



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

HEALTH CENTERS DIVISION

Integrated Behavioral Health

1080 Emeline Avenue, Santa Cruz CA 95060

Phone:(831) 454-4808 Fax:(831) 454-4770



DATE: May 8, 2025

FROM: Dimitri Bacos, MD (Psychiatric Medical Director at Santa Cruz HSA, Clinics Division)

RE: request for reclassification of open psychiatrist position to a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner position

To Whom it May Concern:

This is a letter requesting that our open Psychiatrist position be changed to a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) because we have a willing candidate currently wanting to join our Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH) team.

As the Psychiatric Medical Director for IBH in Clinics, I have been thinking proactively about maintaining psychiatric services in a safe and equitable manner as we lose our two contractor (locum) psychiatrists assigned to South County.

I have been informed that IBH will no longer have monies dedicated to supporting locum tenens contract psychiatrists for our program starting July 1st. Therefore our 2 locum psychiatrists will be leaving us, they represent 34 hours of service per week, 0.85 FTE. They were both assigned to South County. One of the locum psychiatrists who is leaving is fluent in Spanish.

I have also been informed that we are losing our open Psychiatrist position because it has remained open for many years with no one on the hiring list for many, many months.

I propose that we change our open Psychiatrist position to a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner position, we would be able to hire internally someone who is certified for expanded scope of practice (not needing Psychiatrist sign-off for direct patient care). She is fluent in Spanish and would be able to work in South County as a

.85 FTE and thus would allow for IBH to maintain capacity and quality of services in South County.

Also, we would be not only maintaining equity for that patient population, but we would be able to improve the equity of services rendered since our Spanish speaking capacity would be increased compared to what we currently have with our 2 locum psychiatrists (we have one locum psychiatrist working 12 hours per week who is a Spanish speaker, the other is not bilingual).

If this request to reclassify the open psychiatrist position into a PMHNP position is possible, we will be able to continue our services without compromising safety, quality and equity by bringing onboard a highly competent and experienced PMHNP who is fluent in Spanish.

Sincerely,
Dr Dimitri Bacos

DocuSigned by:

Dimitri Bacos

5/16/2025

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Dimitri Bacos, MD

IBH Psychiatric Medical Director, Clinics Division

Santa Cruz Health Services Agency

1080 Emeline Ave; Santa Cruz, CA; 95060

Ph: (831) 454-5017

Blythe Ballao

DocuSigned by:

Blythe Ballao

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Michael OConnor

DocuSigned by:

Michael OConnor

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Signed by:

Courtney Montgomery

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Cayley Lanctot

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