

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

December 16, 2025

FROM

GEORGINA YOSHIOKA, Director, Department of Behavioral Health

SUBJECT

Contract with Helping Hearts Kern, LLC, for Enhanced Adult Residential Facility Services

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Approve **Contract No. 25-1139** with Helping Hearts Kern, LLC, for Enhanced Adult Residential Facility services, in an amount not to exceed \$17,803,500, for the period of December 16, 2025, through September 30, 2030.

(Presenter: Jennifer Alsina, Assistant Director, 252-5142)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies and Stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This item does not impact Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The contract amount not to exceed \$17,803,500 for Enhanced Adult Residential Facility (EARF) is funded by Mental Health Service Act revenue. Adequate appropriation and revenue have been included in the Department of Behavioral Health's (DBH) 2025-26 budget and will be included in future recommended budgets.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DBH is responsible for providing mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services to county residents experiencing severe mental illness and/or SUD. Helping Hearts Kern, LLC (Helping Hearts) is one of a select few state-licensed adult residential facility providers who provide specialty mental health services at the highest level of enhanced treatment. Clients are discharged from locked facilities such as state hospitals, detention centers, institutions for mental disease, Arrowhead Regional Medical Center Behavioral Health Unit, and other fee-for-service acute psychiatric hospitals. The clients served by Helping Hearts include decertified offenders with mental disorders, felony clients deemed incompetent to stand trial in community treatment, misdemeanor clients, Community Assistance Recovery and Empowerment/Assisted Outpatient Treatment clients, pretrial diversion clients, and clients on probation needing a higher level of care placement.

Due to the acuity of clients and the need for added supervision and services, the structure and support provided by EARF are a vital component of the continuum of care. Clients receiving EARF services are provided individualized support to assist in maintaining stability in the community. These services provide increased supervision and support to clients whose behavior negatively impacts their stability in a lower level of care. Services include but are not

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limited to transportation to and from medical and psychiatric appointments, daily treatment groups, on-site educational classes, services for clients who are diabetic, and staff (nurses, clinical therapists, hearing impaired interpreters).

EARF services allow clients to step down from a locked facility and better adapt to a residential setting with personalized treatment designed for successful community reintegration. The objective of EARF services is to reduce recidivism to locked psychiatric facilities and/or detention centers and successfully transition clients to community living by providing continuous care for clients who are ready to transition to a lower level of care. DBH anticipates that Helping Hearts will provide 10,950 bed days annually (5,475 annual bed-days or 15 beds available year-round each for Centralized Hospital Aftercare Services and for Adult Justice Involved) annually at an estimated cost of \$325 per bed-day.

DBH will implement mechanisms to regularly review 1) client service data and progress, conduct site visits and annual monitoring to ensure performance and compliance standards of the contract(s) are met; 2) applicable claims data and claims for reimbursement to ensure fidelity and accuracy of service billing and optimization of Medi-Cal reimbursement in alignment with Contract terms and Department of Health Care Services billing requirements; and 3) provider invoices administratively and programmatically to ensure client and/or bed counts are accurate prior to payment processing.

PROCUREMENT

The Purchasing Department supports the non-competitive procurement of EARF services from Helping Hearts based on their specialized expertise in serving complex and justice-involved clients. DBH is required to provide these services pursuant to Title 9 and Title 22, Division 6 of the California Code of Regulations. After a search, alternative providers capable of providing comparable EARF structured supportive services for this population were not found due to the complex and challenging nature of the population.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by Behavioral Health (Marianna Martinez, Administrative Supervisor II, 383-3940) on November 5, 2025; County Counsel (Dawn Martin, Supervising Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on November 5, 2025; Purchasing (Jessica Barajas, Supervising Buyer, 387-2065) on November 5, 2025; and County Finance and Administration (Paul Garcia, Administrative Analyst, 386-8392) on November 23, 2025.

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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Curt Hagman Seconded: Jesse Armendarez
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Joe Baca, Jr.
Absent: Dawn Rowe
Abstained: Curt Hagman

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY *Lynna Monell*
DATED: December 16, 2025



cc: DBH - Hibbard-Miller w/agree
Contractor - c/o DBH w/agree
File - w/agree
MBA 01/6/2026