



# California Council of Community Mental Health Agencies

Leaders in the partnership that developed and promoted Proposition 63

# #4

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### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Board of Supervisors and County Officials:

I am writing to alert you to a funding source that does not appear to have been considered in your proposed mental health budget cuts- **unspent Prop 63/MHSA Community Services and Supports (CSS) funds.**

Your staff report lists **Los Angeles County** among other counties facing a similar budget crisis and LA had proposed massive cuts in programs. However, after contacting the state and working with their providers they **identified tens of millions** of dollars that had been allocated to the county by the state but had not been spent and worked with their private providers to restructure their programs and **do not anticipate any significant cuts.**

The State Department of Mental Health does not know the exact amount for each county but believes that there are substantial funds for nearly every county.

The basis for having these funds is the fact that county MHSA plans anticipated an earlier start date for services and a faster utilization of funds than has actually occurred. The amounts vary among the counties and likely vary for each contract provider using MHSA funds.

To utilize these funds to avoid cuts in current programs a county must do three things:

1. Verify that the program meets MHSA criteria as being either a full service partnership (the ACT program and possibly supported housing could meet that) or be part of system development – a program element that contributes towards what a full service partnership (whatever it takes program) would have and which serves individuals who have severe mental illnesses. Most of the other programs meet that criteria.
2. Amend the MHSA plan to expand the funding for this program (if it is already in the MHSA CSS) or to add this program to the MHSA plan (which requires public participation in the decision).
3. Restructure the programs (generally not significant) so they are described in terms that meet MHSA criteria.

This is not supplantation. Since the funding that supported these programs no longer exists, MHSA funds are not being used to make existing funds available for other purposes, which is the criteria for supplantation. Moreover, substantial growth is anticipated in MHSA funds in 2009-10 so, in all likelihood these programs can be continued in future years as well.

I would urge county officials to contact state and LA county officials to explore this possibility before proceeding to make the proposed budget cuts.

Sincerely,

Rusty Selix

Co-Author (with Senator Darrell Steinberg) of Proposition 63 – the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA)  
Executive Director  
California Council of Community Mental Health Agencies (CCMHA)  
Mental Health Association of California (MHAC)



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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA  
CLERK OF THE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Representing Non-Profit Community Mental Health Agencies Throughout California  
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