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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



NEVADA DIVISION of PUBLIC
and BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



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GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH with the DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (DPBH) MEETING MINUTES

March 19th, 2026
9:00 AM to Adjournment

Meeting Locations: This meeting was held online and by phone.

Online Meeting Link:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MGNiM2l5NDItZDIkNy00OGRILThhZTQtZjA2MDIzNjNjOWRi%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22id%22%3a%22e4a340e6-b89e-4e68-8eaa-1544d2703980%22%2c%22oid%22%3a%22768e443d-3be6-48f0-9bb0-7e72f1276b8d%22%7d

Phone Conference Number: +1-775-321-6111

Phone Conference ID: 294 143 932#

1. CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

- Braden Schrag, Chair
- Lisa Durette, M.D.
- Dan Ficalora, CPC
- Natasha Mosby, LCSW
- Lisa Ruiz-Lee, Vice Chair

Quorum was present.

Members Absent:

- Jasmine Cooper, CPC
- Nichole Schembre

Others in Attendance:

Andrea R. Rivers (*DPBH*); Carolyn Wilson (*ADSD*); Drew Cross (*DPBH*); Ellen Richardson-Adams (*DPBH*); Faythe Baltisberger (*DPBH*); Jennifer M. Spencer (*AG*); Jessica Adams (*ADSD*); Joseph Roche (*DPBH*); Julie Lindesmith (*DPBH*); Kathryn Martin (*DCFS*); Madalyn Larson (*External*); Margaret Moe (*DPBH*); Mark Funkhouser (*External*); Michele Klem (*ADSD*); Ronna Dillinger

(DPBH); Susan Lynch (DPBH); Valerie Cauhape (*Externa*); William Hammargren (ADSD); Zachary Laskey (*Externa*); Jolene Zamora (*Externa*)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Schrag opened the floor for public comment;

Commenter: Madalyn Larson, *Northern Regional Behavioral Health Center Coordinator*

Summary: Ms. Larson introduced herself as the Northern Regional Behavioral Health Coordinator, taking over the position after Sherrilyn Rohr Wood, and who's position serves the Churchill, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey Counties as well as the Carson City area.

There was no further public comment.

3. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO APPROVE OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 8TH, 2026

Please see the document at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-draft-1.8.26-cobh-meeting-mintues.pdf>

Chair Schrag asked for any comments or corrections from commission members; none were heard. Chair Schrag then asked for a motion of approval for the minutes from the Commission on Behavioral Health meeting held on January 8th, 2026 as presented.

MOTION: Commissioner Durette made a motion for approval of the minutes as written.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ficalora.

PASSED: Unanimous.

4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO APPROVE OF THE FOLLOWING CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Approval of Agency Director Reports

Chair Schrag addressed the Commission about the consent agenda, acknowledging public comments related to the item. Before moving forward, he invited agency directors and commissioners to share any responses or input.

1. Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (NNAMHS)

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-nnamhs-agency-director-report.pdf>

2. Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (SNAMHS)

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-snamhs-agency-director-report.pdf>

3. Lake's Crossing Center

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-lcc-agency-director-report.pdf>

4. *Rural Clinics Services*

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-rural-clinics-agency-director-report.pdf>

5. *Sierra Regional Center*

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-src-agency-director-report.pdf>

Presenter: Carolyn Wilson, *Health Program Manager (ADSD-SRC)*

Summary: Wilson shared that her agency recently underwent an accreditation evaluation with the NADD (National Association for the Dual Diagnosis) and earned the highest overall score indicating excellence in quality of care and operations. A final report, to be released, will offer recommendations to further strengthen services.

The agency's Psych Services Department, led by Dr. Brown, is actively partnering with the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for law enforcement, [ECHO CIT training](#) through UNR Medicine, and training first responders to improve community understanding of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) needs, as well as those experiencing mental health crises. The department has also resumed group programming, including the evidence-based PEERS social and communication skills training program.

Additionally, a new Jobs and Day Training Center operated by Mt. Olive Care opened on February 1st, offering structured wellness-focused activities such as community outings, therapeutic art, music, movement, dance, and nutrition. This new center will help provide participants with a meaningful, engaging, and supportive environment.

6. *Desert Regional Center*

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-drc-agency-director-report.pdf>

Presenter: Michele Klem, *Agency Manager (ADSD-DRC)*

Summary: Klem reported the Desert Regional Center has made significant progress since the submission of its written report, particularly in staffing; Kelm praised the increased support from the agency's HR and Durham's recent hiring event for recent advancements in filling manager and administrative positions.

The center also continues to address the needs of individuals with complex behavioral challenges through its partnership with [Benchmark](#) and by coordinating with the Nevada Health Authority, Medicaid, and Clark County to improve case management and service planning. Benchmark, originally brought in through ARPA funding, has expressed interest in becoming a certified long-term provider due to the success of the collaboration.

Klem also shared, on behalf of Gujuan Caver (*ADSD-ICF Agency Manager*), that the Intermediate Care Facility campus remains under construction, and updated service offer data shows strong efforts to reduce waitlists, especially for respite services. Although demand for services continues, DRC has seen notable progress and believes it will be able to fully eliminate its respite waitlist by the end of the fiscal year.

