

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCE: Eliminating cultural, ethnic & racial disparities**

Addressing disparities across the entire mental health system is integral to providing effective, accessible and equitable programs and services. **Local mental/behavioral health boards & commissions** should:

**RECRUIT** to achieve diverse membership:

Seek out and recommend qualified/diverse individuals for appointment by Board of Supervisors. (per WIC 5604(2)(A)) See "[Best Practices 2020: Recruitment](#)" for guidance.

**LISTEN:** for issues, gaps and successes.

- Invite organizations and individuals to your meetings that can speak to the needs of diverse communities.
- Listen to the public, treating all with dignity and respect.
- Review CALBHB/C "[Unconscious Bias](#)" Training.

**REVIEW:** Penetration rate, data, programs and planning procedures, including review of:

- Staff reports. County data is also available at: [www.calbhbc.org/performance](http://www.calbhbc.org/performance)
- Plans, services and facilities to ensure they meet diverse community needs.
- Planning Process: Review and approve the procedures used to ensure citizen and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process ([5604.2\(4\)](#)), including Cultural Competency Plans and [MHSA Community Program Planning](#)
- Specific racial, ethnic, cultural and LGBTQ issue and program info at: [www.calbhbc.org/cultural-issues](http://www.calbhbc.org/cultural-issues)

**ADVISE** the BH Director and local leadership [usually Board of Supervisors]. Recommend goals and services that meet the diverse mental/behavioral health needs of your community!

**COMMENT** on performance outcome data specific to culture/race/ethnicity and age to the CA Behavioral Health Planning Council.

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### **Local & State Agency Requirements:**

#### [3-Year Cultural Competency Plan /Annual Update Requirements](#)

[CA Law](#) requires cultural competence in all mental health services and programs at all levels. Local systems of care should:

**Acknowledge** and **incorporate** the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards dynamics resulting from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs.

**Recognize** that culture implies an integrated pattern of human behavior, including language, thoughts, beliefs, communications, actions, customs, values, and other institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.

**Promote** congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies enabling the system, agencies, and mental health professionals to function effectively in cross-cultural institutions and communities.