




**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Behavioral Wellness
Department No.: 043
Agenda Date: April 7, 2026
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director: Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director 
Department of Behavioral Wellness
Contact: Ole Behrendtsen, M.D., Medical Director, Department of Behavioral Wellness
SUBJECT: First Amendment to the Agreement for Services of Contractor on Payroll for Fred Berge, M.D. for Fiscal Year 2025-26

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, ratify, and authorize the Chair to execute a First Amendment to the Agreement for Services of Contractor on Payroll with Fred Berge, M.D. to extend the contract term through June 30, 2027, update certain standard provisions for compliance with State and Federal requirements or to clarify the obligations of the parties, increase paid hours for FY 2025-26 by 200 hours for a total of 1,240 hours, add paid hours for FY 2026-27 for a total of 1,560 hours, and increase the contract amount by \$265,910 for a revised, total maximum contract amount not to exceed \$419,910, inclusive of \$182,442 for FY 2025-26 and \$237,468 for FY 2026-27; and
- b) Determine that the above-recommended action is not a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(4) and (b)(5), finding that the action is governmental funding mechanism and/or administrative or fiscal activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

The Board of Supervisors is requested to authorize the Chair to execute the First Amendment to the Contractor on Payroll Agreement with Fred Berge, M.D. This Amendment extends the contract term for an additional fiscal year (FY), through June 30, 2027, updates certain State and Federal terms to ensure compliance with new and updated provisions, and increases Dr. Berge's paid hours in FY 2025-26 by 200 hours (for a total of 1,240 hours) and includes 1,560 hours for FY 2026-27. This amendment increases the cost of the contract by \$265,910 for a total of \$419,910.

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the Department of Behavioral Wellness (BWell) to continue providing critical services at the Calle Real Adult Clinic without interruption.

Discussion:

Fred Berge, M.D. has been providing necessary psychiatric services to BWell members at the Calle Real Adult Clinic since June 2012. Dr. Berge's essential work is necessary to support members with behavioral health conditions.

BWell is increasing Dr. Berge's full-time equivalent (FTE) status from 0.50 to 0.75, which results in an increase of 200 hours in FY 2025-26 (from 1,040 to 1,240) and includes 1,560 hours for FY 2026-27 (from 1,040 to 1,560). The amendment also results in an increase in paid leave from 80 hours to 120 hours over the term of the agreement. This increase is necessary to maintain the ongoing need for necessary psychiatric services and the recent departure of two (2) civil service psychiatrists from the Calle Real Adult Clinic.

Background:

BWell provides specialty mental health services to adults with mental illness and to children with serious emotional disturbances (SED), in part through contracted providers, including Contractors on Payroll (COP).

BWell has experienced ongoing difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified, licensed professionals to provide specialty and ancillary mental health services. Although the County maintains continuous recruitment for these professionals, recruitment efforts rarely yield a sufficient number of qualified candidates to meet departmental needs. The following data was reported by BWell Human Resources (HR) Department:

During the continuous recruitment from January 30, 2023 – February 3, 2025, the County received 29 applications, of which 18 applicants met the minimum qualifications, and six (6) of those qualified applicants were hired. A second continuous recruitment was opened on March 12, 2025. This recruitment yielded four (4) qualified applicants, and one (1) candidate was extended an offer. Within the last three (3) years, the County has hired seven (7) candidates, of which five (5) of whom had separated as of January 2026. The County's current continuous Psychiatrist recruitment is to fill three (3) vacant positions in other programs. A COP helps bridge gaps in mental health treatment service capacity.

Fred Berge, M.D. provides psychiatric services on an as-needed basis within the scope of licensure as a licensed physician and surgeon in California. These services shall include but are not limited to: (a) performing diagnostic, suicide, Tarasoff, involuntary admission, medication, and other evaluations; (b) prescribing psychiatric medication and treatment; (c) participating in utilization review, medication monitoring, quality improvement protocols, and peer review; and (d) provide psychiatric services at the Calle Real Adult Clinic.

In June of 2025, the Board of Supervisors approved a renewal of the Contractor on Payroll Agreement with Dr. Berge.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

These expenditures are ongoing due to the difficulty of recruiting medical professionals. The FY 2025-26 amendment will be funded with Salary Savings of our salaries and benefits budgets. For FY 2026-27, the expenditures have been included in BWell’s recommended budget but remain contingent on the Board of Supervisors’ approval.

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Source	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	Total
Federal (Medi-Cal)	\$91,221	\$118,734	\$209,955
State (BHSA)	\$91,221	\$118,734	\$209,955
Total	\$182,442	\$237,468	\$419,910

The primary funding source for these expenditures will be Medi-Cal patient revenue. Costs that are not fully reimbursable or covered by Medi-Cal will be supplemented with Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) monies.

Special Instructions:

Please email one (1) complete, executed copy of the above Amendment and one (1) Minute Order to Svetlana Arriaga at sarriaga@sbcbswell.org, to auditorgrouppayrollstaff@co.santa-barbara.ca.us, to HRPositionControl@countyofsb.org, and to bwellcontractsstaff@sbcbswell.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A – Fred Berge, M.D. FY 2025-27 Contractor on Payroll First Amendment

Attachment B – Fred Berge, M.D. FY 2025-26 Contractor on Payroll executed

Contact Information:

Svetlana Arriaga
 Contracts Analyst
sarriaga@sbcbswell.org