



**Lake County Behavioral Health Services**  
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May 1, 2020

Lake County Behavioral Health Services (LCBHS), as required under the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), is opening a Public Review and Comment period for the temporary modification to the Lake County 2019-20 MHSA Plan Update. The Public Review and Comment period will begin May 1 – May 30, 2020.

The document under review is posted on the LCBHS website (<http://www.lakecountyca.gov/Government/Directory/LCBHS/MHSA.htm>) and hard copies are available upon request by contacting Scott Abbott at (707) 274-9101.

To provide input, recommendations and comments, please email your comments to [scott.abbott@lakecountyca.gov](mailto:scott.abbott@lakecountyca.gov) or use the Public Comment Form on the website and submit written comments to:

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## Temporary Modification to the Lake County 2019-20 MHSA Plan Update

### Executive Summary:

Lake County Behavioral Health Services, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, is proposing a temporary modification to the County's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) 2019-20 Plan Update to modify peer support being provided at the peer support centers to be provided at local motels for homeless individuals who are at high risk in they contracted the COVID19 virus. This modification would be in place as long as the County's Shelter-In-Place order is in effect.

### Lake County's MHSA 3-Year Plan 2019-20 Update: Peer Support

The 3-Year Plan describes five peer support centers operating throughout Lake County: the Big Oak Peer Support Center, Harbor on Main Transition Age Youth Peer Support Center, Circle of Native Minds Center, La Esperanza Centro Latino (La Voz), and the Family Support Center. A variety of education, prevention, and early intervention service, programs, and activities are run through the centers. The concepts of wellness, recovery, and resiliency are embedded in the programming in all locations. Peer Center staff, made up of peers with lived experience, daily work with all people who come into the centers towards wellness by being recovery centered, supportive, making linkages to community resources (including behavioral health) as needed, and addressing barriers that people face when trying to access services.

### COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19, short for "coronavirus disease 2019," is the name of disease caused by this newly identified coronavirus. This virus is highly contagious producing respiratory illness, creating a pandemic across the world with governments and public health agencies responding with public safety guidelines to prevent the spread and magnitude of the disease. California declared a Emergency on March 4, 2020. It has been determined that those with high-risk factors such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic

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disease) are the most vulnerable and should be separated from other people in non-congregated settings. The homeless population is also particularly vulnerable to contracting COVID-19, not having a set location to “shelter-in-place” nor medical follow-up. On March 18, 2020, the Health Officer of Lake County ordered a “shelter-in-place” for all county residents; the State of California followed with a statewide order the next day.

### [Project RoomKey](#)

On April 3, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that California has become the first state in the nation to secure FEMA approval to provide safe isolation capacity for tens of thousands of people experiencing homelessness in California in order to protect them and the state from COVID-19. Project RoomKey was designed for the most vulnerable of the homeless population, those that require non-congregated sheltering. Lake County officials, in collaboration with local health organizations and the Lake County Continuum of Care, instituted the County’s RoomKey project, starting on April 22, 2020. Medical organizations will refer those over age 65 or with underlying (but ambulatory) health conditions to the program and would be housed in a local motel.

### [MHSA Peer Support Staff](#)

With the peer support centers closed due to the shelter-in-place orders, it was determined that peer support staff could be reassigned to the Project RoomKey – providing peer support and monitoring of the day-to-day operation of the project. This was determined to be a good fit for peer support staff as their duties frequently having them working with the homeless population, particularly those that are vulnerable and need assistance. Peer Support staff would follow public health guidelines when working with guests, including social distancing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Therefore, it is proposed that MHSA funds continue to support MHSA peer support staff in this temporary endeavor. Additionally, MHSA Community Support Services - Outreach and Engagement (O&E) funds will be used to employ to rent one of the motel rooms on site as an office for peer support staff to work. Staff will continue to be tracking and recording Prevention and Early Intervention data as they would have at the peer support centers. The motel will be considered as an additional site for peer support activities (in addition to the five existing centers).

Project RoomKey, the assignment of peer support staff, and the staff office/motel room will continue as long as the Shelter-in-Place order is in effect.

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