Prevent the development of mental health problems, and screen for and intervene with early signs
<i>Innovations (INN)</i>	Test new approaches that may improve outcomes
<i>Workforce Education and Training (WET)</i>	Build, retain, and train public mental health workforce
<i>Capital Facilities and Technology Needs (CFTN)</i>	Infrastructure support (electronic health records, facilities, etc.)

This position leads the Community Program Planning Process (CPPP) and supports a wide array of activities (surveys, focus groups, panels, community events focused on understanding gaps in vulnerable and underserved populations) on an annual basis to generate feedback and input from community stakeholders. That input drives the Three-Year Plan and each Annual Plan Update to ensure that the services HSA BHD is providing align with community perception of needs and gaps. This position also gathers data from the programs funded by MHSA and reports to the public on who was served and what was accomplished each year. Finally, this position takes the Plan to the County Mental Health Advisory Board (MHAB) and the Board of Supervisors on an annual basis for approval and to ensure that the public is apprised of activities, changes to the Plan, or changes in funding strategy.

This position is pivotal to HSA BHD but has been vacant for two years. As a result, Santa Cruz County is behind in its plan development and update process. With two failed recruitments under the Behavioral Health Program Manager classification, HSA BHD believes a broader candidate pool of qualified applicants will be attracted with the Health Services Manager classification.

HSA BHD is also trying to solve for limited psychotherapy services in its Adult Mental Health Branch. With the behavioral health workforce shortage, HSA BHD has a 40% % vacancy rate in adults psychotherapists and has not been able to recruit qualified candidates. In addition, oversight and clinical supervision is scattered across adult mental health teams, and HSA BHD is reorganizing to develop a more cohesive model using evidence-based practices. To accomplish this, HSA BHD is moving all adult mental health therapists into one team with one supervisor who can provide targeted and consistent support and supervision, monitor fidelity to practice, and better manage referrals. There are also gaps in group therapy, especially in South County, and HSA BHD is looking to expand services there.

To build this team HSA BHD is requesting to delete 1.0 FTE Clinical Psychologist position (SY3284AA) and add 1.0 FTE Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist (SK8999AA). This Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist will function as the clinical and administrative supervisor for the therapy team, and monitor practice and work with the team to expand and diversify services.

Financial Impact

Both the current 1.0 FTE Behavioral Health Program Manager and the 1.0 FTE Clinical Psychologist are vacant and funded in HSA BHD's FY2024-25 Approved Budget with a combined annual cost of \$321,264, and deleting both positions to add the 1.0 FTE Health Services Manager and 1.0 FTE Mental Health Supervising Client Specialist, which have a combined annual cost of \$301,860, results in annual savings of \$19,404. No new County General funds are needed nor requested.

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Comprehensive Health & Safety

Submitted By:

Mónica Morales

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.