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SENATOR
JOHN M. W. MOORLACH
THIRTY-SEVENTH SENATE DISTRICT

FACT SHEET

Senate Bill 1273 – Mental Health Services Act Crisis Stabilization Services

BILL SUMMARY

The bill seeks to clarify that Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding is available to county personnel for crisis stabilization services, specifically when law enforcement has in custody an individual who exhibits behaviors that warrant a mental health evaluation.

Pursuant to the Welfare & Institutions Code (W&I) Section 5150, MHSA funding can be used to provide evaluation and temporary outpatient services. This bill will clarify that, when a peace officer or another designated person writes a 5150 hold, these individuals require a temporary assessment and are eligible for outpatient services funded by MHSA pursuant to W&I Section 5801.

This clarification provides counties with the flexibility to fund outpatient care, as well as help ensure emergency department access is preserved for patients with urgent medical conditions and that patients in psychiatric crisis receive prompt therapeutic evaluations and treatment.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In 2004, the California electorate passed Proposition 63 – the Mental Health Services Act. MHSA expanded county mental health programs for children, transition-age youth, adults, older adults and families. **Proposition 63 provides a broad continuum of prevention, early intervention, and outpatient treatment**, and the necessary infrastructure, technology, and enhancement of the mental health workforce to effectively support this system.

The precedent for using MHSA funds to provide involuntary outpatient services was established in 2014 when Laura’s Law (SB 585, Steinberg) modified the MHSA allowing counties to implement providing involuntary outpatient services referred to as, “Assisted Outpatient Treatment.” After Laura’s Law was passed, then Supervisor Moorlach worked with the Orange County Commission to End Homelessness and the Orange County Health Care Agency to allow the County of Orange to become the 2nd county in California to fully implement Laura’s Law.

SUPPORT

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MORE INFORMATION

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