



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 5/19/2020

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File #: 20-575

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** DHHS: Behavioral Health

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Provision of Advanced Payments to County-Contracted Mental Health Organizational Treatment Providers as an Interim COVID-19 Stabilization Measure

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the provision of advanced payments to county-contracted mental health organizational treatment providers, on an as-needed basis, for the period of March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 as an interim COVID-19 stabilization measure; and
2. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services - Behavioral Health Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all amendments to the county's existing mental health organizational provider services agreements necessary to effectuate the proposed payment structure, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Behavioral Health Fund

**DISCUSSION:**

The Board of Supervisors has authorized the Department of Health and Human Services - Behavioral Health (DHHS - Behavioral Health) to operate the County of Humboldt's Mental Health Plan. The provision of specialty mental health treatment services to all Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in Humboldt County that meet necessary criteria is, and will remain, the responsibility of DHHS - Behavioral Health. Therefore, since April 1998, DHHS - Behavioral Health has contracted with qualified specialty mental health treatment service providers to provide such services. DHHS - Behavioral Health has established a provider network with in-county as well as out-of-county providers for referrals of Medi-Cal beneficiaries residing in Humboldt County to ensure that such beneficiaries have a choice of appropriate providers.

The proposed payment structure will allow DHHS - Behavioral Health to advance, on an as-needed basis, up to 1/12th of each mental health organizational treatment provider's approved annual fiscal year 2019-2020 contract maximum, per month, for the period of March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020.

These payments will be reconciled at fiscal year-end according to each provider's actual claims and costs for all billable services provided in each month for which advance payments are made. This restructuring of the current payment process will help ensure more timely payment to the county's valued mental health organizational treatment providers during the current COVID-19 Public Health emergency.

Accordingly, DHHS - Behavioral Health recommends that the Board of Supervisors approve the provision of advance payments to county-contracted mental health organizational treatment providers, on an as-needed basis, for the period of March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020. It is also recommended that the Board authorize the DHHS - Behavioral Health Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all amendments to the county's existing mental health organizational provider services agreements necessary to effectuate the proposed payment structure, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management, and the County Administrative Office, in order to avoid any unnecessary delays in the provision of needed specialty mental health services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

As noted above, the proposed payment structure will allow DHHS - Behavioral Health to advance, on an as-needed basis, up to 1/12th of each mental health organizational treatment provider's approved annual fiscal year 2019-2020 contract maximum, per month, for the period of March 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020. Organizational provider contract amendments will specify amounts payable in advance, per month, to each respective organizational provider.

Expenditure appropriations related to the proposed payment structure have been included in the approved fiscal year 2019-2020 budget for DHHS - Behavioral Health Administration budget unit 1170-424. Funding for the proposed payment structure is available through federal Medi-Cal financial participation, state mental health realignment for early periodic screening diagnosis and treatment and state health and welfare realignment revenues received by DHHS - Behavioral Health. As a result, approval of the proposed payment structure will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health, protecting vulnerable populations and providing appropriate levels of services.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to approve the provision of advanced payments to county-contracted mental health treatment providers. However, this alternative is not recommended, because it would jeopardize the fiscal stability of specific county-contracted mental health organizational treatment providers and could cause a decrease in needed specialty mental health services to the community or require DHHS - Behavioral Health to directly provide the specialty mental health treatment services currently being provided thereby, which is not feasible at this time.

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ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

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