

Date: May 28, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services 

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Mental Health Services in Long Beach**

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. To celebrate, this memorandum uplifts the mental health services available in Long Beach, how to gain access to them, and the ongoing efforts across the City to improve mental health. This memo also provides additional information on mental health resources and programs in both the County and Long Beach as a follow up to the request by the City Council to report on Laura's Law and mental health resources.

HOW MENTAL HEALTH IS FUNDED IN LONG BEACH

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) is the governmental agency responsible for providing mental health services in Long Beach. LACDMH receives and administers state and federal funds for mental health services. The Long Beach Health and Human Services Department (Health Department) does not directly receive or coordinate these funds for Long Beach, yet does partner with LACDMH whenever possible. LACDMH provides direct services in Long Beach as well as subcontracts with a variety of mental health providers in the City. The Health Department and other City Departments partner closely with many of these contracted organizations to support mental wellness in the City. In addition, LACDMH directly funds personnel who partner with our Homeless Services and Police Department efforts.

HOW LONG BEACH RESIDENTS GAIN ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

People living in Long Beach have multiple pathways to access mental health services, including:

- Visiting the Long Health Department's Mental Health Resource website.
- Calling the LACDMH Access Center Helpline to learn more about providers or to request response to a mental health crisis.
- Calling or visiting the Long Beach Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center which operates daily 24/7.
- Visiting a medical provider or contacting Medi-Cal or Private insurance for a referral or a list of providers.
- Visiting the Multiservice Center for those experiencing homelessness.

These opportunities are discussed more fully below.

Access to services may differ based on insurance coverage. However, all people living in Long Beach have access to mental health supports. Insured and uninsured individuals can call the LACDMH Access Hotline for help in finding these services or follow up with the information below.

Individuals with Medi-Cal

Services covered by Medi-Cal include outpatient mental health services such as individual or group counseling, outpatient specialty mental health services, outpatient substance use disorder services, residential treatment services, and voluntary inpatient detoxification. To gain access, residents must contact their Medi-Cal managed care plan or call the Medi-Cal Mental Health Care Ombudsman at (800) 896-4042 to ask for an assessment for needed services.

Individuals with Private Insurance

As of 2012, most individual and small group health insurance plans must cover essential health benefits which include mental health and substance use disorder services. To gain access, residents call the number listed on the back of their insurance cards or speak to their primary care doctor for a referral.

Individuals with No Insurance

Those without health insurance may qualify for health insurance. To find out if someone is eligible and to enroll, people in Long Beach may call the Health Department at (562) 570-7979 to speak to a Certified Enrollment Counselor to learn about programs they may be eligible for. Additionally, those without health insurance in Long Beach can call the ACCESS Line (800) 854-7771 (option 1) or are able to gain access to mental health services at one of these Federally Qualified Health Centers:

- APLA Health Center
- Benevolence Health Centers
- Community Medical Wellness Clinic USA
- Serenity Care Health Group
- TCC Family Health

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN LONG BEACH

LACDMH Access Center Help Line

The LACDMH operates the ACCESS Center Help Line at (800) 854-7771, a 24-hour, 7-days a week service to assist people to find and access services in their community as well as to assist with mental health emergencies. The ACCESS Center Help Line provides the following services:

- The ACCESS Center (option 1), as part of LACDMH's Help Line, operates 24-hours per day, 7-days a week as the entry point for mental health services in Los Angeles County.

Services include information and referrals to mental health services, sending crisis evaluation teams if needed, access to acute inpatient psychiatric beds, interpreter services and client transport.

- The Emotional Support Warm Line with Trained Active Listeners is available 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily (option 2 when calling the Help Line).
- The Veteran Line for Mental Health Support and Connection to Veteran Programs is available 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily (option 3 when calling the Help Line).

When an emergency call is received, LACDMH staff facilitate referrals to their Psychiatric Mobile Response Teams for response.

Urgent Care Centers

Urgent Care Centers (UCC), operated by non-profit organizations, will accept uninsured, Medi-Cal and/or privately insured clients. A UCC can take involuntary patients, but may only hold a person for less than 24 hours to assess and connect the person to additional services. Clinicians assess individuals to determine need and may send patients to a county or local hospital.

The Health Department partnered with the Los Angeles County District Attorney and LACDMH to locate a UCC in Long Beach to increase mental health access for those in crisis and to provide options for public safety teams in accessing emergency mental health services. Star View Behavioral Health operates this center. It features 24-hour psychiatric urgent care for up to 12 adults and six adolescents. They provide 24-hour nursing staff and mental health therapists, as well as a Crisis Walk-In Center where clients can be evaluated and receive medications on a short-term basis until they are connected to ongoing psychiatric care. Referrals are also made for housing and other services. Star View Behavioral Health BHUCC takes several forms of insurance and will provide services to those without insurance.

