

**KERN COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

September 22, 2025

5:30 p.m.

In Person: 2001 28th Street- 1st Floor, Training Room**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michael Bryant (Dist. 3) – Chair

Bryson Gholston (Dist. 3) – 2nd Vice ChairFlossie White (Dist. 4) - *Resigned*

Sonia Silva (Dist. 1)

BreAnne Patterson (Dist. 4) Parliamentarian

Tiara King (Dist. 2) - *Absent*Connie Perez-Andreesen (Dist. 5) - *Resigned*Jeff Burdick (Dist. 1) – 1st Vice ChairDavid Kessler (Dist. 4) - *Excused*

Michael Herrera (Dist. 1)

Ishmeet Singh (Dist. 2)

LaShawna Stowe (Dist. 3) - *Absent*Genora McClanahan (Dist. 5) - *Absent*

Priscilla Sanchez (Dist. 5) – BOS Appointée

Maria Gonzalez – BHB Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: Marisa Trebizo, Pamela Reece (audience).**KERNBHRS STAFF:** Candee Del Rio (BHRS Finance Director), Lynn Corse (BH Recovery System Administrator), Heather Hornibrook (BHRS Deputy Director), Jessica Armstrong (BHRS Deputy Director), Robin Taylor (BHRS Deputy Director).

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Michael Bryant, Chair, welcomed everyone; each board member introduced themselves.
2. **Establish Quorum:** Present (8), Excused (1), Absent (3). Quorum was established.
3. **Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes (Draft)**
 - August 25, 2025, Regular Meeting: MOTION by Sonia Silva and SECONDED by Jeff Burdick ALL AYES: MOTION PASSED
4. **Presentation(s):** PowerPoint Presentation, "CalAIM Payment Reform & Budget" by Candee Del Rio. *Time allowed for Questions & Answers.*
5. **Public Comment:**
 - Pamela Reece (community member)
 - Pamela Reece raised concern over the lack of programs addressing executive function deficits in recovery settings. She noted that many in rehab or sober living struggle with time management, completing tasks, and daily responsibilities. Drawing from her son's experience, she emphasized

the need for services that build self-regulation, confidence, and life skills to support recovery, employment, and independent living.

- Jessica Armstrong, who oversees substance use and adult outpatient services, was appointed to provide additional information and contact details to Pamela Reece.

6. Unfinished Business:

- **Nominations for Chair, First Vice Chair, and Second Vice Chair are open** – Michael Brynat
 - Members should review bylaws and notify Maria or Alison if interested.
 - Ad hoc members and Marketing Chair will compile a slate for a November vote; new officers begin Jan. 1.
- **Members to review changes to bylaws** – Alison Burrowes
 - Going forward, a BOS member will serve on the BHB, starting with District 1 and rotating annually; this change will be added to the bylaws for review and approval. A countywide review recommended reducing BHB membership from 16 to 10–12 to improve quorum, which could be implemented without displacing current members. Application and attendance rules are also being updated, though BOS members remain exempt from attendance requirements.

7. New Business: PowerPoint Presentation, “2025 Data Notebook Draft” by Heather Hornibrook and Lynn Corse. *Time allowed for Questions & Answers.* Motion to approve changes: MOTION Bryson Gholston and SECONDED by Jeff Burdick ALL AYES: MOTION PASSED.

8. Chair Report – Michael Bryant:

- **Chair’s Comment**
 - The Chair expressed appreciation for the strong attendance, noting that quorum was established and the Board was able to proceed with business.

9. KernBHRS Administrative Services – Heather Hornibrook, Deputy Director:

- **Clinical Plan Services:**
 - Parent-Child Interaction Therapy – Five families have successfully completed the program. Two therapists are currently progressing through the multi-step certification process, which includes meeting all PCIT training competencies, guiding at least two families through graduation, submitting the PCIT-International certification application, and passing the certification exam.
- **Department Supports:**
 - The DSD Administrator will retire in October, with MHSA/Cultural Competence moving to Clinical Plan Services, PIP to Kern Linkage, and Professional Development/Clinical Supervision to Adult System of Care. The incoming Administrator has trained and shadowed for a smooth transition.
 - BHSA Updates – Two RFPs for Outpatient Specialty Mental Health Services were posted to support a smooth transition for the incoming Administrator and the Department.
- **QID:**
 - The Department’s June DHCS Compliance Reviews found zero issues in the DMC-ODS Plan and one in the MH Plan. In its first external quality review, HSAG praised EHR training, data integrity, and review preparedness, issuing three recommendations related to CalMHSA reports.

10. KernBHRS Clinical Services Report – Jessica Armstrong, Deputy Director:

- **Adult System of Care:**
 - Access and Assessment services are now being provided at the geographical providers if the client desires to start services at their treatment site instead of going to MKS to have an assessment.
- **Kern Linkage:**

August 25, 2025

- The Mobile Clinics, in collaboration with Street Psychiatry and the Homeless Adult Team, will participate in the Recovery Fair on September 27, 2025, at MLK Park. Staff will be available to provide screenings, assessments, information, and answer questions.
- KernBHRS Correctional Behavioral Health Supervisor is currently on maternity leave. Coleen Najac will serve as the interim supervisor during this period.

