



Administrative Office of the Courts
Karl W. Reifsteck, Director
Sarah Jacobs, Deputy Director



HEALTH CARE
AUTHORITY

Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Kari Armijo, Cabinet Secretary
Kathy Slater-Huff, Deputy Secretary
Niki Kozlowski, Acting Deputy Secretary
Alanna Dancis, Acting Medicaid Director

Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 | Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

New Mexico State Capitol Bldg., 490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Room 322, Santa Fe, NM 87507

Welcome and Roll Call

- Committee Members Present:
 - Nick Boukas, Executive Committee Chair, *Behavioral Health Services Division Director at the New Mexico Health Care Authority*
 - Kari Armijo, *New Mexico Health Care Authority Cabinet Secretary*
 - Alanna Dancis, *New Mexico Health Care Authority, Acting Medicaid Director*
 - Karl W. Reifsteck, *Administrative Office of the Courts Director*
 - Dr. Violette Cloud, *Behavioral Health Expert*
 - Dr. Stacey Cox, *Behavioral Health Expert (Virtual)*
 - Senator Ortiz y Pino, *Behavioral Health Expert*

- **Quorum Confirmation**

- A quorum was established.

- **Meeting Called to Order**

- *The meeting was convened at approximately 9:01 a.m.*
- *Chairman Boukas welcomed attendees. Dr. Cloud initially participated remotely.*

- **Approval of Minutes and Agenda**

- Minutes from the September 2 BHEC Meeting
 - *Senator Ortiz y Pino moved to approve the September 2 meeting minutes as presented.*
 - *Dr. Cox seconded the motion.*
 - *With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

- **Agenda for October 6 BHEC Meeting**

- Prior to approval of the agenda, Committee members discussed whether an additional meeting should be held in November to address legislative-session preparation, potential BHRIA recommendations, follow-up reporting, and other emerging business.
 - Staff agreed to explore a shorter virtual meeting in November.
 - Director Reifsteck moved to approve the October 6 agenda.
 - Senator Ortiz y Pino seconded the motion.
 - With no further discussion, the agenda was approved.
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- **AOC Updates**

Presented by Pamela Trujillo and Stacey Boone

- AOC reported that three Tribal Plans had been formally submitted to HCA: Pueblo of Zuni, Mescalero Apache Tribe, and Pueblo de San Ildefonso.
- AOC continued providing technical assistance to Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes and anticipated additional Tribal Plan submissions during the following one to two months.
- AOC discussed planned outreach to clarify the approved submission process, available technical assistance, and the tribal funding methodology.
- AOC also reported on separate BHRIA-related judicial-district initiatives. Staff stated that \$2.3 million was available for FY26, FY27, and FY28 and that 11 of 14 judicial districts had submitted proposals, with memoranda of understanding under development.
- Committee discussion addressed the relationship between judicial initiatives, regional behavioral health plans, competency-diversion efforts, and workforce development.

- **HCA Updates**

Presented by Josh Swatek, HCA Behavioral Health Services Division.

- HCA described the transition from regional planning into implementation. Regional coordinators are expected to serve as primary points of contact and provide regular, proactive support to regions in coordination with HCA, Behavioral Health Technical Assistance Center (BHTAC), and AOC as appropriate.
- HCA reported approximately \$9.2 million in early-access funding encumbered and approximately \$2.6 million spent.
- HCA identified its centralized BHRIA support contact as a resource for implementation questions and described an expectation of timely response to regional inquiries.
- Committee members requested clearer communication regarding the respective roles of HCA, UNM, AOC, consultants, and other partners. HCA indicated that roles-and-responsibilities guidance could be strengthened and distributed to accountable entities.

- **Regional and Tribal Plan Presentations and Votes**

Presented by Nick Boukas, with regional and Tribal representatives as noted.

- **Region 4 (Mora, San Miguel, and Guadalupe Counties)**

- Region 4 presented its regional plan, requesting \$6,722,225 across four priorities:
 1. Crisis response, mobile teams, and triage;
 2. Intergenerational community activities and prevention;
 3. Workforce recruitment and training; and
 4. Resource navigation and coordination.
- 5. Serentiy Lopez of Eastern Plains Council of Governments, Kate Bailey (consultant) with Emerald Health Partners.



