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

July 16th, 2026
9:00 AM to Adjournment

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

Online Meeting Link:
https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/234736311811354?p=FEstluNlrMk28i047A

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

Phone Conference ID: 873 366 868#

1. CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

- Braden Schrag, Chair
- Lisa Ruiz-Lee, Vice Chair
- Lisa Durette, M.D.
- Dan Ficalora, MA, CPC & LCADC
- Jasmine Cooper, CPC
- Nichole Schembre
- Natasha Mosby
  Note: Ms. Mosby's term on the commission ended 6/30/26; therefore, she should no longer have been counted as a member but was present at the time.

Quorum was present.

Members Absent:
None

Others in Attendance:
Andrea R. Rivers (*DPBH*); Cinthia Cruz (*DPBH*); Faythe Baltisberger (*DPBH*); Jennifer M. Spencer (*AG*); Ellen Richardson-Adams (*DPBH*); Michele Klem (*ADSD*); Julie Lindesmith (*DPBH*); Carolyn Wilson (*ADSD*); Shannon Bennett (*DPBH*); Tina Gerber-Winn (*External*); William Hammargren (*ADSD*); Lea Cartwright (*External*); Drew Cross (*DPBH*); Linda Anderson (*External*); Gujuan Caver (*ADSD*); Yadira Gomez-Guerrero (*ADSD*); Susan Lynch (*DPBH*); Carley Murray (*External*); Jolene

Zamora (*External*); Maddie NLN (*External*); Leon Ravin (*DPBH*); Caitlin Basye (*DCFS*); Zontonnia Moore (*DCFS*); Helen Byrd (*DPBH*); Kathryn Martin (*DCFS*); Mark Funkhouser (*External*); Lea Case (External); Kathleen Metz (External); Misty Vaughn Allen (DPBH); Kimberly Abbott (DCFS); Michelle Sandoval (DPBH)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Schrag opened the floor for public comment;

Commenter: Carley Murray, *Nevada PEP*

Summary: Ms. Murray announced that Nevada has finalized its training and certification plan for Family Peer Support Specialists and Supervisors, and that family peer support is now included as a Medicaid billable service in the state plan. She explained that this service is required under Nevada's Department of Justice settlement and will play a critical role moving forward. Nevada PEP partnered with the state over several years to develop the training, certification, and Medicaid benefit, and has also created the Family Peer Support Network of Nevada. Currently, Nevada PEP is the only entity offering training for both specialists and supervisors, and it supports providers and organizations interested in adding family peer support to their services. Murray ended by offering to share a link to their website for anyone wanting more information or wishing to connect further.

The referenced link can be found here: https://nvpep.org/fpsnn/

There was no further public comment.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: INTRODUCTIONS OF DHS LEADERSHIP TO THE COMMISSION

Chair Schrag invited present DHS leadership to formally introduce themselves. Cinthia Cruz shared that she recently stepped into the executive assistant role on a contracting basis, replacing the previous assistant. Administrator Andrea Rivers then reintroduced herself, noting her 23 years with the Division of Public and Behavioral Health and being in the administrator role since August 2025. She also welcomed Cruz and introduced Shannon Bennett, who recently became the deputy administrator over behavioral health. Bennett expressed her appreciation and willingness to support the Commission. Rivers additionally provided updates on Director Laura Rich, who assumed her position in January after the previous Director's retirement, and on Kimberly Abbott, the new administrator for DCFS. Both had met with the Co-chairs last week but were unable to attend due to scheduling conflicts. Schrag then invited Deputy Attorney General Jennifer Spencer to speak, who reaffirmed her support and availability for legal guidance. Schrag then closed by thanking the state leadership team, commissioners, and all who contribute to the Commission's ongoing work.

4. FOR POSSIBLE ACTION: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE TO APPROVE OF MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 19TH, 2026

Please see the document at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/draft-3.19.26-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.

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

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ficalora.

PASSED: Unanimous.

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

a. Approval of Agency Director Reports

1. *Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (NNAMHS)*
   Please see the report at the following link:
   https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/nnamhs-agency-directors-report.pdf

   Presenter: Julie Lindesmith, *Agency Manager (DPBH-NNAMHS)*

   Summary: Lindesmith reported recent successes in recruitment and noted the implementation of a new pain management program in the inpatient hospital that has produced strong results. When asked by Schrag about the recruitment improvements, she explained that dedicated efforts in networking, word-of-mouth and outreach have been more effective than previous strategies such as social media, job fairs, and internships. She also suggested that the new recruitment system, NeoGov, appears to be generating more visibility and applications compared to the prior NVapps system, though she emphasized this was based on observation rather than formal data.

