



**Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission**  
**Retreat Report**  
**August 15, 2024**  
**South Coast Botanic Gardens**

**Submitted: September 11, 2024**  
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## Introduction

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The Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission (the Commission) partnered with Gina Airey Consulting, Inc. (GAC) to design and facilitate its 2024 annual retreat. To prepare for the retreat, GAC consultants conducted exploratory conversations with the Commission's Chair and Executive Assistant and interviewed the 1st Vice Chair and Members-at-Large. These discussions shaped the retreat's purpose, goals, and design. The half-day retreat took place on August 15, 2024, at the South Coast Botanic Gardens in Los Angeles County.

Of the 14 filled Commission seats, 10 Commissioners attended and participated in the retreat. Nine Commissioners participated as full retreat participants; one Commissioner arrived later and observed the retreat, contributing during the Public Comment section. This section took place at the retreat's closing, following the presentation of the goals produced by the nine Commissioners. All 10 Commissioners contributed to the information included in this report.

The purpose of this report is to document the strategic objectives determined by the Commissioners during the retreat and support the implementation of the Commission's goals.

## Retreat Purpose and Desired Outputs

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The purpose of the retreat was to provide the Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission with a structured opportunity to develop, in alignment with the Commission's mission, strategic and actionable goals for the period from September 2024 through June 2025.

### Desired Outputs

#### 1. Affirmation of our Commission's Mandate

Commissioners will be affirmed in their mandate, reinforcing their commitment and confidence in fulfilling the Commission's mission.

#### 2. Commitment to Strengths and Resources

Commissioners will commit to identifying and leveraging their strengths and resources to further the Commission's mission.

#### 3. Strategic Goals and Objectives

The Commission will leave with actionable and realistically achievable strategic goals and specific objectives within key priority areas.

#### 4. Implementation and Monitoring Plan

A clear plan for implementing the strategic goals and monitoring progress will be established.

#### 5. Enhanced Collaboration, Engagement, and Cohesion

Strengthened teamwork, communication, and consensus among Commissioners to support strategic actions and drive the mission forward.

## Retreat Agenda

The retreat agenda was designed to guide the Commission through a series of collaborative discussions and activities aimed at developing strategic goals. The agenda included sessions on affirming the Commission's mandate, identifying strategic priorities, and creating actionable objectives. Additionally, time was dedicated for Commissioners to identify what additional resources and support they needed in order to effectively implement their goals and ensure accountability.

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Overview of Retreat Agenda
3. Affirm the Commission's Mission
4. Setting Commission Priorities
  - a. Identifying Strategic Priority Areas
  - b. Developing Strategic Objectives & Actionable Goals
5. Designing an Accountability Mechanism
6. Next Steps and Retreat Closing

## The Commission's Strategic Objectives & Proposed Goals for September 2024 through June 2025

During the retreat, the Commission developed strategic objectives and actionable goals for the period of September 2024 through June 2025, reaching consensus on four key objectives:

- **Objective 1: Strengthen the Commission for Greater Impact**
- **Objective 2: Be the Bridge between Stakeholders and County Decision-Makers**
- **Objective 3: Deepen Issue-Specific Knowledge**
- **Objective 4: Use Data to Support Accountability within the Los Angeles County Mental Health Department**

Commissioners collaboratively developed goals for each of the four strategic objectives. An advisory vote followed where nine Commissioners were given a total of eight votes, with the option to cast up to two votes per objective. Commissioners could distribute these votes by supporting two different goals, placing both votes on one goal, or abstaining. This voting process helped prioritize the goals for further consideration by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will review all goals, informed by the advisory vote, to determine which goals the Commission will adopt and implement from September 2024 through June 2025.

The tables on the following page include all goals produced by the Commission, not just the goals that received the top votes.

**Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission**  
**Proposed Goals from Retreat**  
**Implementation Period: September 2024 through June 2025**

<b>Objective 1: Strengthen the Commission for Greater Impact</b>		<b>No. of Votes</b>
<b>Goal 1:</b>	The Commission is composed of 15 active members who reflect the diversity of Los Angeles County and participate in a mandatory onboarding. (Note: Membership may change 2025).	13
<b>Goal 2:</b>	Subcommittees are created and responsible for the implementation of the Commission’s goals.	5

