

Setting the Standard in Health Care Excellence

March 18, 2025

County of Ventura Board of Supervisors

Subject: Approval of, and Authorization for Ventura County Behavioral Health Director to Submit, a Mental Health Services Act Veterans Mentorship Program Project Plan to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission for Funding in the Maximum Amount of \$2,587,377.

Recommendation:

Approval of, and authorization for the Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Director or designee to submit a Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Veterans Mentorship Program (VMP) Project Plan to the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (BHSOAC)¹ for funding in the maximum amount of \$2,587,377. (Exhibit 1)

Fiscal Impact:

MHSA Budget Unit #3260-3269 (MHS Innovation)

	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27
Revenues	\$860,548	\$819,387	\$907,442
Costs	\$860,548	\$819,387	\$907,442
Net County Cost	\$0	\$0	\$0

Funding Source(s): Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)
Match Requirement: None

Discussion:

Background

The proposed project was developed through the VCBH MHSA Innovation project process. The process solicits community members to submit innovation ideas through a public portal and advertises when solicitations are open. A community planning process takes place with community information sessions, a community planning workgroup, and prioritization process. MHSA prioritizes high risk and underserved populations and encourages counties to utilize peers wherever possible, recognizing their positive impact on members. VCBH is looking to expand its peer support by assisting veterans

¹ BHSOAC is now known as the Commission for Behavioral Health. BHSOAC was formerly known as the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC).

throughout Ventura County with various mental health services during their transitions from active service to civilian life and emergency first responders through the proposed VMP project plan.

An MHSIA Innovation Project is defined as a project that “the county designs and implements for a defined time period and evaluates to develop new best practices in mental health services and supports.” An Innovation project should be designed to provide new knowledge to inform current and future mental health practices and approaches. A detailed overview of the proposed MHSIA VMP project plan and approval process for this project are provided below.

Recommendation

The proposed MHSIA VMP project plan will focus on assisting Ventura County veterans who are transitioning from service to civilian life and emergency first responders with their mental health needs. Once identified through a localized referral process, individuals will be screened and receive supportive, guided services to connect them with appropriate employment opportunities while focusing on their mental health. The VMP would also connect individuals with a peer mentor and develop a plan for addressing the individual’s needs. The program seeks to provide veterans and first responders with tiers of service depending on the needs of the individual.

All MHSIA Innovation Projects must be approved by the BHSOAC before counties are authorized to move forward with executing programming and contracts. Accordingly, VCBH is requesting your Board’s approval of the proposed VCBH MHSIA VMP project plan and authorization for the VCBH Director or designee to submit the plan to BHSOAC for funding in the maximum amount of \$2,587,377. VCBH will procure the services necessary to implement its MHSIA VMP project plan, as approved by BHSOAC, in accordance with all applicable County contracting and procurement policies and requirements.

Strategic Plan Priority:

The item presented in this Board letter ties to Goal #1 of the Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities strategic priority of the County Strategic Plan as it is designed to meet the goal of providing equitable and timely access to quality mental health services.

This Board letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, Auditor Controller’s Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions regarding this item, please contact VCBH Behavioral Health Director Loretta L. Denering DrPH, MS at (805) 981-2214 or HCA Assistant Chief Financial Officer Narcisa Egan at (805) 973-5357.



LORETTA L. DENERING, DrPH, MS
Behavioral Health Director



THERESA CHO, MD, MHA
Health Care Agency Director

Attachment:
Exhibit 1 – Ventura County Veteran Mentorship Program Project Plan