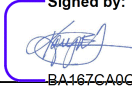
 <p>Behavioral Health Department Alameda County Health</p>	<p>Signed by: </p> <p>By: <u>BA187CA0C0D444A</u> Karyn Tribble, PsyD, LCSW Behavioral Health Director</p>
<p>POLICY TITLE</p> <p>Mental Health Program Approval (MHPA) of Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs)</p>	<p>Policy No: 403-11-2</p> <p>Date of Original Approval: 6/23/2026</p> <p>Date(s) of Revision(s):</p>

PURPOSE

This policy establishes the requirements and procedures for Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP) to obtain a mental health program approval (MHPA) and to ensure these programs are in compliance with Federal, State, and county regulations.

AUTHORITY

- [MHSUDS Information Notice \(IN\) No. 17-016](#): Statewide Criteria For Mental Health Program Approval of Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)
- [Behavioral Health Information Notice \(BHIN\) NO. 20-005](#): Statewide Criteria For Mental Health Program Approval of Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (supersedes MHSUDS IN 17-016)
- [DHCS BHIN No. 22-069](#): Guidance to Counties and Providers on STRTP Placement and Institution for Mental Disease Transitions

SCOPE

All Alameda County Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD) County-Operated programs, as well as entities and individuals that provide specialty mental health services (SMHS) under a contract, subcontract or memorandum of understanding (MOU) serving children and youth, shall be responsible for implementing and adhering to this policy.

POLICY

This policy supersedes [MHSUDS 17-016](#) and establishes regulatory requirements and guidance to counties and providers on STRTPs and establishes descriptions of timelines, service criteria, and service components to meet certification requirements as a STRTP.

- I. Timeframe to Obtain MHPA

STRTPs have 12 months from the date of licensure to obtain a MHPA that includes a Medi-Cal mental health certification
[WIC Sec. 4096.5](#) and [WIC Sec. 11462.01](#)
- II. Implementation and Administration of STRTP Process

DHCS and ACBHD will implement and administer these processes through DHCS

INs.

III. Level of Care and Service Maintenance

STRTPs will maintain the level of care and services necessary to meet the needs of the children and youth in their care.

IV. MHPA and Medi-Cal Certification Requirement

STRTPs will maintain and have in good standing the MHPA and Medi-Cal certification for Medi-Cal SMHS.

V. Provision of SMHS

A STRTP cannot directly provide SMHS without a current MHPA.

VI. MHPA Process and Access to Services

A STRTP that has not yet completed the program approval process must still provide access to appropriate mental health services until their program approval is completed.

VII. Required SMHS

At a minimum, STRTPs must be Medi-Cal certified to provide the following SMHS as medically necessary:

- A. Mental Health Services
- B. Crisis Intervention
- C. Medication Support
- D. Targeted Case Management
- E. Access to other mental health services based on individual need

VIII. STRTP Placement Criteria

STRTP placement is pursuant to [WIC Sec. 4096](#) and **one** of the following criteria:

- A. The child/youth meets the medical necessity criteria for Medi-Cal SMHS [Title 9, CCR Sec 1830.205](#)
- B. The child/youth is seriously emotionally disturbed, as defined in [WIC Section 5600.3\(a\)](#); or
- C. This level of service is necessary to meet the behavioral or therapeutic needs of the child/youth.

IX. STRTP Specialized Programs

STRTPs may have a specialized program to serve the following:

- A. A commercially or sexually exploited child/youth;
- B. A private voluntary placement where the child/youth exhibits persistent behavioral concerns;
- C. A juvenile sex offender; or
- D. A child who is affiliated with, or impacted by, a gang [WIC Sec. 11462.01](#)

X. STRTP Protocol

Major elements of the STRTP protocol include, but are not limited to:

