



**Behavioral Health
Department**
Alameda County Health



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Alameda County Prepares for Launch of CARE Court on Dec. 2

Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court will assist individuals with mental health disorders;

County officials to host public Zoom meetings to provide information on services

Alameda County, CA— Alameda County Superior Court and Alameda County Health’s Behavioral Health Department (ACBHD) are preparing for the Dec. 2 local launch of the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act Court, a new civil court process that provides support services to people with certain mental health diagnoses and substance use disorders.

“We encourage families in Alameda County to petition the CARE Act Court if a loved one is struggling with severe mental health challenges,” said Alameda County Superior Court Judge Sandra Bean, who will preside over the CARE Act Court. “This court is designed to provide compassionate, individualized care plans that prioritize treatment, support, and housing, offering a path to recover and stability for those in need.”

A state initiative, CARE Act Court is aimed at helping the thousands of Californians with untreated serious mental health and substance use disorders.

“Our system is incredibly grateful for the extensive collaboration, commitment, and engagement of our esteemed consultant leads, community members, our agency partners, providers, and stakeholders across Alameda County for working alongside us to realize all of the planning efforts dedicated to the implementation of CARE Court,” said ACBHD Director Dr. Karyn Tribble. “We see it as an important component to our previously established programs dedicated to supporting individuals appropriately who are most in need through a collaboration with the courts. The behavioral health needs are great, and we are committed to continuing to evaluate our progress and impact to the community at large.”



Family members, health care providers, County mental health workers, first responders and social services providers can all petition for a person to be considered for the CARE Act Court. A person may also petition for themselves for CARE Act Court. The court does not create a criminal record—it's a civil proceeding to provide resources to those in need.

An Alameda County Superior Court Judge will decide if a person qualifies for the CARE Act Court. If the person qualifies, the judge will order ACBHD to work with the individual to create a CARE Agreement, which can include housing, treatment, and support services.

If an agreement cannot be made, the Court may order a CARE Plan. Once a plan/agreement is created, the Court will hold status hearings to review the participant's progress. The Alameda County Public Defender will represent all qualifying CARE Court participants. CARE Court petitioners do not need an attorney to file a petition.

To help the public learn more information about CARE Court prior to its Dec. 2 launch, ACBHD and the Alameda County Superior Court will host a series of public Zoom meetings this month. Details on those meetings are [here](#).

The CARE Act Court is available for individuals who are at least 18 years old and who are diagnosed with certain schizophrenia spectrum or other psychotic disorders that interfere with their ability to participate safely in daily life, who are not currently stabilized in an on-going voluntary treatment program. The full eligibility criteria can be found [here](#).

To file a CARE Act Court petition, individuals will be able to visit alameda.courts.ca.gov/CARE and download a CARE-100 form. There will be additional information about filling out the form at alameda.courts.ca.gov/CARE. Individuals can also contact the Court's Self-Help Center for eligibility information and to make appointments. Visit www.alameda.courts.ca.gov/self-help for more information.

CARE Act Court petitions can be filed electronically beginning on Thanksgiving (11/28/24) or in person beginning on December 2, 2024. Petitions can be filed in-person at the Rene C. Davidson Courthouse, Berkeley Courthouse and Hayward Hall of Justice. Hearings will begin December 12.

It's important to note that CARE Act Court is not a conservatorship. CARE Act Court's goal is for every participating person to graduate and live a full and autonomous life. CARE Act Court enables the participant to work with mental health specialists, housing specialists, their petitioners, and the judicial officer to develop a CARE Act Plan to improve their long-term health, so that they can live successfully and independently. CARE Act Court empowers individuals to make self-directed decisions about their treatment and recovery.



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ALAMEDA COUNTY
CARE ACT COURT

The CARE Act Court is a part of a continuum of services supported by the Alameda County that supports individuals who are treatment reluctant or resistant and assists in providing supports in the least restrictive environment. CARE Act Court promotes alternatives to incarceration and seeks to provide whole person care for those who are in the program. For those who are justice involved, CARE Act court participation will assist with the reentry transition, reduce recidivism, and promote justice.

Learn more about Alameda County Health at [ACBHCS.org](https://www.acbhcs.org).