



## SAN FRANCISCO MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

**Mayor  
Edwin Lee**

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Dear Program Director,

The Mental Health Board of San Francisco is charged with reviewing programs that are a part of the Community Mental Health System. We review from five to ten programs a year. Your program has been chosen for this special type of review.

Here are the steps involved:

1. Helynna Brooke, Executive Director of the Mental Health Board (MHB), or Loy Proffitt, Administrator, will call you to schedule the review.
2. Once the date is set, the MHB will send you:
  - a. Letters to distribute to your clients or parents of clients for programs serving children, inviting them to participate in the review if they so chose.
  - b. Notices to post at your center to inform clients or parents of clients for programs serving children, of the opportunity to participate in the review.
3. On the day of the review:
  - a. A member of the MHB will come to your program and will meet with you to get some background information about your program before interviewing clients. For larger programs where it's likely that a larger number of clients will volunteer to be interviewed, two Board members may come as a team.
  - b. Client interviews will begin. Please have a private room or space set aside. The interviews are totally confidential. Each interview will take anywhere from a few minutes to half an hour, depending on how much the client has to say. The interview can be an empowering experience for the client. It's a chance for them to have direct, personal input into the process of improving our mental health system.
  - c. If there is time, the reviewer from the MHB may want to interview a staff member or two about how the program works.

Key things to remember:

1. The client interviews are voluntary. We appreciate it if you do everything you can to make sure clients know about the interviews and what they are for, but no client should be told that they have to participate.
2. All information gathered in the client interview is confidential. The reviewer from the MHB will not be able to tell you what was said in the interviews.
3. The MHB reviewer is only doing an interview with the clients, and will not attempt to intervene in individual treatment plans or offer to fix any problems or complaints a client might bring up.
4. The MHB reviewer will not look at client charts, billing records, financial documents, or any of the other things covered by the reviewer from CBHS. Our focus is on the clients, the services they receive, and how they feel about it.
5. The reviewer from the MHB will write a summary based on the findings of the interviews. The summary will be presented to the Director of Community Behavioral Health Services with a copies to you and the program's CBHS monitor.

In the event you disagree with any of the findings or recommendations of the MHB, you'll of course have an opportunity to respond to CBHS and we urge you to do so.

We like to emphasize that this is a friendly review rather than an investigation. Not only is this process of value to CBHS and DPH in their evaluation of programs, but it helps make the Mental Health Board stronger and more articulate advocates for mental health funding when we meet with Supervisors and mayoral staff at City Hall during the course of the year. Also, the reviews help us understand what's happening on the front lines of the mental health system, which then adds immediacy and depth to the recommendations we make in our Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors.

If you have questions about this review process, we'll be glad to answer them. Please feel free to call 255-3474 at any time.

Sincerely,



Kara Ka Wa Chien  
Chair