

December 10, 2024

Board of Supervisors  
County of Ventura  
800 South Victoria Avenue  
Ventura, CA 93009

**SUBJECT: Ratification and Approval of, and Authorization for the Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Director to Sign, the Agreement with Khepera House for Behavioral Health Bridge Housing-Substance Use Services (SUS) Recovery Residence Services, in the Amount of \$448,392, for the Term December 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027; Ratification and Approval of, and Authorization for the VCBH Director to Sign, the First Amendment to the Agreement with Cri-Help, Inc. for SUS Residential and Withdrawal Management Services, in the Amount of \$301,179, for the Term August 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025; Approval of, and Authorization for the VCBH Director to Make Limited Modifications to the Agreements and Extend the Terms; and Authorization for the Auditor Controller to Process Any Necessary Accounting Transactions. RECOMMENDATION NO. 5 REQUIRES 4/5THS VOTE.**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Ratification and approval of, and authorization for the Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Director to Sign, the memorandum of agreement with Khepera House for Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) - Substance Use Services (SUS) Recovery Residence Services (RRS), in the amount of \$448,392, for the term December 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027(Exhibit 1). Of this amount, \$100,912 shall be for the term of December 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, \$173,740 shall be for the term of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, and \$173,740 shall be for the term of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.
2. Ratification and approval of, and authorization for the VCBH Director or designee to sign, the first amendment with Cri-Help, Inc. for SUS residential and withdrawal management services for the Spanish monolingual population, in the existing amount of \$301,179, to add a second service location for the term August 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. (Exhibit 2)
3. Authorization for the VCBH Director or designee (a) to approve modifications to decrease the amount of each agreement referenced in Recommendations #1 and #2, (b) to approve budget modifications that do not increase the amount of the agreements

referenced in Recommendations #1 and #2, (c) to approve modifications to the Provider Service Rates that do not exceed 25% of the rates stated in the agreements and which do not increase the amount of the agreement in Recommendation #1, (d) to approve corrections, clarifications and technical changes and modifications to the agreements in Recommendations #1 and #2, when the changes are consistent with the original purpose of the agreements and do not result in additional costs to the County, and (e) to amend the agreement in Recommendation #2 to revise or add language applicable to providers as required by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), subject to County Counsel review and approval.

4. Authorization for the VCBH Director or designee to extend the term of the agreement referenced in Recommendation #2, up to two (2) times for a period one (1) year each, on the same or more favorable terms and conditions (with any changes in the Scope of Work to be consistent with the original purpose of the agreement), and for up to an amount not to exceed (a) the amount of the agreement specified above and (b) any Board-approved increase made to each agreement amount within FY 2024-25. All extensions would be subject to all necessary prior appropriations and other budgetary approvals by your Board and review and approval as to form by County Counsel.
5. Authorization for the Auditor-Controller to process the necessary budgetary transactions to revise the following appropriations and revenue. (This recommendation requires 4/5ths vote.):

FY24-25 Budget Unit 3220-3227 SUS Residential Services

INCREASE	Services and Supplies	\$100,912
INCREASE	Intergovernmental Revenue	\$100,912

**REASON FOR RATIFICATION**

To address safety issues that arise with clients, VCBH authorized Cri-Help, Inc. to utilize a second treatment facility for placement of clients to avoid early discharge and ensure clients continued treatment. VCBH also authorized Khepera House to begin serving clients in advance of your Board's approval to ensure client service needs are met in timely manner. VCBH is presenting these agreements to your Board at the earliest opportunity.

**FISCAL/MANDATES IMPACT:**

**SUS Budget Unit #3220-3227 (Residential Services)**

Mandatory: No ☒ Yes ☐ Cite Authority:

Source of Funding: Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Federal Financial Participation (FFP); 2011 Realignment; State General Fund; Substance Use

Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant (SUBG) and Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Program

Funding Match Required: No

Impact on Other Department(s): None

	<u>FY 2024-25</u>	<u>FY 2025-26</u>
Summary of Revenue and Total Costs		
Revenue:	\$402,091	\$474,919
Costs:		
Direct Cost	\$402,091	\$474,919
Indirect - Dept.	\$0	\$0
Total Costs	\$402,091	\$474,919
Net County Costs	\$0	\$0

<b>FY 2024-25 Adjusted Budget for SUS Budget Unit #3220-3227</b>				
	<b>Adopted Budget</b>	<b>Adjusted Budget</b>	<b>Projected Actual</b>	<b>Estimated Savings/(Deficit)</b>
Appropriations	\$7,376,950	\$9,976,439	\$9,976,439	\$0
Revenue	\$6,990,685	\$6,990,685	\$6,990,685	\$0
Net Cost	\$386,265	\$2,985,754	\$2,985,754	\$0

**STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY:**

The item presented in this Board letter ties to 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.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Recommendation #1:**

In April 2023, VCBH submitted a proposal for a Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) non-competitive funding allocation from the DHCS in the amount of \$13,325,088 to provide a variety of housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness who have serious behavioral health conditions that prevent them from accessing help and moving out of homelessness. In June 2023, VCBH was awarded conditional approval of the BHBH Short-term Housing Program funds by DHCS, and your Board approved the acceptance of the grant funding on September 12, 2023. After extensive stakeholder input, VCBH developed a BHBH program plan that included a provision for new shelter beds, emergency motel accommodations, interim supportive housing units and dedicated housing case managers to support this extensive new housing program. VCBH has

dedicated BHBH resources to projects that were previously approved by your Board on December 19, 2023 and May 21, 2024.