- **Substance Use Disorder Division:**

- The Recovery fair will be held on September 27, 2025, from 9 AM-1 PM at Mill Creek Park, featuring 50+ service vendors, food, raffles, and recovery stories to show that treatment works.
- On September 12, 2025, KernBHRS received an \$8 million award from the Board of State and Community Corrections to expand DMC-ODS treatment capacity, improve follow-up, add referral tracking staff, and boost Prop 36 program engagement.

11. KernBHRS Specialty Clinical Services Report – Robin Taylor, Deputy Director:

- **Senate Bill 43**

- SB 43 expands the definition of “gravely disabled” to include individuals with severe substance use and mental health disorders, allowing for involuntary detention and conservatorship. The bill clarifies that grave disability applies to those unable to maintain their personal safety or obtain necessary medical care.
- The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has issued new guidance regarding fiscal and billing implications when services are provided to individuals with a substance use disorder–only diagnosis through the current involuntary treatment system.
- As of September 2025, Kern County has completed over 60% of its SB 43 Implementation Plan, with many additional items close to completion. The department remains on track to achieve full implementation by January 1, 2026.

- **Crisis Services**

- September events supporting Suicide Prevention Awareness included:
 - Save a Life Today Walk, BOS Proclamation, and the first 988 Day Celebration
 - Hope Has No Age Limit campaign continues, with handwritten notes of hope sent to seniors via Meals on Wheels.
- Oversight of the Telecare Recovery Station is transitioning to Crisis Services Administration in preparation for SB 43.
- Construction is underway on the 16-bed *Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit* and *Family Resource Center*, funded by a BHCIP Grant. The facility is expected to be completed by fall 2026, with an RFP issued for a service provider.

- **Children’s System of Care**

- Continuum of Care Reform (CCR): Staff attended 47 Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) meetings in July 2025 to support out-of-county youth with intensified services and coordinated care.
- CalAIM Justice-Involved Initiative: The PEI Juvenile Justice Engagement Team is now the Youth Futures Team, focusing on hope and stigma reduction. They are piloting interventions at the YDC to engage youth and families, with “Behavioral Health Links” reframed as warm welcomes.
 - Future Focused Team: Engages parents/guardians after YDC youth meetings to strengthen post-release connections. Of 11 youth released, 7 linked to services; 2 declined due to age, 2 were unreachable.

12. KernBHRS Department Report – Alison Burrowes, Director:

- **Directors’ Association and DHCS Updates**

- State and federal mandates are increasing rapidly, creating significant financial and operational strain (e.g., SB 43 fiscal impact with short timelines).
- Directors statewide expressed concern: DHCS acknowledged pressures but noted limited flexibility.

August 25, 2025

- Growing misalignment between program requirements and recovery-focused approaches (housing, DEI, harm reduction).

- **Local Updates – Safe Encampment Initiative**

- Bakersfield selected for state initiative with Caltrans and CalOES.
- BHRS will participate in planning, outreach, and providing resources at targeted encampment sites.
- Existing psychiatry and outreach programs position BHRS well for this effort.

- **Medi-Cal Redeterminations**

- More frequent Medi-Cal renewal requirements expected to increase lapses in coverage.
- BHRS will assist with reenrollment but anticipates fiscal pressure serving uninsured and undocumented individuals.

13. Board Member Item – Bryson Gholston

- **Board Member Recognition**

- Commended BHRS teams for supporting students with parents experiencing mental illness, including securing housing and resources. Bryson Gholston noted BHRS's exceptional work, highlighting the teams' dedication, intelligence, and the County's leading efforts statewide.

- **Upcoming Event – Young Male Educational Mental Health Conference**

- The Young Male Educational Mental Health Conference will be at Bakersfield College on October 18, 8 AM–3 PM, with interest in Kern BHRS participation.

14. Committee Reports:

Adult Treatment & Recovery Services (quarterly): Bryson Gholston:

- Next meeting will be November 12, 2025. Will report at the November Meeting.

Children's Treatment & Recovery Services (quarterly): Jeff Burdick:

- Next meeting will be October 9, 2025. Made report at the October meeting.

System Quality Improvement Committee (bi-monthly): David Kessler – *Excused*

- Last meeting was September 22, 2025.

15. Announcements to the Public:

- **Upcoming Event – District 5 Youth Job and Resource Fair**

- Targets 18–28-year-olds, especially anti-social or unsupported youth. Kern BHRS invited to provide on-site mental health support, training, and resource assistance; event flyers distributed.

16. Adjourn: MOTION by BreAnne Patterson to adjourn to the next regular meeting in person on October 27, 2025, and SECONDED by Sonia Silva. ALL AYES: MOTION PASSED. Adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Items Distributed via Meeting Invite

BHB 2025 Schedule

<https://www.kernbhhs.org/behavioral-health-board>