

April 12, 2026

Public Comment

Sacramento County Behavioral Health Commission

Dear Chairperson Weber and Commissioners,

As you may or may not know, I recently resigned from the Commission. I understand that the Commission will be taking a look at Commissioner roles and responsibilities during your retreat. I've served on a few advisory bodies over the past several years and I would like to share with you my thoughts on what the job of a Commissioner does and does not include.

To get specific, I believe it is *not* your job to:

- Figure out what the County and the Behavioral Health Services Department can afford to do to meet the needs of the people of Sacramento County *before* you recommend a particular course of action to the Department and the Board of Supervisors. You are the voice of the people. You are not responsible for figuring out how to pay for the programs and services that are needed. You are responsible for identifying those needs and discerning whether those needs are being met; and
- I don't believe that you should consider whether the Board of Supervisors and the Behavioral Health Services Department will approve of your recommendation or the direction of your inquiries before you decide to make a recommendation or investigate a problem.

It *is* your job to:

1. Educate yourself about County Behavioral Health Services programs and policies and to apply a critical eye to the evaluation of those programs and policies;
2. Deploy your expertise, your connections in the community, and your good sense to explore the effectiveness and impact of County programs and policies on all our diverse communities;
3. Approach your work collaboratively with respect for every voice at the table since hierarchical patterns of decision making characteristic of the white, patriarchal culture often silence dissent and exclude people from diverse communities;
4. Actively solicit feedback and input from providers about the degree to which County programs and policies are affecting their ability to provide the highest level of service possible and to seek their input on any proposals that will impact providers;
5. Describe and assess needs that have not previously been identified or that are not being adequately addressed, invite community input on possible solutions, and generate innovative recommendations for addressing those needs;
6. Consider whether there are behavioral health needs that cannot be addressed by existing programs but that are impacting the community and that may be addressed by new programs or policies such as implementing AB1424 which requires law enforcement to accept and include reports from family members when evaluating a person for a 5150 or to spread knowledge about SB855 which requires commercial health plans to provide

services in a timely and appropriate manner and offers remedies to consumers for the failure of such plans to meet their needs; and finally to

7. Recognize outstanding service from programs and individuals who are providing superior service to the people of Sacramento County and to the systems meant to support them.

I hope that you will consider these ideas as you identify your priorities as a Commission at this retreat.

Sincerely,

Patricia J. Wentzel