

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

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Director

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**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**

<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

Reply To: (213) 738-4601  
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December 06, 2011

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**ADOPTED**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

#25 DECEMBER 6, 2011

*Sachi A. Hamai*  
SACHI A. HAMAI  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**APPROVE EXPENDITURES FOR THE SIXTH ANNUAL  
CONNECTIONS FOR LIFE THROUGH  
EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION CONFERENCE  
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)  
(3 VOTES)**

**SUBJECT**

Request approval to host and conduct the Sixth Annual Connections for Life Through Employment and Education Conference at the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities.

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Authorize the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to expend funds to conduct the Sixth Annual Connections for Life Through Employment and Education Conference to be held on April 18, 2012, at an estimated total cost of \$15,000, fully funded by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) revenue.
2. Authorize DMH to execute an agreement with the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities (Endowment) for the conference's catering services at an estimated total cost of \$6,100.
3. Authorize DMH to execute an agreement with the California Certified Interpreters for the conference's interpretation services at an estimated total cost of \$2,000.
4. Authorize the Director of Mental Health, or his designee, to sign agreements for catering and interpreting services for three subsequent annual Connections for Life Through Employment and Education Conferences through Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-15 not to exceed a total maximum per year

amount of \$20,000, subject to review and approval by County Counsel and notice to your Board and the Chief Executive Office (CEO).

### **PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Approval of these actions will allow DMH to host and conduct the Sixth Annual Connections for Life Through Employment and Education Conference to be held on April 18, 2012, at the Endowment. Also, it will allow the Department to host the conference annually for three subsequent fiscal years through FY 2014-15. In support of promoting the wellness and recovery of mental health clients in Los Angeles County, the conference will offer consumers the information and community resources that support their journey to independence and self-determination. This conference also includes an awards ceremony to recognize the successes consumers have achieved in attaining their employment and/or education goals. Furthermore, the monolingual consumers in attendance require Spanish-speaking interpreters.

The conference is required at this time as it supports DMH in accomplishing elements of its State-approved MHSA plans. This conference provides an important opportunity to support the tenet of recovery by offering a learning opportunity to consumers who are reticent to work or attend school because of their mental illness.

### **Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals**

The recommended actions support the County's Strategic Plan Goal 4, Health and Mental Health.

### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING**

The estimated total cost of the conference is \$15,000, fully funded by MHSA revenue and is included in DMH's FY 2011-12 Final Adopted Budget. The amount includes approximately \$6,100 for breakfast and lunch catering services, \$2,000 for two Spanish interpreters, \$4,000 for four trainers, \$2,900 for presenters' honorariums, consumer totes, and supplies including paper, poster board, labels, folders, pens, name badges and miscellaneous items.

Funding for future years, including an estimated cost increase, will be requested through DMH's annual budget process.

There is no net County cost associated with these actions.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Since 2007, DMH and the Mental Health Commission have sponsored an annual Connections for Life Through Employment and Education Conference. This conference unites consumers who are employed, volunteering and/or attending school, consumers whose recovery goals include employment and/or education and professionals who work in the employment and education field. This conference supports the tenet of recovery contained in the MHSA.

Connections for Life Through Employment and Education is a truly transformative conference that offers a learning opportunity for consumers who are reticent to work or attend school because of

their mental illness. Many of the consumers who attend the conference were gainfully employed or enrolled in school prior to being diagnosed with a serious mental illness. These consumers will learn about the successes other consumers have achieved in attaining their employment and/or education goals. Consumers will also gain a heightened awareness of their employment and/or educational capabilities.

Connections for Life Through Employment and Education also provides valuable community resources to consumers that are needed to support their interest in employment and education. The community resource providers available to consumers at this conference include: Los Angeles Unified School District Adult Education Division, California Department of Rehabilitation, WorkSource Centers, Social Security Administration, Work Incentives Planning Assistance, California Employment Development Department, community colleges, literacy programs, local employers, County Client Coalition and National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

At this conference, consumers will join in a dialogue of hope, recovery and wellness. This unique opportunity will reinforce the power of hope and positive thinking and provide an environment that envisions solutions to the many challenges of having a mental illness.

This is an all day conference with about 250 DMH consumers attending. Catering services are needed because many of the consumers attending the conference do not have the financial resources to pay for breakfast and lunch and/or lack the transportation resources to access a restaurant and have breakfast and lunch within the allocated break times. Serving breakfast and lunch at the conference also provides consumers with the opportunity to network and share personal resources.

### **CONTRACTING PROCESS**

This conference is being held at the Endowment which was selected based on availability, no cost for the space, size of accommodations and convenience of both automobile access and public transportation for presenters, employees and consumers. The Endowment prohibits the use of outside catering services and contracts with Sodexo for their catering services.

DMH solicited bid proposals to provide Spanish translation at the conference from five local Spanish interpreters on DMH's vendor list, eliciting one vendor response. California Certified Interpreters submitted the only bid proposal.

### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

This conference will benefit the mental health system by promoting hope, wellness and recovery. Consumers will be provided with information and community resources that support their entering the workforce and/or enrolling in vocational or school programs. Ultimately, this conference increases the likelihood of consumers being gainfully employed and no longer reliant on publicly funded services. Moreover, approval of this action will not impact any other services.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

12/6/2011

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mg Southard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

MARVIN J. SOUTHARD, D.S.W.

Director of Mental Health

MJS:MF:LR

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Chairperson, Mental Health Commission  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors