

Additional Mental Health Services Act Funds for Berkeley and Albany

Your input and comments are invited on the attached recommendations to expand the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Community Services and Supports (CSS) Plan for the cities of Berkeley and Albany.

Background

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) is California state legislation approved by voters in November 2004 as Proposition 63. This Act places a 1% tax on every dollar of personal income over \$1 million. The State allocates these revenues to city and county mental health departments for the purpose of transforming and expanding public mental health services. There are five MHSA funding components. Community Services and Supports (CSS) is the largest and first component funded by the state.

In accordance with the MHSA, in 2005 the City of Berkeley conducted an extensive planning process by staff and community stakeholders to develop its draft Community Services and Supports Plan. The Mental Health Commission held a Public Hearing in January 2006 following a 30-day public review and comment period for the \$1.1 million draft CSS Plan, which was then submitted to the State for approval. Following an extended negotiation with the State Department of Mental Health regarding Berkeley's funding allocation, the City of Berkeley CSS Plan was approved in September 2006 for approximately \$900,000 annually.

Current Status

Statewide tax revenues received under the MHSA are exceeding what was originally projected. All approved Community Services and Supports Plans throughout the state are eligible to receive additional funds. The additional amount available for Berkeley Mental Health is \$333,000 annually beginning in fiscal year 07-08. These funds need to be used in accordance with Berkeley's approved Plan and state guidelines for CSS programs.

The MHSA Steering Committee, which was responsible for the planning and development of the original CSS Plan, reviewed proposals for the best use of the additional funds and made the recommendations on the attached chart. The primary recommendations are to: 1) increase staff for supportive housing; 2) add a full time Peer Counselor position; 3) increase contracted services for Transition Age Youth; and 4) provide legal assistance for clients' benefits advocacy. Additional documentation regarding these proposals is available on our website.

As part of the required state approval process we are soliciting your comments for a 30-day review period beginning **July 20th through August 20th.**

You can email, call or send comments to:

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MHSA website at: www.ci.berkeley.c.us/mentalhealth/prop63.html