



Mental Health Commission

INFORMATION CALENDAR

May 10, 2022

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Mental Health Commission  
 Submitted by: Dr. Margaret Fine, Chair, Mental Health Commission  
 Subject: Mental Health Commission Work Plan 2022-2023

INTRODUCTION

At its March 24, 2022 meeting, the Mental Health Commission adopted its 2022-2023 Work Plan.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On March 24, 2022, the Mental Health Commission adopted the attached work plan through the action detailed

M/S/C (Fine, Opton) Motion to pass the work plan 2022 with the 3 changes and submit to the Mental Health Commission and Berkeley City Council. The 3 changes: 1. On the Blue Print that we make sure it's coordinated with Alameda Court. 2. Area in Equity and having someone appointed from the Mental Health Commission to the Mental Health Division. 3. Explore how we add substance use as appropriate to the commission, division and manager titles.

PASSED

Ayes: Escarcega, Fine, Jones, Opton Noes: None; Abstentions: None; Absent: Prichett, Taplin

The Mental Health Commissioners include: Margaret Fine (Chair), Monica Jones (Vice-Chair), Edward Opton, Andrea Pritchett, Tommy Escarcega, and Councilmember Terry Taplin. On March 25, 2022, the Mental Health Commission adopted the attached work plan through the action detailed below during its regular public meeting.

The 2022-2023 Work Plan is designed to address the public mental health and substance use system for people living with serious mental illness and substance use issues and disorders—many of whom are unhoused, people of color, LGBTQIA+ people, people living with disabilities of all ages. It is further designed to address public mental health and substance use to inform the community at-large, particularly through programs at its public meetings.

The Mental Health Commission advances: 1) a whole person care approach that equitably provides well-integrated, coordinated systems of care to diverse people with mental health and substance use challenges, and 2) a diversion approach to reduce interactions with law enforcement and using hospital emergency rooms, inpatient psychiatric hospitalization, and incarceration for service delivery whenever possible.

Overall, the Work Plan is designed to advance a comprehensive 365/24/7 mental health and substance use system for Berkeley, including implementing an alternative non-police responder program, the Specialized Care Unit, and establishing a crisis stabilization center in Berkeley for people who seek voluntary urgent care. The Work Plan is designed to further achieve these goals through building partnerships with consumers, families, community, the Division of Mental Health, and community-based organizations. Further, the Mental Health Commission achieves them through membership, Site Visit Subcommittee, and inviting speakers to present about the public mental health and substance use and related systems at public meetings.

Last, the Mental Health Commission has the goal to submit a Blueprint to the Berkeley City Council making recommendations on the public mental health, substance use, and related systems for serving Berkeley people with mental health and substance use challenges. Overall, the Work Plan is designed to champion and demonstrate the importance of equitable, inclusive public mental health and substance use service delivery in the form of tailored culturally safe and responsive services to diverse people and communities.

#### BACKGROUND

In 2016, the City Council adopted direction to commissioners to submit a work plan annually.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There is no identifiable environmental sustainability impact associated with the adoption of this work plan.

#### POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

None.

#### FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

None.

#### CONTACT PERSON

Jamie Works-Wright, MH Commission Secretary, HHCS/MH, 510-981-7721

#### Attachments:

1: FY 2022-2023 Work Plan

WORK PLAN 2022-2023  
Mental Health Commission for the City of Berkeley

“Contributing to building a comprehensive 365/24/7 behavioral health system for Berkeley.”

- Participate in the selection of the next Division Manager for the Division of Mental Health according to state-mandated duties for the Mental Health Commission.
- Establish a Site Visit Committee that may visit "any facility within the county or jurisdiction where mental health evaluations or services are being provided, including but not limited to, schools, emergency departments, and psychiatric facilities" in alignment with the Mental Health Commission's state-mandated duties.
- Build and continue building partnerships with diverse consumers, families, community, the Division of Mental Health, community-based organizations, including to outreach for new members and by continuing to invite speakers to present and answer questions about the public behavioral health (mental health and substance use) and related systems.
- Develop and advance a diversion program for diverse people with mental health and substance use challenges away from hospital emergency rooms, inpatient psychiatric hospitalization, law enforcement, and criminal legal and incarceration systems. Collaborate with the Mental Health Subcommittee of the Police Accountability Board and the Police Accountability Board to develop a diversion program (Santa Rita Jail Subcommittee).
- Write and submit a Blueprint for the City of Berkeley with recommendations for building a comprehensive 365/24/7 behavioral health system for our city—particularly focused on diverse people with mental health, substance use, and housing challenges and equitable, inclusive care—and submit to the Berkeley City Council, including to ensure joint action with Alameda County.
- Advance establishment of an alternative non-police responder program, the Specialized Care Unit, for the City of Berkeley.
- Advance establishment of a crisis stabilization center in Berkeley to serve diverse individuals with mental health and substance use challenges who voluntarily seek urgent care in our city, including a center that aligns with the SAMHSA National Behavioral Health Crisis Care Guidelines for the definition of crisis stabilization and the minimum expectations for operating a crisis stabilization center.
- Advance using a whole person care approach that equitably provides well-integrated, coordinated systems of care for diverse Berkeley people with

behavioral health challenges, including through current onboarding and use of the Community Health Records by the Division of Mental Health with Alameda County.

- Evaluate levels of equity, disparities, and inclusion for diverse and marginalized people with mental health and substance use challenges who use or attempt to use the Division of Mental Health for the City of Berkeley, including having a Mental Health Commissioner appointed to participate on the Mental Health Equity Committee for this Division of Mental Health.
- Explore changing the titles of the Mental Health Commission, the Manager for Mental Health Services, and the Division of Mental Health to include substance use as appropriate to reflect: 1) the high number of clients served by the Division of Mental Health with mental health and substance use issues and disorders, and 2) the scope and nature of Medi-Cal insurance under CalAIM for people experiencing serious mental illness and substance use disorders at the Division of Mental Health.