2. *Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (SNAMHS)*
   Please see the report at the following link:
   https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/snamhs-agency-directors-report.pdf

3. *Lake's Crossing Center*
   Please see the report at the following link:
   https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/lcc-agency-directors-report.pdf

4. *Rural Clinics Services*
   Please see the report at the following link:
   https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/rural-clinics-agency-directors-report.pdf

5. *Sierra Regional Center*
   Please see the report at the following link:
   https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/src-agency-directors-report.pdf

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

   Summary: Wilson reported that the agency currently has an 18.3% vacancy rate due to a large number of new positions added this year, and staff are working closely with HR to fill roles ranging from service coordinators and administrative assistants to clinical

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positions such as a psychiatric nurse and psychologist. She shared that the SRC recently launched a five-week skills group called The Calm Crew, a 5-week program designed to help adults build effective coping and emotional regulation strategies, and early results have been very positive. Additionally, she highlighted that the supportive living provider Mount Olive opened a new jobs and day training program offering structured habilitation, wellness activities, therapeutic supports, and community engagement. The program currently serves 47 individuals and can support up to 100, marking the second such program opened in the past year and a half, and reflecting ongoing efforts to expand meaningful services and supports.

6. *Desert Regional Center*

Please see the report at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/drc-agency-directors-report.pdf

Presenter: Gujuan Caver, *Agency Manager (ADSD-DRC/IFC)*

Summary: Caver began with an apology for missing the deadline to include ICF updates in the formal report but shared that the team is actively working to fill vacant Developmental Support Technician (DST) positions. They recently onboarded 5 new staff in the July orientation, completed interviews for 5 vacant positions, and expect 3 or 4 more DST staff to start in August. Overall, the agency expects to, potentially, be bringing on 14 to 15 new staff by the end of that month. Caver also noted interviews happening for a custodial supervisor position, which is being supported with two interviewers from another DHHS agency, and announced the onboarding of a full-time Administrative Assistant III through a recent hiring event. Caver concluded his presentation reporting construction on three new campus buildings - an administration building, a nursing/therapy building, and a residential/staff building- which is progressing on schedule, with openings expected in mid-August and September.

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

Summary: Klem reported ongoing staffing challenges, particularly in clinical roles such as psychologists, mental health counselors, and psychiatric nurses, though the transition to NeoGov has begun to generate more recruitment traction. She noted significant progress in hiring developmental specialists, reducing vacancies from 18 last report to just 5. Filling the positions has allowed the center to begin opening additional cases from the service waitlist- about 130 are projected for this month- marking the first substantial movement since the waitlist began in June 2025. She highlighted recent service expansions, including offering respite to 79 families, residential supports to 40 individuals, and JDT services to 55 people in May, with capacity expected to sustain service offers through FY27; though, Klem also shared concerns about provider capacity, as some service offers are declined due to workforce shortages or inability to support complex needs. Continuing with the presentation, Klem also reported the successful completion of the statewide Juvenile Justice Learning Collaborative and invited participants to ongoing monthly office hours intended to maintain cross-agency coordination. Finally, she announced that all three regional centers- Sierra, Rural, and Desert- recently earned three-year certifications from the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed, which will provide benefits including enhanced training and support for complex behavioral and mental health cases.

Commenter: Braden Schrag, *Chair*

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Summary: Schrag thanked Klem for her update and expressed concern about vendors not responding to service offers, asking whether any statutory or administrative barriers might be contributing to the issue, especially with an upcoming legislative session next year. He encouraged exploring more data or metrics to better understand what's happening, suggesting that if this is a problem for Klem's agency, it may soon affect others. He proposed bringing the topic back for deeper discussion at a future meeting, once Klem and her team have more information, emphasizing the importance of identifying solutions to vendor limitations. Given that funding exists but providers may lack staffing or capacity, he urged the Commission to proactively address long-standing resource challenges in Nevada and expressed interest in collectively finding ways to overcome these barriers and strengthen service delivery moving forward.

b. Approval of DPBH Policy 01-139 Metabolic Syndrome Evaluation and Management

Please see the document at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/policy-01-139-metabolic-syndrome-evaluation-and-management-may-27-2026.pdf

Presenter: Dr. Leon Ravin, *State Psychiatric Medical Director* (*DPBH*)

Summary: Ravin presented an updated policy related to monitoring individuals treated with second-generation antipsychotics, noting that the policy was previously presented several years ago and largely maintains the same focus. He explained that it outlines the assessment process for detecting metabolic syndrome, defines its parameters, and provides evidence-based recommendations for screening, management, and ongoing monitoring. The policy also includes a hierarchy of interventions, ranging from behavioral strategies to medication adjustments, guidance on referrals for individuals with significant metabolic concerns, information on maintaining a healthy BMI, and a summary of the relative metabolic risks associated with different antipsychotics, followed by some definitions and references.

