



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

Department Name: Human Resources / Behavioral Wellness
Department No.: 064
For Agenda Of: April 23, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Kristine Schmidt, Human Resources Director,
805-568-2800
Director(s) Antonette Navarro, LMFT, Director
Behavioral Wellness (805) 681-5220
Contact Info: Erin Jeffery, Fiscal & Workforce Planning Division Chief,
568-2808

SUBJECT: Establish Job Classification Series of Peer Support Specialist Trainee / Peer Certified Support Specialist

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Adopt the resolution in Attachment A to establish the job classifications of Behavioral Wellness Peer Support Specialist Trainee (Class #1201, Range #1201, \$25.261 hourly to \$30.062 hourly) and Behavioral Wellness Peer Certified Support Specialist (Class #1202, Range #1202, \$27.281 hourly to \$32.466 hourly), reclassifying thirty-one (31) existing legal positions to these new classifications; and
- b) Determine that the above actions are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review per CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(4) since the recommended actions are government funding mechanisms or other government fiscal activities which do not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potentially significant physical impact on the environment.

Summary Text:

The recommended action would establish two new job classifications of Peer Support Specialist Trainee and Peer Certified Support Specialist. Both classifications would provide services as required by the Peer Certification program implemented by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA). Incumbent employees would provide information, support, assistance and advocacy for

recipients, and/or caregivers/family members of clients of behavioral health services (mental health and co-occurring substance use disorders), including assisting other mental health professionals with providing client treatment. Incumbents without a valid CalMHSA Peer Certification would be hired into the Peer Support Specialist Trainee classification, obtain CalMHSA training within the first year of hire and function as a trainee before progressing to the Peer Certified Support Specialist classification. Accordingly, these classifications would be eligible for flexible staffing under Civil Service Rule 609 if established by the Board.

A total of 31 Recovery Assistant classifications (out of 47) will be reclassified into the Peer Support Specialist flexibly classed series. Of the 31 positions, 22 will either be filled or remain vacant at the Peer Support Specialist Trainee classification. The remaining nine (9) positions will be filled at the Peer Certified Support Specialist classification, consisting of current staff members who meet the employment standards of this classification.

An equity adjustment of 5% was applied to the ADMHS Recovery Assistant classification on February 5, 2024. This classification performs similar functions and duties to the Peer Support Specialist Trainee but works outside of the Peer program: the proposed salary range for Peer Support Specialist Trainee brings it to the same salary as the Recovery Assistant.

In accordance with the Employer-Employee Relations Policy all recognized employee organizations were notified of the County's intent to assign the classification to bargaining unit 27 (Supervisory Craft Workers, Technicians and Maintenance Services Employees) represented by Service Employees International Union, Local 620 and there were no objections. The County met and conferred with the Union and agreed on the proposed salaries for the classifications.

Background: The California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) launched the Medi-Cal Peer Support Services benefit in July 2022, in compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 803 (Beall, Chapter 150, Statutes of 2020) which required DHCS to seek federal approval to establish Medi-Cal Peer Specialists as a provider type and to provide distinct Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist services under the Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) and Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) programs. Following federal approval, DHCS added Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialists (Peers) as a unique provider type within specific reimbursable services. The Behavioral Wellness Department (BWell) opted-in to provide these peer support services in 2022 in both their SMHS and DMC-ODS systems of care.

BWell agrees with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) who "recognizes that the experiences of peer support specialists, as part of an evidence-based model of care, can be an important component in a state's delivery of effective mental health and substance use disorder treatment. The CMS encourages states to offer comprehensive programs. A substantial number of research studies demonstrate that peer supports improve client functioning, increase client satisfaction, reduce family burden, alleviate depression and other symptoms, reduce homelessness, reduce hospitalizations and hospital days, increase client activation, and enhance client self-advocacy."

Santa Barbara Community partners, including treatment providers, community advocacy groups and the Behavioral Wellness Commission have all pointed to the importance of peers in our system of care and have shared numerous stories of how peers have helped clients succeed in their recovery. As a result, BWell now has twenty-one (21) peer support specialists, nine (9) of whom are certified, throughout the SMHS and DMC-ODS systems of care. These job classifications will help formalize BWell's peer support system and provide a career path for individuals with lived experience.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No; BWell has sufficient salary savings to cover the increase in FY 23-24.

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Annualized Additional Cost:</u>	
General Fund		
State		
Federal	\$	66,930
Fees		
Other:		
Total	\$	66,930

Narrative: The above table only represents the annualized additional cost of having nine additional Certified Peers. Medi-Cal (Federal Source) will be the primary funding source. Recovery Assistants that were only converted to Peer Trainees have no financial impact because they have the same pay range.

<u>Requested Action</u>	<u>FTE's</u>	<u>FY 23-24 Cost</u>	<u>Annualized Cost</u>
Reclassification from ADMHS Recovery Assistant to Peer Support Specialist Trainee	21	\$41,963	\$111,902
Reclassification from ADMHS Recovery Assistant to Peer Certified Support Specialist	9	\$25,099	\$66,930

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

No change

FTEs:

No change

There is no staffing impact associated with establishing the classifications by themselves, or by reclassifying existing employees and vacant positions into these new job classifications. Future staffing impacts are anticipated as the County conducts recruitments for vacancies in these classifications.

Special Instructions:

Please email one (1) copy of the minute order and one (1) copy of the fully executed Salary Resolution to Tracy Rogers, Workforce Planning Analyst, Human Resources Department at trogers@countyofsb.org and Melanie Johnson, Contracts Manager, Behavioral Wellness Department at mejohanson@sbcbswell.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Salary Resolution

Attachment B: Proposed Class Specification for Behavioral Wellness Peer Support Specialist Trainee

Attachment C: Proposed Class Specification for Behavioral Wellness Peer Certified Support Specialist

Authored by:

Stefan Brewer, Workforce Planning Manager, County Human Resources

cc:

Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer
Nancy Anderson, Chief Assistant County Executive Officer
Tanja Heitman, Assistant County Executive Officer