

Public comment from D. Thirakul

From: Danny Thirakul <dthirakul@mhac.org>

Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2025 1:03 PM

To: Rayshell Chambers <rayshell.chambers@paintedbrain.org>; BHSOAC Public Comment <publiccomment@bhsoac.ca.gov>

Cc: Karen Vicari <kvicari@mhac.org>

Subject: Public Comment on Innovation Partnership Fund (IPF) Request for Proposals (RFP) Outline

Greeting Chair Chambers,

My name is Danny Thirakul, Public Policy Coordinator with Mental Health America of California. Attached is our public comment on the Innovation Partnership Fund Request for Proposal Outline.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require any clarification.

In Community,
Danny Thirakul, CMPSS
He/Him/His
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"MHAC will be closed for Winter Break from December 24, 2025 through January 4, 2026. We will resume normal business hours on January 5, 2026. Thank you for your understanding, and warm wishes for a restorative season."

December 16th, 2025

Rayshell Chambers, Chair
Client, Family, & Community Inclusion, Lived Experience, & Diversity Advisory Committee
Commission for Behavioral Health
1812 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

RE: Innovation Partnership Fund (IPF) Request for Proposal (RFP) Outline

Dear Chair Chambers,

Mental Health America of California (MHAC) is pleased to provide the following feedback on the proposed IPF RFP Outline:

Small Grant Carve Out

MHAC supports the inclusion of a small grant tier that requires the grantee to be a CBO, nonprofit entity, or tribal organization. Given that the Commission will receive \$20 million annually for the IPF, we recommend a minimum of 40% (\$8 million) be set aside for small grants. In addition, we recommend a minimum of 30% (\$6 million) dedicated to large grants where a CBO, nonprofit entity, or tribal organization is the lead or co-lead. This minimum requirement would ensure efficacy and optimization of funds while prioritizing local needs.

Assessing Sustainability

The Commission should consider evaluating whether applicants intend to utilize Medi-Cal billable services, specifically Peer Support, or participate in the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative Fee Schedule. This would demonstrate the ability to continue services beyond the Innovation grant. The Commission may also want to evaluate whether applicants will partner with local CBOs. Multiple local partnerships signal a vested interest within the community and the infrastructure capabilities to continue and support ongoing services.

Conflict of Interest

To avoid any public appearances of impropriety, grant awards to sitting commissioners, or to entities that any Commissioner is affiliated with, should be avoided. In the event a grant is

awarded to an organization or entity that a Commissioner has an affiliation with, those grant awards should be accompanied by a document outlining the steps taken to ensure a fair grant process that avoids any conflict of interest.

MHAC appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the IPF Outline. If you have any questions, or if MHAC can provide any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at kvicari@mhac.org or our Public Policy Coordinator, Danny Thirakul, at dthirakul@mhac.org.

In Community,



Karen Vicari
Director of Public Policy
Mental Health America of California