7. *Rural Regional Center*

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-rrc-agency-director-report.pdf>

Presenter: William Hammagren, *Health Program Manager (ADSD-RRC)*

Summary: Hammargren reported for the Rural Regional Center that most information in its submitted report remains accurate, with overall staffing remaining stable aside from ongoing challenges in filling certain quality assurance and service coordination positions due to turnover. The center is optimistic about improvements in recruitment efforts.

Like the Sierra Regional Center, the RRC has also completed the NADD accreditation process and received a three-year accreditation certification.

Additionally, the team continues working through the transition from the WellSky system to the Therap system and is managing that process as effectively as possible.

As this is a Consent Item, Chair then asked for a motion of approval of the agency director reports as submitted.

MOTION: Commissioner Ficalora made a motion for approval of the consent agenda as presented.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mosby.

PASSED: Unanimous.

5. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSS AND REVIEW OF THE DRAFT OF THE GOVERNOR'S LETTER FOR 2026

Presenter: Andrea R. Rivers M.S., *Administrator (DPBH)*

Please see the document at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-2026-draft-letter.pdf>

Summary: Rivers opened by thanking the Commission and noting that although a draft was unavailable at the previous meeting, an updated version is now ready for review. She explained that the foremost pages include refreshed data links and information reflecting updates since the 2025 annual letter. Rivers highlighted that the recommendations marked in yellow are continued recommendations from the prior letter and asked the Commission to confirm whether they still stand. She also requested input on revising the summation section, which appears outdated. Rivers concluded by stating that, depending on the Commission's action or motion today, the Division can finalize updates and forward the letter to the Governor's Office, or bring it back at a future meeting if more discussion is needed.

Commissioner Ficalora noted that the recommendations have remained unchanged as Nevada continues to face the same long-standing gaps and access challenges, making continued focus appropriate.

Schrag agreed, emphasizing that despite recent efforts and improvements, Nevada still ranks near the bottom nationally in behavioral health measures for both children and adults. He suggested that, while this year's recommendations are sound, the Commission should identify one or two priority areas to concentrate on and consider whether additional issues should be addressed in future reports. He also recommended updating data sources in the summation section and stressed the importance of keeping the Governor and Legislature informed so decision-makers can allocate needed resources. Finally, Schrag asked that the letter be finalized and signed by the end of the month to ensure it reaches the Governor in time to support planning for the 2027 legislative session.

Commissioner Durette asked what specific areas the Commission should address in the report's summation, prompting Chair Schrag to define focus on whether any adjustments were needed beyond updating Nevada's behavioral health rankings. Durette agreed that access and workforce remain challenges but emphasized that the Commission should address the financing of mental health care, referencing the Nevada Independent's article which covers Nevada's limited insurance options and the disconnect between available providers and reimbursement systems that leave many patients unable to access care. Schrag agreed with her assessment and inquired after ideas on alternatives and better access for providers. Durette noted that while Nevada has strong workforce development initiatives through programs like Be Here Nevada, the greater issue is sustaining funding for key evidence-based programs such as access programs, Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) services, crisis services, and early screening initiatives. She stressed the need for legislatively mandated, line-item funding to avoid the repeated cycle of successful programs collapsing when grant funding ends. When asked by the Chair how to summarize this in the letter, she recommended stating that critical programs should receive stable, legislatively mandated funding rather than fluctuating grant support.

Commissioner Mosby agreed with earlier comments about the need for sustainable program funding and added that Nevada also faces a gap in understanding and supporting the behavioral-health programs that already exist, noting that many operate in silos despite contributing to workforce development and early intervention.

When asked by the Chair for input, Rivers suggested that the Commission could address these points either by reframing the current recommendations or incorporating them into next year's summation.

Commissioner Ficalora then highlighted that while workforce numbers have improved, community-based behavioral health providers remain poorly supported due to heavy regulatory and documentation burdens that discourage trained clinicians from working in those settings.

Chair Schrag concluded that the volume and significance of these recommendations require more than minor edits and proposed that commissioners submit specific language individually to staff, after which a brief follow-up meeting would be scheduled to finalize the revised letter.

No motion was made on this item.

6. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ELECTIONS OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

a. Chair Braden Schrag's term as Chair of the Commission expires at the end of March, 2026. Pursuant to Article IV. of the Bylaws and NRS 232.361.3, the Governor appoints the Chair from amongst the Commission members. Discussion and possible vote to provide recommendation to the Governor regarding a new Chair to be appointed for a four-year term.

b. Vice-Chair Lisa Ruiz Lee's term as Vice Chair of the Commission expires at the end of June, 2026. Pursuant to Article IV. of the Bylaws, the Vice Chair of the Commission shall be elected at the end of the current Vice-Chair's four-year term. Discussion and possible vote to elect a new Vice-Chair to serve a four-year term once Ms. Lisa Ruiz Lee's term expires.

Note: A member of the Commission may not serve more than two consecutive terms in office.

