



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** HEALTH

**File #:** 24-077

Board Meeting Date: 1/30/2024

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Louise F. Rogers, Chief, San Mateo County Health  
Jeï Africa, Director, Behavioral Health, and Recovery Services

**Subject:** Expansion of Behavioral Health HEAL Team through Bridge Housing Grant Program

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution authorizing the addition of two new Unclassified Full-Time Psychiatric Social Worker/Marriage and Family Therapy I/II positions and one new Unclassified Full-time Case Management Assessment Specialist position to start on March 1, 2024

**BACKGROUND:**

The Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Grant Program is a program from the State of California through its Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). BHBH includes funding to be awarded to County behavioral health departments in order to operate bridge housing settings to address the immediate and sustainable housing needs of people experiencing homelessness who have serious behavioral health conditions, including serious mental illness (SMI) and/or substance use disorder (SUD).

The BHBH Program, which was signed into law in September 2022 under Assembly Bill 179 (Ting, Chapter 249, Statutes of 2022), provided \$1,500,000,000 statewide in funding through June 30, 2027, to address the immediate housing and treatment needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness and who have serious behavioral health conditions. San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) was awarded a grant of \$10,246,862 for the term of June 23, 2023, through June 30, 2027, by DHCS.

**DISCUSSION:**

EBHRS proposes to hire two new unclassified Psychiatric Social Worker/Marriage and Family Therapy I/II (PSW/MFT I/II) Homeless, Engagement, Assessment, and Linkage (HEAL) clinicians who will rotate through the County's emergency shelters for adults (six programs consisting of a total of 627 beds, including a mix of congregate and non-congregate programs) to provide services to sheltered clients who may have SMI or SUD. The two unclassified PSW/MFT I/II HEAL staff and one additional unclassified Case Management Assessment Specialist for SUD will serve 30 individuals at

any given time, staying in emergency shelters for adults. These positions will expand the reach of the HEAL Team, which serves unsheltered clients in encampments and other non-shelter locations.

The positions are being requested to be unclassified because the grant for the BHBH program has a four-year duration, exceeding the maximum 3-year time limit for limited-term positions. BHRS understands that unclassified County positions convert into permanent positions after three years and plans to evaluate whether or not the unclassified positions should be converted before the conversion date. If the positions are ultimately converted to permanent, BHRS will secure alternative funding for these positions once the BHBH grant ends. These positions are being presented to the Board in this separate memorandum and resolution to ensure that they are highlighted, given the nature of the positions and the program. They will also be reflected in the County’s Salary Resolution if the Board approves adding the positions.

Sample duties for the PSW/MFT I/II HEAL clinicians may include:

- Engage, screen, and assess individuals for mental health services and assist BHBH clients with housing readiness and referrals to permanent housing navigator/locator services.
- Assist clients to obtain Coordinated Entry System assessments for prioritizations of housing and eligibility for housing vouchers.
- Provide linkage to other housing support services, benefits assistance, employment services, peer services, supported education, and psychosocial rehabilitation services.

Sample duties for the Case Management Assessment Specialist may include:

- Engage, screen, and assess individuals for substance use disorders to provide a range of services and supports including referrals for Medication Assisted Treatment and other SUD treatment options.
- Provide intensive case management including transportation, client advocacy, and care coordination with other care providers and linkages to other housing support services, benefits assistance, employment services, peer services, supported education, and psychosocial rehabilitation services.
- Assist BHBH clients with housing readiness and referrals to permanent housing navigator/locator services and support them to obtain CES assessment for prioritizations of housing and eligibility for housing vouchers.

The grant will also pay for 15 transitional bridge co-housing units at the Canyon Vista Center currently under construction on the Cordilleras Health and Healing campus, 20 apartments or hotel units (located throughout the County) secured through medium-term (i.e., up to 24 months) tenant-based rental assistance, and housing navigator/locator services and participant assistance funds to help BHBH participants identify and secure a pathway to permanent housing. Agreements for these services will be brought forward to this Board separately.

It is anticipated that 85% of clients that enter the BHBH program will obtain permanent housing.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURE:**

Measure	FY 2023-24 Estimated	FY 2024-25 Projected
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Percentage of clients that enter the BHBH program that obtain permanent housing	85%	85%
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**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impact of this request to hire these new unclassified full-time positions is \$1,207,186 for the three-year term of the grant. These funds are already reflected in the FY 23-24 BHRS budget. The BHBH program grant will entirely fund these positions. There is no Net County Cost.