



Health, Housing & Community Services  
Mental Health Commission

ACTION CALENDAR  
June 9, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
From: Mental Health Commission  
Submitted by: Carole Marasovic, Acting Chairperson, Mental Health Commission  
Subject: Support for Recommendations as to Implementation of AB 1421  
Alternatives developed by Alameda County Behavioral Health Services  
Stakeholder's Group

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution directing the City Manager to send a letter of support to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors from the City of Berkeley for the recommendations developed by the AB 1421 stakeholder group reviewing the programs identified as addressing the needs of persons with serious mental illness not currently engaged in mental health treatment. These recommendations were submitted by Alex Briscoe, Director, Health Care Services Agency to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on January 13, 2015.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Recommendations for implementation of AB 1421 alternatives submitted by Health Services Agency Director Alex Briscoe are currently being reviewed by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. Behavioral Health Care Services is in the process of submitting to the Board of Supervisors appropriation and revenue details as operational plans for the programs are finalized. A decision by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on AB 1421 implementation is imminent.

BACKGROUND

Since implementation is at the discretion of each individual county, AB1421 has been a subject of discussion for several years in multiple counties across California since it was first passed in 2002. By 2010, Nevada County became the first and only county to implement AB 1421, also known as Laura's Law. More recently, a handful of other counties have voted to implement it. The great majority of counties have not.

In recent years, there has been discussion in Alameda County as to whether or not AB 1421 should be implemented. Persuasive arguments have been made in favor of

voluntary non-coercive models to target the same population, that being those with serious mental illness not currently engaged in mental health treatment. In response, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors established the working group of stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive review of programs targeted towards this population. A thorough study and subsequent report were issued placing Alameda County with the greater majority of California counties who have identified alternatives to AB 1421 based on a voluntary non-coercive model as the best means of working with this population.

As a result of extensive discussion in Alameda County, a stakeholder's group, as described above, was established, at the direction of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, to conduct a comprehensive review of programs that could serve the AB 1421 population based on a voluntary, non-coercive model. Alternatives were identified by the stakeholder's group which are detailed in the attached report. These recommendations were submitted to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors by Health Services Agency Director Alex Briscoe. Behavioral Health Care Services is in the process of submitting to the Board of Supervisors appropriation and revenue details as operational plans for the programs are finalized. The Mental Health Commission passed the following motion at its regular meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2015:

M/S/C (Marasovic, Grossman) The Mental Health Commission recommends that the City of Berkeley support the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services Task Force's recommendations to implement compassionate and voluntary alternatives to AB 1421, also known as Laura's Law.

Ayes:	Davis, Grossman, Heda, Kealoha-Blake, Kerr, Marasovic, Michel, Posey
Noes:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Arreguin, Dixon, Fazio

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

#### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

There are multiple programs available to address the needs of persons with serious mental illness and engage them in treatment. Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, after careful study, has chosen to adopt these programs for implementation, as an alternative to AB 1421, pending the County Board of Supervisors' approval.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City of Berkeley, as part of Alameda County, is bound, by state statute, to follow the position on AB 1421 that Alameda County chooses to implement.

CITY MANAGER

See companion report.

CONTACT PERSON

Carole Marasovic, Acting Chair, Mental Health Commission (510) 225-5060

Carol Patterson, Mental Health Commission Secretary, HHCS, (510) 981-7721

Attachments:

1: Resolution

Exhibit A: Re-envisioning Engagement: AB1421 Stakeholder Planning BHCS  
Response and Implementation Plan, November 12, 2014

Exhibit B: January 13, 2015 Briscoe letter to Board of Supervisors

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORT OF AB 1421 ALTERNATIVES

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley is committed to serve persons with serious mental illness including those currently not engaged in mental health treatment; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors directed Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services to form a stakeholder's working group to conduct a comprehensive review of mental health programs and identify recommendations as to AB 1421 and serving the population of persons with serious mental illness not currently engaged in treatment; and

WHEREAS, a thorough review of all programs by the stakeholder's group was conducted and multiple recommendations were made, establishing programs that would serve persons under a voluntary, non-coercive model; and

WHEREAS, the Alameda County Health Services Agency Director has submitted these recommendations to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and a budget for the implementation of these programs is being formulated.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley directs the City Manager to submit a letter of support to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors consistent with the recommendations made by Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services to implement compassionate and voluntary alternatives to AB 1421.

Exhibits

A: Re-envisioning Engagement: AB1421 Stakeholder Planning BHCS Response and Implementation Plan, November 12, 2014

B: January 13, 2015 Briscoe letter to Board of Supervisors