LACDMH Outpatient Services

Outpatient mental health services funded by the LACDMH are available at 22 locations in Long Beach. The ACCESS Center Helpline offers live assistance, determining the most appropriate clinic based on the person's situation, insurance status and geographic location. Navigators are also available to assist people in gaining access. Services include those specific to children and youth, those with co-occurring substance use conditions, and older adults. The list of service providers can be found through the [LACDMH Outpatient Services web page](#).

Adult Residents with Severe Mental Illness

Adult Full-Service Partnership (FSP) programs are designed for adults ages 26 - 59 who have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness and would benefit from an intensive service program. Adult FSP programs assist with housing, employment and education in addition to providing mental health services and integrated treatment for individuals who have a co-

occurring mental health and substance abuse disorder. Mental Health America is the primary FSP provider for people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach.

To gain access to FSP Services in the Long Beach/South Bay, call (562) 435-2287 or (562) 435-2257.

Laura's Law

Laura's Law provides a pathway for mental health treatment for those who are seriously mentally ill under very prescribed circumstances. The LACDMH provides Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) services to eligible individuals who are outreached to voluntarily engage them in Full-Service Partnership (FSP) services. If the person refuses services, AOT-LA may petition the court to order the individual into psychiatric outpatient treatment, namely FSP, under very prescribed circumstances. The Long Beach Police Department utilizes this option for people who qualify approximately monthly.

LOCAL HOSPITALS

The City's hospitals provide a response to individuals who enter the hospital with suicidal ideation, a suicide attempt, or who are gravely disabled or a danger to themselves.

- College Medical Center in Long Beach operates a Mental Health Center 24-hours per day and takes walk-ins. To gain access, call the ACCESS Line or the hospital directly at (562) 997-2000.
- St. Mary Medical Center screens patients who present a risk of suicide. At-risk patients are seen by a medical doctor who orders social work and psychiatric consultations.
- Long Beach Memorial Medical Center also administers a Suicide Risk Screen. In addition, a depression screening tool is used for certain diagnoses, including cancer, stroke, and adult cystic fibrosis.

POPULATION SPECIFIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN LONG BEACH

Veterans

The Veteran and Military Support Line supports veterans, military members and their families. The line is operated by a community-driven support network called the Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN). Led by veterans for veterans, VPAN helps residents navigate complicated systems so that they may receive the services that are needed. It connects callers to County departments, non-profits, the VA and Los Angeles City programs. Resources available include mental health, substance misuse support, housing, workforce development and employment, healthcare, education, basic needs resources, legal services, and social connection/recreation.

The Veteran and Military Support Line offers general support and support for difficulty associated with COVID-19. To gain access, call (800) 854-7771 (option 3), 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily.

Multi-Service Center (MSC)

People experiencing homelessness have access to mental health services through the Multi-Service Center. Prior to COVID-19, LACDMH co-located a mental health clinician at the MSC weekly to provide assessments and referrals to services. It is anticipated that this opportunity will continue in the future months. In addition, the MSC has a full-time mental health clinician that provides immediate services to clients and referrals for long-term, ongoing support. The MSC is also implementing two health and mental health outreach teams who will engage people experiencing homelessness who are living in places unfit for human habitation to engage people into health, mental health and substance use services.

Mental Evaluation Teams

The Long Beach Police Department (LBPd) operates six Mental Evaluation Teams (MET). Each MET unit consists of one LACDMH co-located mental health clinician and one LBPd sworn officer working together in the same car. The six police officers assigned to the MET units are consistently assigned to those teams, allowing them to develop a high level of expertise in mental illness. MET units respond to calls for service when a mental health concern is involved. In addition, all LBPd recruits participate in general mental health and suicide prevention, intervention and response training.

The main intervention tool available to law enforcement is outreach to people experiencing a mental health crisis. The focus of outreach is to link and refer people who voluntarily seek assistance with mental illness to organizations that can provide help. However, in certain cases, an involuntary 72-hour hold may be necessary. If a person meets the criteria for an involuntary hold, the person is transported to Harbor UCLA if they are uninsured or to a private/non-profit hospital if they are insured. For those with private insurance, the LACDMH mental health clinician serves as an ombudsman who will place the patient in hospitals located in Long Beach or surrounding cities. Access depends on capacity.

Clinician in Jail

The Clinician in Jail program operates through a LBPd subcontract with the Guidance Center. A licensed therapist (LMFT) in the jail focuses on reducing recidivism by working with “high frequency utilizers,” defined as a person having two or more arrests in the past 18 months for non-violent crimes. The social worker also works with anyone in jail who is experiencing distress. The social worker conducts a behavioral health assessment, develops a post release plan that identifies priority needs and resources, makes referrals and follows up to see whether the resource linkage was successful. In cases of severe and persistent mental illness, the social worker contacts the person’s family and provides resources. This program is integrated with the City Prosecutor’s Office, Probation and Reentry with LA County.

Priority Access Diversion Program

Over the past three years, the City Prosecutor’s [Priority Access Diversion](#) (PAD) Program has been connecting and reconnecting persons experiencing mental illness, substance abuse and/or homelessness to residential treatment programs in lieu of prosecution. Additionally, the

City Prosecutor's Office is participating in countywide Mental Health Rapid Diversion, funded by the MacArthur Foundation. This allows individuals to be connected to mental health treatment before conviction, when appropriate. PAD is a voluntary program.

LONG BEACH HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S PARTICIPATION IN MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AND COORDINATION

In-House Mental Health Professionals

The Health Department has embedded Licensed Clinical Social Workers into its HIV, Family Preservation, Senior LINKS, Homeless Services and Black Infant Health Programs with outside grant funding. These services help provide direct support as they engage in our services, as well as connect people to additional services as needed.

City of Long Beach Mental Health Resource Guide

The Health Department produced and regularly updates the City of Long Beach [Mental Health Resource Guide](#), which can be found on the City's website. This guide was created to connect Long Beach residents to local mental health providers. The guide simplifies access to:

- A text response number that allows anyone in Long Beach to text 24/7 and receive a response from a Los Angeles trained crisis counselor.
- The Los Angeles County Substance Abuse Service Helpline, a hotline that provides screening, resources, and service referrals regarding substance use disorders.
- The LACDMH phone number that serves as the main point of entry for mental health services, including screening and assessment, referrals to service providers, crisis counseling, field response teams.
- Many other numbers and websites specific to the type of service needed, such as mental health clinics, the Suicide Prevention Hotline, the Trevor Project Hotline for the LGBTQ community, child abuse services, domestic violence shelters, and more.

Black Mental Health

In November 2020, in response to the unmet need for mental health support amidst the pandemic and racial injustice, the City contracted with licensed mental health providers using CARES Act funding to connect uninsured and underinsured Black residents to quality mental health services at no cost. To date, more than 550 culturally-affirming mental health therapy sessions have been completed virtually by clinicians from three partner agencies.

Mental Health Awareness

The Health Department, in collaboration with Long Beach based mental health providers, created a mental health awareness campaign, "Mental Health Matters," using CARES Act funding. The campaign includes bus placards, flyers, a hand sanitizer promotional item and radio and digital public service announcements (PSAs) on [Radio.com](#) and via the City's social media platforms @LongBeachCity on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Flyers

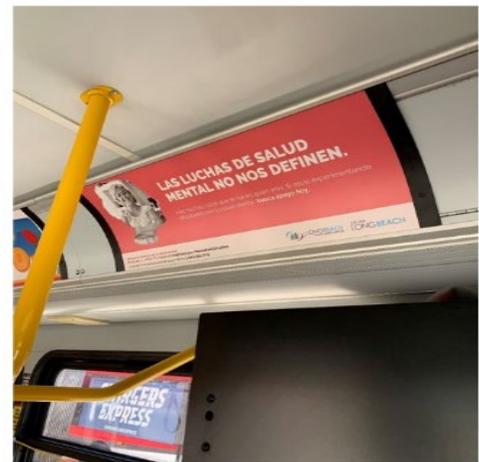


Spanish

Tagalog

Khmer

Bus Placards



Paid Social Media



Instagram



Facebook

Promotional Item



Artwork



Mockup

Expert panel discussions, which focus on normalizing experiences with mental health conditions while also uplifting the City's diverse and vibrant communities, will be available on the City's YouTube channel beginning in May 2021.

- English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSncAL9hmU>
- Spanish: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDiFBgIPj2A>
- Khmer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTGifbKp-k0>

ONGOING COMMITMENT

The Health Department maintains an ongoing commitment to mental health. Our Mental Health Strategic Planning Committee, comprised of mental health professionals and nurses within the Health Department, has been meeting for more than five years, and is working to raise awareness of mental health resources and destigmatize mental illness. In addition, staff across the Department are regularly scanning for and identifying funding opportunities; participating in

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LACDMH task forces and meetings; collaborating with our City and community partners to raise awareness and increase connections to services; working to change social conditions that undermine good mental health; and supporting Early Childhood Education, Older Adult Services and other efforts that support mental health across the entire lifespan.

If you have any questions, please contact me at kelly.colopy@longbeach.gov or (562) 570-4016.

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PRESS RELEASE

[\(Spanish\)](#)

[\(Khmer\)](#)

June 27, 2022

Contact: Jennifer Rice Epstein, Public Affairs Officer, Department of Health and Human Services, 562.441.3590, Jennifer.RiceEpstein@longbeach.gov

For Immediate Release

REACH Teams Provide Alternative Response to Calls for Service for People Experiencing Homelessness *Outreach teams engaged with more than 1,800 people in the last year*

Long Beach, CA – In a press conference earlier today, the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services ([Health Department](#)) provided updates regarding two REACH outreach teams that were created in July of last year as an alternative response to certain calls for service related to people experiencing homelessness. These specialized teams focus on increasing access to mental and physical health services as well as housing and case management resources, while reducing impacts to the emergency response system and addressing the root cause of homelessness.

