



HEALTH CARE
AUTHORITY

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

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: May 29, 2026 | Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
37 Plaza la Prensa, Santa Fe, NM 87507**

DRAFT

- **Welcome and Roll Call**

- Committee 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, *Acting Medicaid Director*
 - Karl W. Reifsteck, *Administrative Office of the Courts Director*
 - Dr. Violette Cloud, *Behavioral Health Expert*
 - Dr. Stacey Cox, *Behavioral Health Expert*
 - Gerald P. “Jerry” Ortiz y Piño, *Former Senator, Behavioral Health Expert*

- Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act Lead:

- Sarah Jacobs, *Administrative Office of the Courts Deputy Director*

- **Quorum Confirmation**

- A quorum was established.

- **Meeting Called to Order**

- **Meeting Format**

- The Committee agreed to use this session as a workshop to work through questions about roles, responsibilities, and funding processes. Formal approval of the April 23 minutes was postponed.

- **Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities**

- Members reviewed statutory roles for the Behavioral Health Executive Committee, the Human Services Department (HCA), the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), and the Legislative Finance Committee. Discussion focused on:
 - The Committee’s responsibility to review and approve regional behavioral health plans.
 - The need for clearer definitions of Accountable Entity (AE) responsibilities.
 - Ensuring appropriated funds align with statutory priorities.



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- Distinguishing behavioral-health appropriations from Medicaid, which operates under separate authority.
 - Members noted that regions and AEs have interpreted their responsibilities differently, creating confusion about planning, contracting, and reporting expectations.
- **Administrative Burden and Funding Flow**
 - Members discussed how funds move from the state to regions and providers, and how reporting requirements affect both AEs and local partners. Key points included:
 - The Early Access process was designed to help regions begin contracting more quickly.
 - Regions and AEs continue to face administrative barriers, including procurement and reporting requirements.
 - Some members expressed concern that administrative responsibilities are being pushed too far down to the regional level.
- **Grants vs. Regional Plan Model**
 - The Committee discussed whether behavioral health funds should continue flowing through AEs or whether HCA should administer bucket-specific grants directly to providers.
 - Supporters of a grants model noted it could reduce administrative burden on AEs and allow more providers to apply directly for funds aligned with regional priorities.
 - Others cautioned that shifting to a grants model could slow down funding, add new layers of bureaucracy, and undermine the purpose of regional planning.
 - Members agreed that any approach must protect community collaboration and ensure that regional priorities guide funding decisions.
- **Tribal Funding and Equity**
 - The Committee discussed concerns about the **Native American funding formula**, including missing population data and the need to ensure equitable access to funds in regions without a seated tribe or pueblo.



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- Members agreed that:
 - Native American population data should be complete and accurate.
 - Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes must be able to access their full share of behavioral health funds.
 - Statutory language may allow for direct allocation to tribes and pueblos, and this option should be explored.
 - Respect for tribal sovereignty must be central to any funding model.
- **Next Steps**
 - The Committee agreed to form a small working group to:
 - Review and refine the funding formula.
 - Clarify terminology such as “allocation” and “share.”
 - Develop written definitions of AE roles and responsibilities.
 - Prepare visual materials to support future discussions.
 - Chairman Boukas emphasized the importance of continuing progress on regional plans while this work moves forward.
- **Adjournment**
 - Meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.