

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

February 23, 2026

5:30 p.m. to 7:00 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 Chair - *Excused*

Sonia Silva (Dist. 1)

BreAnne Patterson (Dist. 4) Parliamentarian - *Excused*

Jeff Burdick (Dist. 1) – 1st Vice Chair

Tiara King (Dist. 2) - *Absent*

Michael Herrera (Dist. 1)

Ishmeet Singh (Dist. 2) - *Excused*

LaShawna Stowe (Dist. 3)

Maria Gonzalez – BHB Coordinator

OTHERS PRESENT: 3 STEPS Staff – Bryan Burrow, Patricia Medina, Lynnette Jones

KERNBHRS STAFF: Jessica Armstrong (BHRS Deputy Director), Robin Taylor (BHRS Deputy Director), Heather Hornibrook (BHRS Deputy Director), Alison Burrowes (BHRS Director).

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Michael Bryant, Chair, welcomed everyone; each board member introduced themselves.
2. **Establish Quorum:** Present (5) *Quorum was not established.*
3. **Approval of Draft Minutes:**
 - January 26, 2026, Regular Meeting MOTION by/ *Quorum was not established. Deferred to March 23, 2026.*
4. **Presentation(s):** STEPS
 - PowerPoint Presentation, "STEPS" by Bryan Burrow. *Time allowed for Questions & Answers.*
5. **Public Comment:** None
6. **Unfinished Business**
 - Adult – Bryson Gholston and Michael Herrera
 - Children's - Jeff Burdick and LaShawna Stowe
 - SQIC – Michael Bryant and BreAnne Patterson

7. New Business – Michael Byant

- **Board member district reorganization**

- o Tiara King – Removal/ Quorum was not established. Deferred to March 23, 2026.
- o Sonia Silva – District Change to District 2
- o Lashawna Stowe – District Change to District 4

8. Chair Report – Michael Bryant

- The Chair attended training hosted by the California Behavioral Health Planning Council (CALBHB/C) addressing board roles and Brown Act requirements. The training will be incorporated into the onboarding process for new members.

9. KernBHRS Administrative Services – Heather Hornibrook, Deputy Director

- **Clinical Plan Services**

- o May is Mental Health Month.
- o The MHSA Annual Plan and BHSA Integrated Plan are in final preparation.

- **Proposition 47 (Prop 47) Grant**

- o Cohort 3 programming ends March 1, 2026.
- o Referrals have closed to allow Clarvida and BHRS SUD to serve existing participants and complete data reporting. The final recidivism report from the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) is expected in March.
- o Approximately 150 participant records will be reviewed to assess post-entry convictions.
- o EVALCORP is preparing the Final Evaluation Plan due June 1, 2026, BHRS is compiling required data

- **QID**

- o External Quality Review (EQR) – 2026 PMV & NAV
- o Combined Performance Measure Validation (PMV) and Network Adequacy Validation (NAV) review.
- o Conducted by Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG) for MHP and DMC-ODS.
- o Date: April 6, 2026| Time: 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. PT via Teams Virtual via Microsoft Teams.

- **DHCS FY 2024–25 Review**

- o Conducted by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Focus: DMC-ODS and SUBG services in Kern County. Audit Period: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.
- o Review Dates: May 5, 2026 – Compliance sessions. May 6, 2026 – Closing session, Format: Virtual via Microsoft Teams.

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

- **Kern Linkage**

- o The Point-in-Time Count was conducted on January 28, with projections indicating an increase in individuals surveyed compared to last year.
- o The first round of Psychology Internship Program interviews was completed, with 19 candidates interviewed for five departmental placements.

- **Substance Use Disorder Division**
 - American Health Services received Drug Medi-Cal Certification for its new 18th Street facility and will begin transitioning clients to the expanded site. Bakersfield American Indian Health Project was approved for reimbursement of Traditional Health Care Practices under DMC-ODS, expanding services for eligible Medi-Cal beneficiaries. The L Street Outpatient Program is adding Level 2.1 Intensive Outpatient services to enhance flexibility and access to treatment.
- **KernBHRS Specialty Clinical Services Report** – Robin Taylor, Deputy Director
- **Children's System of Care**
 - A second round of workshops is being conducted for Recovery Specialist staff to enhance resiliency and strengthen skills in serving youth and families.
- **Early Intervention**
 - The First Episode Psychosis Program has expanded outreach efforts to increase service referrals.
- **Juvenile Justice and Youth Services**
 - The Juvenile Justice Initiative is being implemented, and the Future Focus Team continues to support youth.
 - Data tracking is underway to monitor active Medi-Cal coverage for 90-day pre-release youth.
 - Family engagement efforts have been strengthened to reduce barriers to behavioral health services.
- **High Fidelity Wraparound (HFW)**
 - The "One County Plan" for HFW is being finalized in partnership with DHS and Probation in alignment with Proposition 1, effective July 1, 2026.
 - Staff training on the HFW model is in progress through UC Davis. Plan submission is anticipated within the next month.
- **Medical Services**
 - Centralized scheduling has been implemented for all Psychiatry services within KernBHRS. This structure ensures compliance with all timeliness and access requirements.
- **Crisis Services**
 - AB 416 authorizes Emergency Room Physicians to obtain certification to initiate 5150 involuntary holds.
 - Collaboration with Kern County hospitals is underway to review certification requirements. KernBHRS policies will be updated as needed following stakeholder consultation.
- **BHCIP Youth CSU and Family Resource Center**
 - The BHCIP Youth Crisis Stabilization Unit and Family Resource Center Project remains on schedule. The RFP for operations has been awarded to Telecare, completion is anticipated in December 2026, with operations expected to begin in early 2027.

11. KernBHRS Department Report – Alison Burrowes, Director

- An overview video developed by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) and sponsored by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) was introduced for use in new board member orientation. A video that explains the structure and role of County Behavioral Health and the Board's oversight responsibilities.

February 23, 2026

12. Board Member Item: None

13. Committee Reports:

Adult Treatment & Recovery Services (quarterly): Bryson Gholston and Michael Herrera:

- Next meeting will be held on March 11, 2026.

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

- Last meeting was held on January 8, 2026. Next meeting on April 9, 2026.

System Quality Improvement Committee (quarterly): No BHB Member.

- Last meeting was held on January 26, 2026. Next meeting on March 23, 2026.

14. Announcements to the Public: None

15. Adjourn: MOTION by Michael Bryant to adjourn to the next regular meeting in person on March 23, 2026, and SECONDED by a. ALL AYES: MOTION PASSED. Adjourned at 6:40 PM.