“Long Beach is expanding our compassionate and accessible approach to improving the health of people experiencing homelessness in the city,” said Mayor Robert Garcia. “The REACH model is improving the quality of life for people experiencing homelessness by connecting people to care, treatment and housing.”

City leaders announced that, in the past year, the Health Department’s Homeless Services Bureau outreach teams responded to 567 requests for outreach and engaged with more than 1,800 people. Of those, 87 people with significant mental health and physical health care needs were enrolled in ongoing services through REACH. Those enrolled in ongoing REACH follow-up services tend to have been underserved by traditional care systems and have complex care needs along with histories of trauma.

The City today also revealed two new vehicles that will be used for outreach. One of them for general outreach and one specialized for the REACH teams to use when responding to calls for service. The outreach van has been branded with City colors and logos to increase awareness and visibility of the resource in the community. The

REACH van, which is the newest of the two vehicles, will also receive the same treatment. The branded vehicles will help build trust and authority with those receiving services.

The two teams, each comprised of a public health nurse, a mental health clinician and two outreach workers, currently serve as alternative response models focused on mental and physical health, with the goal of increasing access to services for people experiencing homelessness while working to reduce the number of calls for emergency response for mental and physical health-related situations. In total, the Health Department employs 16 outreach workers, including REACH team members, supervisory staff, outreach staff and a library outreach worker, with another eight positions in various stages of the hiring process.

The Long Beach Emergency Communications Center currently assesses all incoming calls to 911 and non-emergency lines to determine the most appropriate response. For dispatchers, depending on availability, the REACH teams can serve as an alternate response resource to certain calls for service for people experiencing homelessness with mental health and physical health concerns that do not require a law enforcement or emergency medical response. The REACH teams will be a key partner in ending the cycle of homelessness and improving health outcomes through proactive follow-up, engagement and close coordination between the Health Department and other care partners.

REACH team members assess for safety and physical health emergencies and can request assistance in situations where additional response is needed from the Long Beach Fire or Police departments. The departments work collaboratively to ensure a warm handoff is done during a response to a call and to provide follow-up information when appropriate.

Each member of the REACH teams receives extensive training in supporting people through experiences of trauma, educating people on health and medical conditions and engaging people in conversations about substance use, with a focus on both harm reduction and behavior change. These unique skill sets have equipped the team with the tools to support and guide even those whom have experienced long-term homelessness, into interim and permanent housing settings.

When not responding to urgent calls for response, the REACH teams conduct neighborhood needs assessments to identify historically under-resourced areas, such as those with a significant number of drug overdoses, human trafficking incidences and mental health needs. The teams provide proactive outreach as well as follow-up engagement to people experiencing homelessness. This may include interacting with people in treatment settings such as hospitals, mental health and substance use disorder programs, or interim housing settings to ensure that connections are maintained, and people are continually supported in their recovery.

“The REACH teams are an innovative and best practice model for integrated health and mental health outreach,” said Health and Human Services Director Kelly Colopy. “By taking services directly to each call for response, their work continues to be crucial in ensuring people experiencing homelessness are getting the help they need.”

The REACH teams operate weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with expected expansion into weekends when additional staffing is secured. The REACH teams may be contacted by calling 562.570.4672 (4MSC). Calls that come in after 4 p.m. will direct individuals, via voicemail, to contact 911 for immediate medical response if needed. Any messages received after 4 p.m. will be reviewed the following morning. Calls and messages will be triaged and prioritized based upon urgency. Any call or message that does not have a direct concern regarding a person’s physical or mental health will be scheduled within normal outreach protocols and will be addressed within 48 hours.

About the City of Long Beach

Home to approximately 470,000 people, the multiple award-winning and innovative City of Long Beach offers all the world-class amenities of a large metropolitan city while maintaining a strong sense of individual and diverse neighborhoods nestled together along the California coast. As a full-service charter city, Long Beach is home to the Queen Mary, Aquarium of the Pacific, several museums and theaters, a highly-rated school district, Long Beach Airport, the Port of Long Beach, as well as many award-winning City departments such as Health and Human Services; Parks, Recreation and Marine; Development Services; Public Works and more. The City also has a highly respected university and city college, two historic ranchos, five hospitals, 12 libraries, five golf courses, 169 parks, miles of beaches, marinas, bike paths and a Bike Share program.

For more information about the City of Long Beach, visit <http://longbeach.gov/>. Follow us on social to keep up with the latest news: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

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