- A. Application content, process, and timelines
- B. Written program statement and required contents (Note: Contents may be included in the same program statement that is submitted to California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for licensing so that it is all in one document.)
- C. Notifications to the department, e.g., when there is a change to the mental health program statement
- D. Record retention
- E. Documentation requirements, including timelines
- F. Psychotropic medication control, e.g., monitoring, documentation, timelines
- G. Clinical review and continued stay determinations
- H. Staff characteristics, qualifications and duties
- I. In-service education requirements for staff
- J. Personnel records

XI. STRTP Concluding Process

After the application is complete and DHCS or delegate has determined that the submitted application and supporting documentation demonstrates that the applicant meets the requirements of these regulations and related statutes, DHCS or delegate shall conduct an onsite review to verify that the applicant meets the requirements of these regulations and related statutes. If DHCS or delegate determines that the submitted information demonstrates that the applicant does not meet the requirements of these regulations and related statutes, DHCS or delegate may deny the application for MHPA prior to conducting an onsite review.

PROCEDURE

I. STRTP Associated Tasks for Approval:

- A. DHCS may, upon the request of a county, delegate to that county mental health plan (MHP) MHPA of STRTPs that operate within its borders.
- B. ACBHD must perform all aspects of the MHPA task to ensure that applicants and STRTPs follow the provisions of these regulations and related statutes.

- C. ACBHD shall satisfy inquiries of applicants regarding whether the MHPA task has been delegated or remains with DHCS.
- D. ACBHD is responsible for providing written notice to DHCS and to CDSS upon the MHPA, renewal, non-renewal, or revocation of any approval pursuant to these regulations.
- E. DHCS will provide written notice to ACBHD if DHCS no longer delegates the MHPA task.
- F. Notices shall include a 30-day timeframe for the cessation of the MHPA task responsibilities.
- G. If ACBHD no longer desires to have the MHPA task delegated, ACBHD shall provide written notice to DHCS 30 calendar days prior to the cessation of the MHPA task responsibilities.

NON-COMPLIANCE

- I. Contractors not in compliance with contract provisions, or with State or Federal law and/or regulations, shall be immediately responsible for remedy.
- II. ACBHD may, at its discretion, issue a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) or Contract Compliance Plan (CCP), as appropriate.
- III. The cost to implement the CAP or CCP shall be borne by the Contractor.
- IV. Staff shall report incidents of non-compliance to their department manager, who shall submit those incidents of non-compliance to ACBHD Quality Management (QM).
- V. Incidents of non-compliance shall be submitted within 15 days of reasonable awareness of the non-compliance.
- VI. Failure to address identified issues may result in further action by ACBHD up to and including program termination, as specified in [ACBHD Policy # 1302-1-1](#), Contract Compliance and Sanctions for ACBHD-Contracted Providers.
- VII. Staff shall not face retribution for submitting incidents of non-compliance.
- VIII. Any communication that contains protected health information (PHI) or otherwise confidential information (e.g., as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 2, etc.) shall be sent through secure methods such as email with secure encryption.

CONTACT

ACBHD Office	Current As Of	Email
Child and Young Adult System of Care (CYASOC)	3/4/26	Info.CYASOC@acgov.org
Contracts Unit (CU)	3/4/26	Contracts@acgov.org
Billing and Benefits Support Unit (BBSU) / Provider Relations Claims Processing	3/4/26	Provider.relations@acgov.org
Utilization Management (UM)	3/4/26	Utilizationmanagement@acgov.org
Quality Assurance (QA)	3/4/26	QAOFFICE@acgov.org
Quality Improvement (QI)	3/4/26	QITEAM@acgov.org

DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be distributed to the following:

- ACBHD Staff
- ACBHD County and Contract Providers
- Public

ISSUANCE AND REVISION HISTORY

Original Authors: Janyce Prothro, Clinical Review Specialist Supervisor, CYASOC
Original Date of Approval: 6/23/2026 by Karyn L. Tribble, PsyD, LCSW, Behavioral Health Director

Revision Author	Reason for Revision	Date of Approval by (Name)

DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Delegate	A delegate is a county mental health plan (MHP) to which the DHCS has delegated the approval task.

APPENDICES

None