

# Sonoma County BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT Newsletter

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## May is Mental Health Matters Month!

### When Is It Time to Seek Support for Your Mental Health?

Everyone faces challenges sometimes. Your mental health can vary greatly based on what's happening in your life. Life events can affect your mental health and wellness in different ways. Whether you are experiencing a major life event, or a less obvious stressor you may experience sadness, anxiety, or feel off-balance. Recognizing these feelings or stressful events can help you know when to reach out for support.

#### How do I know when to seek help?

You might think the hard times you've been having are just part of life. And you may be right. However, when a few bad days seem like they come more often than not, and last for more than two weeks, this can be more serious. If your usual coping methods aren't helping, it's time to seek additional support.



#### Some of the most common signs that you may need support or professional help include:

- Feeling sad or hopeless
- Feeling consistently anxious, worried, or overwhelmed
- Being unable to concentrate on work or school
- Having wide changes in moods
- Withdrawing from friends and activities
- Difficulty coping with daily problems or stress
- Consuming more alcohol or drugs than usual or more often
- Becoming easily irritable
- Undergoing changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Thinking people are out to get you

When one or more of these conditions keeps you from functioning well or affects your quality of life, getting support can help you get back on track and feel better.

#### What should I do?

Build your long-term wellness by taking care of yourself through healthy habits every day. Check in with yourself regularly to get a read on how you're feeling. If you notice that you're a bit stressed or feeling low, boost your mental health with some self-care tools like podcasts, apps, and other resources found [HERE](#).

If you're having any of the warning signs or symptoms listed above, or if you feel like your usual coping methods aren't helping, reach out for support. This might include talking with someone you trust like a friend or family member, joining a peer support group, [continued on page 2]

### From MHSA to BHSA: What's Changing?

California's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) is evolving into the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA)—a shift aimed at strengthening the state's behavioral health system and better addressing today's needs.



One of the most significant changes is an expanded focus. While MHSA primarily funded mental health services, BHSA broadens the scope to include substance use disorder (SUD) services, supporting a more integrated, whole-person approach to care.

BHSA also places a stronger emphasis on housing interventions, recognizing that stable housing is a critical foundation for recovery and well-being. A dedicated portion of funding is now required to support housing and related services for individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In addition, BHSA introduces more structured funding categories and accountability measures, with a focus on outcomes such as timely access to care, housing stability, and improved behavioral health outcomes. This includes updated planning requirements through a three-year Integrated Plan and increased state oversight.

While these changes bring new requirements, the core goal remains the same: to improve access to care, promote equity, and support the well-being of individuals and communities. BHSA builds on the foundation of MHSA while creating new opportunities to better serve those with the greatest needs.

Learn more about Sonoma County's BHSA Three-Year Integrated Plan — click [HERE](#).

**988**  
SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

**YOU MATTER**

Text. Call. Chat.

**988** SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

The 988 Lifeline is for everyone. Through the 988 Lifeline, you have access to free, quality, one-on-one assistance. Skilled, judgment-free counselors are here to provide compassionate support. You deserve to feel heard and cared about anytime, anywhere, 24/7/365.

or making an appointment with a mental health or medical professional. Call or text 988 to connect with skilled counselors anytime, confidentially, and free. If you are in need of resources check out our local resource map on the right or find different types of support available by clicking [HERE](#).

**What is a mental health crisis?**

Just as mental health may look different for each person, the signs of a mental health crisis can vary widely.

If you notice that someone you know is acting differently than usual in their behavior or personality, this is a good clue to check in with them about how they are feeling. You might see a pattern of them not taking care of themselves as they normally do. For example, they may skip work or school, sleep all day, or avoid personal care activities like bathing or eating.

Ask how you can best support them. You can even help them explore options for other types of assistance. Get ideas on how to start the conversation with them [HERE](#).

Take action right away if someone puts themselves or others at risk of harm. If they are suicidal, get help by calling 911 in a life-threatening situation. Counselors are available by calling or texting 988, or via chat at 988lifeline.org. 988 offers 24/7 support to anyone in crisis, and are also available to help you in supporting someone else. You are not alone.

CHECK IN

LEARN MORE

GET SUPPORT

When you regularly check in on your own mental health and that of the people you care about, you can take action to address problems early on before they become more serious. Learn more on the Take Action for Mental Health website: [www.takeaction4mh.com](http://www.takeaction4mh.com)



**Get Involved: Upcoming BHSA Public Meetings**

**BHSA Stakeholder Meeting**

Learn more about Sonoma County’s BHSA Three-Year Integrated Plan at our upcoming stakeholder meeting. This meeting is open to anyone interested in Sonoma County’s behavioral health system of care.

Join us at our upcoming BHSA Stakeholder Meeting:

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 12, 2026  
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

**WHERE:** North Coast Builders’ Exchange  
1030 Apollo Way, Santa Rosa, CA 95407

We will share BHSA updates, feature a presentation from one of MHSA’s Innovation Projects, and provide opportunities to collaborate with community partners and stakeholders.

Lunch will be provided for those who register by May 8th. Click [HERE](#) to register. For questions or concerns email: [BHSA@sonomacounty.gov](mailto:BHSA@sonomacounty.gov)

**Your Mental Health Matters: Take Action This May!**



To celebrate Mental Health Matters Month, local organizations are coming together to host a variety of events and activities that support our community’s well-being. These efforts reflect a shared commitment to uplifting both our community and each individual’s unique mental health journey.

Join us in taking action for your mental health. Whether it’s taking a walk, attending a community event, or reaching out for support, every step matters.

We’ve created a calendar of events and activities to help you get involved this May. Click [HERE](#) to view our community calendar.

**Behavioral Health Board (BHB) Public Hearing**

You are invited to review and provide feedback on the BHSA Three-Year Integrated Plan for FY 2026 - 2029. Your input is important in helping shape local behavioral health services and priorities. Comments and feedback may be submitted by email to [BHSA@sonomacounty.gov](mailto:BHSA@sonomacounty.gov) or shared during the public hearing on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Join us for the upcoming Behavioral Health Board Public Hearing:

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 19, 2026  
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**WHERE:** Santa Rosa Conference Room  
1450 Neotomas Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Community members may also attend virtually via Zoom. Click [HERE](#) for more information or email: [DHS-MHB@sonomacounty.gov](mailto:DHS-MHB@sonomacounty.gov)