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- Committee discussion addressed the proposed hub-and-spoke/resource-center model, including behavioral health navigation, telehealth access, local staffing, prevention, community connection, and coordination of services across rural communities.
- Region representatives stated that no CCBHC currently operates in Region 4. Committee members also discussed a proposed regional behavioral health workforce feasibility study and encouraged coordination with other statewide workforce efforts to avoid duplication.
- Additional discussion addressed EPCOG's role as accountable entity, coordination with courts and judicial districts, and behavioral health infrastructure in Las Vegas area.
- Motion: Dr. Cloud moved to approve the Region 4 plan as submitted.
- Second: Director Reifsteck seconded the motion.
- Outcome: The motion passed unanimously.
- **Region 12 (Lincoln and Otero Counties)**
 - Region 12 presented its regional plan, requesting \$6,754,425.70 across five priorities:
 1. Housing;
 2. Behavioral health care continuum expansion;
 3. Youth, family, and caregiver supports;
 4. Crisis response services; and
 5. Justice and diversion services. Ross Coleman and Amber Mayhall represented Region 12, along with Councilwoman Dorlynn Simmons from Mescalero—also representing R12.
 - Region representatives noted that Mescalero Apache Tribe participated in the initial planning process and was proceeding separately with a Tribal Priority Plan.
 - Committee discussion addressed sober-living conditions, housing, infrastructure limitations affecting service development, natural-disaster and fire recovery, crisis services, youth and family supports, and justice/diversion services.
 - Motion: Senator Ortiz y Pino moved to approve the Region 12 plan.
 - Second: Dr. Cox seconded the motion.
 - Outcome: The motion passed unanimously.
- **Taos Pueblo**
 - Representatives from Taos Pueblo discussed multiple submitted plan versions and funding alternatives, including an approximately \$8.41 million proposal and two approximately \$1.5 million alternatives.
 - The Committee clarified that Taos Pueblo's allocation under the adopted tribal funding methodology was \$358,874 and discussed how the available amount would be distributed following execution of an agreement.
 - Given the available allocation, Taos Pueblo representatives identified transitional housing as the preferred priority. Discussion addressed a residential/transitional-living concept, existing outpatient services, Medicaid and third-party billing, workforce development, and other potential funding sources.
 - Motion: Secretary Armijo moved to approve the Taos Pueblo transitional housing proposal.
 - Second: Director Reifsteck seconded the motion.



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- Outcome: The motion passed.
- **Pueblo of Isleta**
 - Margaret Peina, Director of Public Health at the Isleta Health Center, presented the Pueblo of Isleta plan.
 - The Pueblo requested \$337,000 across three proposed priorities: (1) continuum of care; (2) social drivers of health; and (3) workforce development. The Committee discussed an available allocation of \$260,334.
 - Ms. Peina stated that, given the available allocation, the Pueblo's current priority was workforce development, with funding intended to increase psychologist capacity.
 - Discussion also addressed continued collaboration with the regional planning structure while the Pueblo proceeds with a separate Tribal Plan.
 - Motion: Senator Ortiz y Pino moved to approve the Pueblo of Isleta proposal.
 - Second: Dr. Cloud seconded the motion.
 - Outcome: The motion passed unanimously.
- **Behavioral Health Workforce Update**

Presented by Deborah Altschul and Jennifer Panhorst, BHTAC at UNM

 - BHTAC presented statewide behavioral health workforce information and noted that workforce shortages emerged across the regional E-SIM and planning processes, with workforce specifically prioritized in multiple regional plans.
 - The presentation and Committee discussion addressed education and training pipelines, licensure and retention, rural workforce shortages, Tribal colleges, clinical rotations and preceptorships, psychiatry and psychology capacity, peer and community-based workforce roles, reimbursement, recruitment incentives, and coordination among higher education, HCA, Workforce Solutions, UNM, and other partners.
 - Committee members discussed the need to move from identifying workforce gaps toward actionable policy recommendations, including potential funding strategies, approaches used in other states, and opportunities for coordination with the Legislature and other agencies.
 - Motion: Secretary Armijo moved that UNM and LFC staff to use the workforce report to develop a plan that includes policy recommendations and approaches for leveraging funding to expand the behavioral health workforce.
 - Second: Dr. Cloud seconded the motion.
 - Outcome: The motion passed with no opposition recorded.
- **Legislative and Future Business Discussion**
 - Senator Ortiz y Pino distributed material being developed by Senate Finance Committee Chairman, Senator George Muñoz, and Adrian Avila, regarding potential targeted amendments to the Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act and requested Committee review and possible feedback at a future meeting.
 - Potential future agenda topics discussed included additional Tribal Plans, legislative proposals, progress reports on AOC competency-diversion initiatives, development of a statewide



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behavioral health strategic plan drawing from the 13 regional plans, evaluation of BHRIA implementation and outcomes, and priorities for the coming year.

- **Next Meeting and Follow-Up**

- Chairman Boukas noted that all 13 regional plans had now been approved and that two Tribal Plans had been approved, with additional Tribal Plans anticipated.
- Chairman Boukas stated that staff would work to identify a potential meeting date in November, most likely a virtual meeting.
- Chairman Boukas recognized Breast Cancer Awareness Month and thanked participants for their work and attendance.

- **Adjournment**

- The meeting concluded following Chairman Boukas's closing remarks at 12:06 p.m.