Summary: Chair Schrag stated that the current chair's term ends in March and the vice chair's in June and noted that the bylaws allow no more than two consecutive terms. Commissioners quickly expressed strong support for retaining both leaders, with Commissioner Ficalora informally nominating the current chair to continue and Commissioner Durette seconding. Both Vice Chair Ruiz-Lee and Chair Schrag stated they were willing to continue, with Schrag noting he would need to resubmit his application to remain on the Commission.

1st MOTION: Commissioner Mosby made a motion for current Chair Braden Schrag to continue as chair going forward for the Commission on Behavioral Health.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Durette.

PASSED: Unanimous

2nd MOTION: Commissioner Ficalora made a motion for current Vice-Chair Lisa Ruiz-Lee to continue as vice-chair for the next four years.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Durette.

PASSED: Unanimous

7. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO APPROVE FY27 NEW RATES FOR DPBH SERVICES AT SOUTHERN NEVADA ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, NORTHERN NEVADA ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, AND RURAL CLINICS

Presenter: Margaret Moe, *Rates and Containment Manager (RMU-DPBH)*

Please see the document at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-sfy27-new-rates.pdf>

Summary: Moe reported that there were no significant changes to the current rates, which is positive news following the substantial 62% increase in the previous fiscal year. She requested approval of the existing rates, and in response to questions from Chair Schrag about potential fiscal concerns or federal impacts, Moe stated she felt confident in the projections despite initial worries about administrative changes at the federal level.

Commenter: Dan Ficalora, *Commission Member*

Summary: Commissioner Ficalora commented that if Ms. Moe is confident in the current rates, then they appear sustainable, especially compared to the challenges faced by community behavioral-health providers who often struggle with far lower reimbursement levels. He noted that many community providers would welcome rates like these to help stabilize their practices and commended Moe for her work, to which she expressed her thanks.

Chair then asked for a motion for approval of the 2027 rates as presented.

MOTION: Commissioner Ficalora made a motion for approval of the rates as presented.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mosby.

PASSED: Unanimous.

8. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: UPDATE ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

Presenter: Jessica Adams, *Deputy Administrator for Developmental Services (ADSD)*

Summary: Adams reported significant progress across the state's regional centers due to expanded contracted services, noting major reductions in multiple waitlists. Their respite services waitlist has gone from over 1,200 to just over 600, the self-directed family support services waitlist dropped from more than 600 to about 275, and waitlists for supported living arrangements and jobs and day training have also decreased. However, Adams highlighted growing concern over the newly created service coordination waitlist after the last legislative session cut approval of more sufficient service coordinator positions. The Desert and Sierra Regional Centers now have about 460 individuals waiting for assignment, with only the Rural Regional Center maintaining capacity. Adams also provided updates on ARPA-funded initiatives, including the Capacity Building Institute cohorts, NADD accreditation efforts, and ongoing training investments to improve care for individuals with intellectual disabilities and complex behavioral needs. Finally, she shared that Desert Regional Center recently completed its annual licensure review with only minor issues identified to be followed up on.

9. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: UPDATE ON SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT/DENIAL OF RIGHTS, *DRC-ADSD*

Presenter: Jessica Adams, on behalf of Gujuan Caver

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-drc-rad-report.pdf>

Summary: Adams noted that she was presenting in place of Gujuan and asked whether Michelle had the information needed for the agenda item. When it became clear that the update was not available, Chair Schrag recommended postponing the item, and the Commission agreed to move agenda item nine to the next meeting.

10. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: UPDATE ON SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT/DENIAL OF RIGHTS, *SNAMHS-DPBH*

Presenter: Susan Lynch, *Hospital Administrator (SNAMHS)*

Please see the report at the following link:

<https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/r-cobh-state-seclusion--restraint-report.pdf>

Summary: Lynch noted with satisfaction that restraint rates at SNAMHS decreased in November and December, and that January's average length of stay rose to 72 days due to the discharge of five long-term patients.

Chair Braden Schrag thanked her and briefly addressed the Commission, acknowledging staff efforts to resolve access issues with shared materials in Teams and asking commissioners to review the documents.

11. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION, IDENTIFICATION, AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Chair Schrag invited Commissioner Ficalora to discuss potential future agenda items, given his concerns regarding disparities with the structure and system of the licensing boards.

Commissioner Ficalora highlighted interest in examining disparities and inconsistencies across the behavioral-health licensing boards, suggesting future conversations with individual boards to explore standards related to supervision, reciprocity, and requirements for interns and supervisors.

Chair Schrag supported the idea but asked Administrator Andrea Rivers to consult the Attorney General's office to determine whether the Commission has authority to engage in this work; Rivers confirmed that legal guidance would be needed. Schrag concluded, noting that the topic could be considered as a potential future agenda item pending that review, and checked with Commissioners Durette, Mosby, and Vice Chair Ruiz-Lee for any additional suggestions. None were offered, and he closed the item, inviting the commissioners to send any further ideas to staff.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Schrag opened the floor for public comment; none were heard.

13. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Schrag adjourned the meeting at 10:22am.