Chair then asked for a motion of approval on the consent agenda item(s).

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

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Lee.

PASSED: Unanimous.

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

Please see the document at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/2026-draft-letter-behavioral-health-commission.pdf

Summary: Andrea Rivers, Administrator for the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, explained that the recommendations included in the letter were the same as those presented in March as no additional feedback had been received from the Commission since then. She recalled that earlier discussions moved quickly, making it difficult to clearly capture the Commission's desired changes, and asked that any new edits be stated clearly if adjustments were to be made during the meeting. Chair Schrag then invited comments from other

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Commissioners. Commissioner Ficalora suggested submitting the letter as it stands, acknowledging the delay and recommending that the Commission focus on being more intentional with the 2027 letter. Commissioner Cooper agreed the letter was well thought out and supported submitting it as is, noting that early planning for 2027 would keep the Commission ahead. Commissioner Schembre stated she had no further comments and found the letter well laid out. Vice-chair Ruiz-Lee also agreed the letter should move forward without changes. Seeing no objections, Schrag confirmed that the letter would be submitted as is and that he and Administrator Rivers would finalize the transmission documents.

Chair then asked for a motion of approval on the 2026 Governor's Letter.

MOTION: Commissioner Durette made a motion for approval of the letter as is.

SECONDED: The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

PASSED: Unanimous.

7. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION:** DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOVERNOR'S LETTER FOR 2027

Summary: Chair Schrag opened the discussion noting that the Commission is required to prepare the annual letter and may need a subcommittee to support the 2027 effort, and asked for clarification on the due date. The Deputy Attorney General, Jennifer Spencer, confirmed the letter is statutorily due at the beginning of each year. Schrag requested volunteers to chair a potential subcommittee, but Commissioner Schembre declined due to her commitment to the Children's Subcommittee. Commissioner Cooper also declined due to recent changes in her workload. Commissioner Ficalora raised concerns about quorum challenges and suggested handling the work within regular Commission meetings. Spencer clarified that only the Children's Subcommittee is required under the bylaws, while others are optional. Commissioner Ruiz-Lee and Durette recalled that past years were most successful when Commissioners individually drafted sections by region, with an administrative assistant coordinating edits to avoid open meeting law issues with Commissioner Ficalora agreeing the this method had historically worked well. Schrag concurred proposing that he and Commissioner Ruiz-Lee draft an outline for the next meeting, after which roles could be assigned and the letter developed in time for the 2027 legislative session. He encouraged policy board members and Commissioners to begin identifying regional priorities now, with formal planning to occur at the next Commission meeting.

No action was taken.

8. **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION:** DISCUSSION AND REVIEW OF THE COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BYLAWS AND ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERS

Focus areas to include:

a. *Excused and unexcused absences*
b. *Terms of members and Chair/Co-Chair*
c. *Accountability of meeting attendance and quorum*
d. *Handling replacements of members as necessary*
e. *Language around timeline for reappointment paperwork to be submitted to the Governor's Office by members*

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f. *Language around term lapses and members being in good standing can remain as reappointment paperwork is processed through the Governor's Office.*

Please see the document at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/current-commission-bylaws.pdf

Summary: Schrag opened the discussion regarding the Commission's bylaws by emphasizing the importance of maintaining quorum, urging Commissioners to review Article 3 on excused and unexcused absences and to consider whether any updates were needed. He then raised the issue of term limits for the Chair and Co-Chair, noting prior agreement that no member should serve more than two consecutive terms in either role. Commissioner Jasmine Cooper asked whether the governor selects the Chair independently or based on Commission recommendations, prompting Schrag to request clarification from Deputy Attorney General Jennifer Spencer. Spencer explained that while the Commission may recommend candidates, the governor ultimately appoints the Chair under NRS 232.361.3, and if no one volunteers, the governor can still designate someone. As the discussion continued, Spencer added that Commissioners serve four-year terms, with no term limit requirements, under statute. Schrag suggested tabling any further review of the bylaws until the next meeting so members could read the bylaws thoroughly and return with questions or proposed revisions. Commissioner Schembre noted that Article 4 lacks clarity regarding term length for the Vice Chair and suggested adding more explicit language. Schrag agreed, proposing that he, the Vice Chair, Spencer, and Administrator Rivers meet to prepare for a more detailed discussion at the next meeting. He also reminded Commissioners to stay current with attendance and reappointment requirements and asked staff to provide reminders before term expirations, suggesting it be either 60, 90, or 120 days.