Recently, a service provider for one of the BHBH projects chose not to proceed with executing a BHBH Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) for Shelter Beds. VCBH conducted a review to determine how these funds could be reallocated. Based on the department's review, it was determined that the County has a need for recovery residence services.

**Khepera House** is a Ventura based affordable sober living and additional treatment and recovery residential provider. The mission of Khepera House is to provide a clean, sober and healthy living environment for recovery from alcohol and drug addiction, which has been recognized as a disease that affects all areas of our residents' lives. Khepera House accommodates clients that have been inducted onto Medicated-Assisted Treatment with an approved provider. Residents at Khepera House deal with the issues of alcohol and drug addiction, as well as changes in their perception, attitude and lifestyle.

Through the proposed agreement with Khepera House, VCBH will use the available BHBH funding to create a new bridge housing opportunity that is focused on providing a clean, sober, and healthy living environment for individuals recovering from alcohol and drug addiction. Specifically, VCBH will contract with Khepera House for fourteen (14) beds at a rate of \$34.00 per client/bed day and \$14.67 per client/per day for bed holds. The total not to exceed amount of the agreement is \$448,392. Of this amount, \$100,912 shall be for the term of December 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, \$173,740 shall be for the term of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, and \$173,740 shall be for the term of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. These beds will be specifically dedicated to the BHBH target population and in addition to other recovery residence services that Khepera provides through a separate agreement.

VCBH requests ratification and approval of, and authorization for the VCBH Director to sign, the agreement with Khepera House for BHBH – SUS RRS, in the amount of \$448,392, for the term December 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027.

## **Background**

### **Recommendation #2:**

**Cri-Help Inc.** is a Los Angeles based certified substance use disorder (SUD) withdrawal management (detox) and SUD residential provider that offers a treatment track with approximately forty percent (40%) of their census conducted entirely in Spanish. In Ventura County, monolingual Spanish speaking community members with an SUD needing residential care are seen in outpatient treatment, or in English-based residential programs. VCBH Substance Use Services (SUS) Division is seeking to prioritize culturally and linguistically competent services for the VCBH SUD treatment clients who report Spanish as their primary language by entering into an agreement with Cri-Help, Inc. for Ventura County monolingual Spanish speakers needing inpatient SUD treatment.



The First Amendment is needed in order to add a second facility location to the scope of work to better serve VCBH members. VCBH authorized the use of a second facility in North Hollywood as of August 1, 2024 through the signature of the first amendment, however, no members have been placed at this facility to date. The North Hollywood site will only be used if safety issues arise with a client that could potentially result in their early discharge if the client is not moved to a different facility that is able to meet their needs and maintain them in treatment.

VCBH requests ratification and approval of, and authorization for the VCBH Director designee, to sign the first amendment with Cri-Help Inc, for SUS residential and withdrawal management services for the Spanish monolingual population, in the existing amount of \$301,179, for the term August 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

**Recommendation #3:**

In order to timely respond to needed changes to achieve contract goals and ensure costs are maintained within available funding and budgets, VCBH also requests authorization for the VCBH Director or designee, (a) to approve modifications to decrease the amount of each agreement referenced in Recommendations #1 and #2, (b) to approve budget modifications that do not increase the amount of the agreements referenced in Recommendations #1 and #2, (c) to approve modifications to the Provider Service Rates that do not exceed 25% of the rates stated in the agreements and which do not increase the amount of the agreement in Recommendation #1, (d) to approve corrections, clarifications and technical changes and modifications to the agreements in Recommendations #1 and #2, when the changes are consistent with the original purpose of the agreements and do not result in additional costs to the County, and (e) to amend the agreement in Recommendation #2 to revise or add language applicable to providers as required by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), subject to County Counsel review and approval.

**Recommendation #4:**

VCBH requests authorization for the VCBH Director or designee to extend the term of agreement in Recommendation #2, up to two (2) times for a period one (1) year each, on the same or more favorable terms and conditions (with any changes in the Scope of Work to be consistent with the original purpose of the agreement), and for up to an amount not to exceed (a) the amount of each agreement specified above and (b) any Board approved increase made to each agreement amount within FY 2024-25. All extensions would be subject to all necessary prior appropriations and other budgetary approvals by your Board and review and approval as to form by County Counsel.

**Recommendation #5:**


To ensure that sufficient appropriations are available, VCBH is also recommending approval of and authorization for Auditor-Controller to process the budgetary transactions

necessary to increase the appropriations and revenue, as discussed above in Recommendation #5.

This Board Letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, Auditor-Controller's Office, and County Counsel. If you have any questions regarding these items, please contact VCBH Director Dr. Loretta 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

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 – FY 2024-25 Khepera House BHBH SUS RRS MOA
- Exhibit 2 – FY 2024-25 Cri-Help 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment