



STANISLAUS COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY SERVICES: QUALITY SERVICES

QS INFORMATION NOTICE

APRIL 2026

PURPOSE: To inform Stanislaus County staff, contractors, and general community of changes in programs, policies, or procedures at the local, State & Federal levels. QS Information Notices will be sent out monthly and posted on the Stanislaus County website.



GENERAL UPDATES

BHRS Chief of the Office of Public Guardian Announcement

BHRS is excited to announce the promotion of Kristy Johnson to Chief of the Office of Public Guardian, effective March 9, 2026! In this important leadership role, Kristy will oversee operations of the Office of the Public Guardian, guiding conservatorship investigations, estate management, care coordination, and other vital services that support some of the County's most vulnerable residents. For further details, please refer to the email from Cynthia Bocage on 3/16/2026.

BHRS Conservatorship Investigations Supervisor Announcement

BHRS is excited to announce Hannah Martinez as the new Conservatorship Investigations Supervisor! For further details, please refer to the email from Sara Jacobo on 3/17/2026.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INFORMATION NOTICE (BHIN) UPDATES

BHIN 26-004 Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Recovery or Treatment Facilities' Licensure and Certification Fee Increase Beginning Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-2027

This BHIN implements Health & Safety Code Section 11833.02, allowing DHCS to increase licensing and certification fees for SUD treatment facilities. Senate Bill 104 authorizes annual fee increases through FY 2026–27, up to a 75% total. Effective July 1, 2026, fees will increase by 15%. See BHIN 26-004 for additional details.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT (BHSA) UPDATES

Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) Integrated Plan Submission Deadline

The deadline to submit the draft three-year Integrated Plan and budgets for Fiscal Years 2026–2029 was March 31, 2026, with final plans due to DHCS by June 30, 2026. A key component of the BHSA planning process is meaningful engagement with local stakeholders and community partners through the Community Planning Process. This collaborative approach helps ensure the plan reflects local behavioral health needs, reduces disparities, and aligns investments with both statewide priorities and community-driven outcomes. For any further information or questions, please email BHSA@stanbhhs.org



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BHRS POLICY UPDATES - PLEASE ENSURE YOU REVIEW THE UPDATED POLICIES IN THEIR ENTIRETY.

UPDATED: BHRS Policy 30.1.109 Personal Device Usage for Work

To protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of BHRS systems and sensitive data, including PHI and PII, an updated policy outlines important device usage guidelines.

UPDATED: Policy 50.8.102 ADA American Disability Act Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

BHRS is committed to ensuring all digital content and online services are accessible, inclusive, and compliant with federal and state regulations, including Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. This updated policy emphasizes key design principles such as ensuring content is perceivable, operable, and robust, while also prioritizing user privacy, clear pathways to care, and inclusive engagement.

UPDATED: Policy 110.5.104 Safeguarding Members Property in SUD Facilities

BHRS Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment Programs maintain a policy to safeguard member possessions in compliance with requirements. In residential programs, members are informed of allowable items at admission, and staff document and securely store any excess belongings, cash, or valuables using standardized tracking forms, with items placed in labeled storage or safes and accessible during business hours. In outpatient programs, members are responsible for their personal belongings and are encouraged to always keep items with them.

QUALITY SERVICES (QS) UPDATES

Upcoming Audits & Reviews

BHRS will be participating in several key external audits and reviews to demonstrate compliance with state and federal requirements. The following have been scheduled:

- **External Quality Review (EQR):** Virtual live review is scheduled for April 16th, 2026, with reviewers Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG).
- **Mental Health Block Grant (MHBG) & Mental Health Services Act (MHSA Review):** Onsite review is scheduled for April 21st, 2026, with DHCS.
- **BHP Triennial Review (MHP & DMC-ODS), & Substance Use Block Grant (SUBG):** Virtual live review is scheduled for 06/08–06/12/2026 with DHCS.

Updated DHCS 1801 Form (5150 Form)

The March 2026 update to the [DHCS 1801 form](#) makes it easier to understand and use when starting 5150 holds, with clearer sections for criteria, advisements, and reasons for the hold. Please share this update with your staff and community partners who help start 5150 holds.

Documenting Multiple Same-Day, Service, & Provider Encounters – Clarification from March 2026

You can complete a service note in SmartCare for each service as it is provided. There is no need to wait until the end of the day to combine multiple same services into a single note for the same

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member and provider (although at this time you can choose to continue doing this). If you choose to enter separate service notes throughout the day, SmartCare will automatically combine them for you when appropriate.

Medi-Cal Informing Materials

Our featured Medi-Cal informing material for April is **Advance Medical Directives**.

An Advance Medical Directive is a legal document that lets individuals outline their medical and mental health care preferences if they become unable to communicate or make decisions. Adults 18+ with decision-making capacity can create one and may designate a Health Care Agent to act on their behalf. It takes effect when a physician determines the individual lacks capacity.

The directive must include a statement of intent, signatures (individual + two witnesses or a notary), and the date. It can be updated or revoked at any time. Individuals should share copies with providers and designated decision-makers. For more information, scan the QR code.



English Version Spanish Version

UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT (UM) UPDATES

2026 NOABD Annual Training Now Available

The UM tab on both the internet and extranet has been updated with the 2026 NOABD Annual Training. Reminder to all staff that this training is a core competency and to ensure they complete the most current version of the training by following these pathways: Intranet > Client Support > UT > NOABD, and Extranet > Forms > UT > NOABD. For further details, please see the email from Utilization Management sent on 03/09/26.

COMPLIANCE, PRIVACY, & ETHICS UPDATES

Compliance Resources

As part of BHRS' ongoing commitment to supporting the mission of Compliance, Privacy and Ethics, an informational video was sent out that reinforces the importance of maintaining integrity, safeguarding privacy, and upholding ethical standards in everything we do. For further details, please see email from Compliance sent on 2/27/26.

Phishing Email Statistics

A special thank you to our IT team for providing ongoing Phishing Email Statistics and leading our phishing email awareness efforts. Phishing simulations are conducted to assess real-time awareness, reduce cybersecurity risk, and strengthen our overall compliance posture. These



Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

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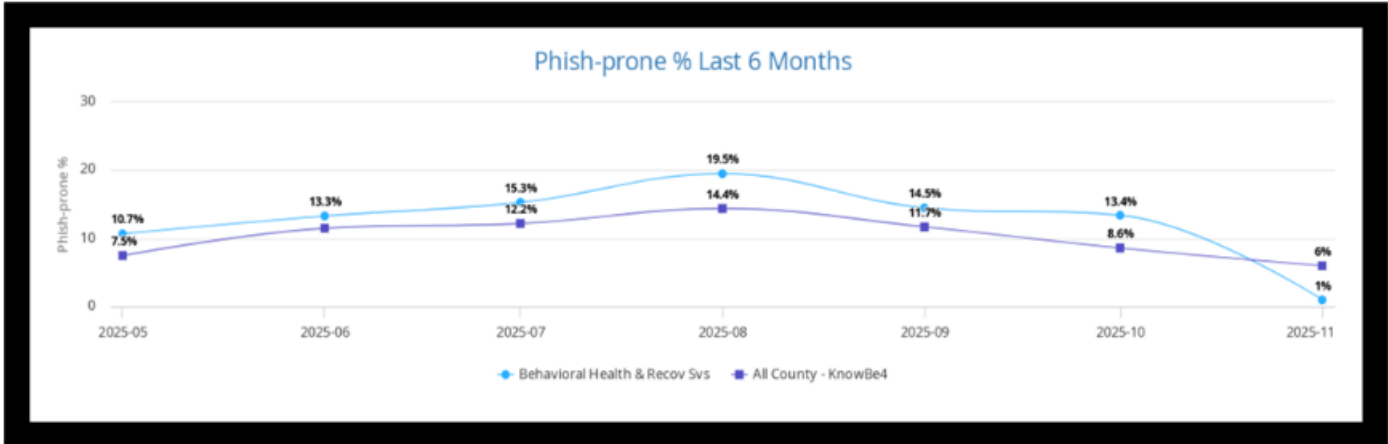
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exercises help staff identify suspicious emails before they result in data breaches or regulatory exposure.



Over the past six months, BHRS' phish-prone percentage has generally trended slightly higher than the county-wide average. However, the most recent results reflect a significant improvement — BHRS decreased to 1% compared to the county's 6%, demonstrating measurable progress in staff awareness and response. This improvement highlights the positive impact of continued training and increased vigilance. Sustained engagement in cybersecurity education remains critical to protecting sensitive member information and maintaining regulatory compliance.



Excellence in Ethics: Celebrating BHRS Ethical Champion Nominees!

As part of March's Ethics Awareness Month, we celebrate the outstanding individuals who exemplify integrity, accountability, and commitment to ethical excellence in their work every day. A big shout out to this year's Ethical Champion nominees, whose dedication and impact truly set them apart:



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- Samantha Austin, LCSW, Clinician II with Turlock BHST
- Dan Domeier, Behavioral Health Specialist II with CCT
- Adylene Villasenor, LCSW, Manager with CSOC
- Linnea Worthy, PHR, CCEP, Staff Services Analyst with Compliance, Privacy and Ethics Division
- Nicole Cox, Accounting Tech at the Business Office
- Pam Esparza, Manager IV with Support Services Division
- Grace Andrade, ACSW, Clinician I with Community Correction Partnership
- Rita Preciado, Behavioral Health Specialist II with Community Correction Partnership
- Bryan Bolduc, Behavioral Health Specialist II with the Housing Department
- Jill Fisher, Deputy Public Guardian with the Office of Public Guardian
- Dulce Guillen-Garcia, LCSW, Mental Health Clinician III with Utilization Management

SMARTCARE UPDATES

Accessing Reports & Data Requests in SmartCare

The Outcomes & Evaluations Management (OEM) Team is now using the JIRA system to manage all requests for new reports and data from SmartCare. All staff submitting reports or data requests are encouraged to use JIRA moving forward to support a more organized process. For any further questions, please contact the OEM Team.

Two New BHRS Reports in SmartCare

Two new BHRS reports are now available in SmartCare: Expired License(s)/Degree(s) and Change of Provider Notification. The Expired License(s)/Degree(s) report identifies staff with licenses or degrees that are expired or nearing expiration (e.g., CANS, DEA, MD) and that may impact their ability to complete assessments or schedule future appointments in SmartCare. It also includes each staff member's last date of service (DOS) and indicates whether they are currently identified as reportable in the monthly IBHP NACT 274 file.

The Change of Provider Report displays a client roster with current contact information, including street address, city, state, and zip code, to support notifying members about changes to their licensed, waived, or registered mental health or substance use disorder service providers. Both reports are updated in SmartCare monthly. For further details, please see the email from SmartCare sent on 3/10/26.

If you have any questions related to QS Information Notices, contact Quality Services by:

- **Email:** QSEmail@stanbh.rs.org, **PHONE:** (209) 525-6043, or **FAX:** (209) 558-4324