No action was taken.

9. **INFORMATIONL ITEM:** UPDATE ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS FOR AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

Presenter: Gujuan Caver, *Agency Manager* (*ADSD-DRC*)

Summary: Caver reported that all three regional centers and the Youth Intensive Support Services program have received NADD accreditation (part of an update Michelle Klem had also mentioned). He added that Desert, Rural, and Sierra Regional Centers are actively offering services such as Supported Living Arrangements, Jobs and Day Training, and Respite to individuals who request them. Caver then announced an upcoming conference called "Building Lasting Change," scheduled for October 26th & 27th in Reno and sponsored by Health Management Associates. He explained that the free two-day event will bring together individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, families, advocates, providers, and system partners to strengthen connections and promote meaningful system improvements, with travel scholarships available for individuals and families. After receiving approval from the Commission, he confirmed he would add the conference link in the chat.

The referenced link can be found here:
https://hma.connect.space/building-lasting-change/details

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

Presenter: Gujuan Caver, *Agency Manager* (*ADSD-DRC*)

Please see the report at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/drc-seclusion--restraint-report-2026.07.pdf

Summary: Caver reported briefly on restraint-related data from Desert Regional Center noting that, while the center does not use seclusion, the number of individuals involved in restraints and denials has remained relatively consistent. He explained that March and April each saw five individuals, with an uptick to seven in May before dropping to two in June. Caver suggested that this decrease may be linked to a successful home transition for one individual, resulting in improved well-being for her and her housemates, and expressed hope for continued low numbers through the coming months. Chair Schrag asked for clarification, confirming that the consistency referenced concerned the number of individuals, not the number of incidents, and Caver affirmed this understanding.

11. **INFORMATIONAL ITEM:** UPDATE ON SELCUSION AND RESTRAIN/DENIAL OF RIGHTS, STATE ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES-*DPBH*

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

Please see the report at the following link:
https://www.dpbh.nv.gov/siteassets/boards/cbh/meetings/2026/7.16.26/state-seclusion--restraint-report-2026.07.pdf

Summary: Lynch reported that seclusion and restraint data for both NNAMHS and SNAMHS had been submitted and reflected little change from the previous quarter. She noted that both facilities experienced a decrease in restraints during April, which she was pleased to share, and that median lengths of stay increased slightly to 25 days at NNAMHS and 26 days at SNAMHS. She concluded, adding that the rest of the report remained largely consistent with prior data.

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

Summary: Schrag opened by proposing that the next meeting include discussion on preparing the governor's 2027 letter and revisiting bylaws from agenda item 8 to ensure needed updates are made. Commissioner Ficalora suggested adding a standing agenda item to track Commission memberships and vacancies so members could help recruit qualified applicants in the community. Schrag agreed and asked Administrator Rivers for an update on current vacancies. Rivers reported that the Commission currently has openings for a registered nurse, a master's-level social worker (noting an application is already under review by the governor), a psychologist, and a physician experienced with intellectual disabilities, and offered to share this information along with the bylaws. Schrag supported adding these updates to future agendas and asked Commissioners and attendees to refer qualified individuals to the application website. He then invited additional agenda suggestions from Commissioners or agency leaders, encouraging submissions to staff or to himself and Vice-Chair Ruiz-Lee for consideration at the next meeting.

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13. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chair Schrag opened the floor for public comment:

Summary: Commissioner Cooper offered a brief remark, apologizing for missing the earlier agenda item and expressing appreciation to Caver for sharing information about the upcoming IDD conference, noting that she had not been aware such opportunities existed and encouraging others to share similar community resources.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

Summary: Chair Schrag thanked all Commissioners, staff, agency leaders, and administrators for their commitment and, seeing Administrator Kimberly Abbott joined, invited Abbott to introduce herself before adjourning. Abbott apologized for joining late and explained that she is about four and a half months into her role as Administrator of the Division of Child and Family Services. She described efforts to build and stabilize leadership staff, fill key vacancies, and recruit new positions including a COO and a hospital administrator at Desert Willow, while temporarily covering multiple roles until new hires begin. She then introduced Deputy Caitlin Basye, who shared that she has been in her children's mental health deputy role for about three months and brings extensive experience in children's mental health administration, early childhood prevention, and foster care, expressing enthusiasm for advancing strategic initiatives. Braden welcomed both leaders, noted his and the Co-Chair's excitement about collaborating with them, and closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their dedication to improving Nevada's behavioral health system, wishing all a good summer, and formally adjourning the session.

Chair Schrag adjourned the meeting at 11:02am.

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