



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Health Services Agency

Subject: Mental Health Advisory Board Code Update

Meeting Date: March 25, 2025

Formal Title: Consider approving in concept an “Ordinance Amending Chapter 2.104 of the Santa Cruz County Code Regarding the County of Santa Cruz Mental Health Advisory Board”, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

- 1) Consider approving in concept an “Ordinance Amending Chapter 2.104 of the Santa Cruz County Code Regarding the County of Santa Cruz Mental Health Advisory Board”;
- 2) Schedule the ordinance for a second reading and final adoption on April 8, 2025;
- 3) Direct the Clerk of the Board to publish the Notice of Proposed Ordinance Summary in a newspaper of general circulation at least five days prior to the scheduled second reading and final adoption, no later than April 1, 2025, pursuant to Government Code Section 25124.

Executive Summary

The Santa Cruz Mental Health Advisory Board (MHAB) is a commission that serves as an advisory body to the County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors. The Commission recommends updating Santa Cruz County Code (SCCC) Chapter 2.104 to comply with changes to the California’s Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) Section 5604 due to approval of Proposition 1 and California Senate Bill 326 (SB326). Board approval is required to amend SCCC Chapter 2.104. MHAB will return after ordinance adoption to request approval to update its bylaws.

Discussion

The MHAB provides oversight and monitoring of the local behavioral health system and serves as an advocate for persons with behavioral health or mental illness. A primary responsibility of this commission is to review and evaluate the community’s behavioral health needs, services, facilities, and special problems. Effective January 1, 2025, the MHAB membership bylaws should be updated to reflect changes from Proposition 1 and SB326 (the Behavioral Health Services Act).

The key changes to the ordinance are:

1. Rename the Board from MHAB to Behavioral Health Advisory Board (“BHAB”).
2. The term “Mental” is changed to “Behavioral.”
3. Youth Membership Requirement: WIC Section 5604(a)(2)(B)(i) states that at least one of the members that are consumers, or the parents, spouses, siblings, or adult children of consumers who are receiving or have received behavioral health services shall be 25 years of age or younger.
4. Local Education Agency Membership Requirement: WIC Section 5604(a)(2)(D)(i) states that at least one member of the board shall be an employee of a local education agency.

5. Veteran or Veteran Advocate Membership Requirement: WIC Section 5604(a)(2)(C)(i) states that at least one member of the Board shall be a veteran or a veteran advocate.
6. Advice on “Substance use disorder” is added to the Board’s duties.

At its meeting on January 16, 2025, MHAB voted to recommend revisions to SCCC Chapter 2.104 to conform to WIC Section 5604.

Attached for Board consideration are the ordinance and strikeout-underline versions showing amendments to SCCC Chapter 2.104.

Upon adoption of the amended SCCC Chapter 2.104, MHAB will address changes to its bylaws in a subsequent agenda item, which encompass meetings and trainings, officer responsibilities, committee responsibilities, and other administrative adjustments.

Financial Impact

The recommended actions have no financial impact.

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Comprehensive Health & Safety

Submitted By:

Monica Morales, Director of Health Services

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.