<b>Objective 2: Be the Bridge between Stakeholders and County Decision-Makers</b>		<b>No. of Votes</b>
<b>Goal 1:</b>	Organize or host separate Town Hall meetings outside of LA County Mental Health Commission meetings around issues intersecting with mental health. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Halls may be issue-specific.</li> <li>Town Halls may be organized as listening and learning sessions or as action-oriented sessions, as appropriate.</li> <li>The Commission should engage in targeted outreach when appropriate.</li> <li>Commissioners may give testimony and/or invite others to give testimony.</li> <li>Commissioners may compile and share findings with and/or from Town Halls.</li> </ul>	13
<b>Goal 2:</b>	Conduct and/or support an information campaign with the LA County Mental Health Department. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information campaign may include making a public directory of services, entities by SPA, and entities by Supervisorial District.</li> </ul>	7
<b>Goal 3:</b>	Organize trainings with other departments around contracting, billable codes, advertising, and/or outreach.	0
<b>Goal 4:</b>	Design an inclusive approach to stakeholder engagement that includes follow-up and creating a sense of belonging for the public to engage in the spaces the Commission creates (e.g., Commission meetings, Town Halls)	0
<b>Goal 5:</b>	Plan LA County Mental Health Commission meetings and events with consideration for other stakeholder groups, especially those with shared membership, audiences, or agendas with the Commission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Commission may continue utilizing the master calendar to minimize scheduling conflicts and increase awareness of stakeholder events.</li> </ul>	0

<b>Objective 3: Deepen Issue-Specific Knowledge</b>		<b>No. of Votes</b>
<b>Goal 1:</b>	Continue to collect and review ongoing progress and monitoring reports regarding, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CARE (Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment)</li> </ul>	11

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SB 43</li> <li>• Prop 1</li> <li>• Progress in response to LA County’s Homelessness Emergency Response and relevant court decisions impacting unhoused individuals</li> <li>• Underserved groups and geographic areas</li> </ul>	
<b>Goal 2:</b>	Rewrite LA County Mental Health Commission Bylaws in accordance with Prop 1	4

<b>Objective 4: Use Data to Support Accountability within the Los Angeles County Mental Health Department</b>		<b>No. of Votes</b>
<b>Goal 1:</b>	<p>Collect and review quarterly reports on, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program impact</li> <li>• Finance (unspent and allocated)</li> <li>• Crisis</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Outpatient</li> <li>• Inpatient</li> <li>• Youth / Transitional Age Youth</li> </ul> <p>Reports may include metrics around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Critical Issue Areas</li> <li>• Staffing</li> </ul> <p>LA County Mental Health Commission may create a master calendar of when these reports are due or made available to the LA County Mental Health Department and/or to the Commission.</p>	7
<b>Goal 2:</b>	Advance participation in and buy-in of LA County Mental Health Commission in the development of the Community Planning Process for the Behavioral Health Services Act.	6
<b>Goal 3:</b>	Conduct a review of legal contracts on a semi-annual basis.	4
<b>Goal 4:</b>	Collect from the LA County Mental Health Department a list of pending and active litigation on a quarterly basis.	0
<b>Goal 5:</b>	Identify accountability metrics for the Mental Health Services Act and the developing Behavioral Health Services Act to track progress made by the LA County Mental Health Department in addressing unmet needs within LA County.	0

## Post-Retreat Action Items for the Executive Committee and Executive Assistant

During the retreat, Commissioners outlined key action items and leadership support needed from the Executive Committee and Executive Assistant to ensure effective goal implementation and accountability. These support areas include:

- **Formalize the Commission’s Commitments to Strategic Objectives and Goals**  
The Commission requests that the Executive Committee formalize the consensus reached during the retreat around the Commission’s objectives. This includes selecting which goals to commit to implementing between September 2024 through June 2025, referencing how the Commissioners cast their advisory votes during the retreat. By following the necessary procedures to formalize these commitments, the Executive Committee can ensure its strategic goals are officially adopted and prepared for implementation.
- **Agendize Goal Implementation and Accountability**  
Commissioners emphasized the need for the Executive Committee and Executive Assistant to regularly agendize discussions around goal implementation. This creates opportunities for Commissioners to share challenges and leverage the full Commission’s collective knowledge and relationships to overcome challenges in goal implementation. Progress may be tracked and reported using the Scorecard to ensure transparency.
- **Adopt an Accountability Mechanism**  
Commissioners requested an accountability mechanism to support the Commission in successfully implementing its goals. GAC proposed a Scorecard, a tool designed to monitor both accountability and adaptability throughout the implementation process. The Scorecard allows the Commission to assess progress toward its objectives and remain flexible by adjusting to evolving needs or opportunities. It provides a structured way to ensure the Commission remains on track with its goals and addresses concerns around transparency and goal progression.  
  
A Scorecard template has been provided by GAC, along with this report, for the Commission's use. It is offered with the intention that the Commissioners regularly engage with the Scorecard, documenting their progress in implementing goals, and adjusting strategies as needed based on changing circumstances.
- **Create Ad Hoc Committees**  
Commissioners requested support for the formation of ad hoc committees, as needed. Ad hoc committees serve to address specific activities related to the strategic goals. The Executive Committee may assist by facilitating the creation of these committees and providing clear guidelines for their function and purpose.
- **Provide Guidance and Advising**  
Commissioners also expressed the need for ongoing guidance from the Executive Committee, including offering feedback on approaches and solutions for overcoming barriers. The Executive Committee's role in advising will be critical in maintaining momentum, aligning objectives with the Commission’s overall mission, and ensuring that goals remain ambitious yet realistic.
- **Clarify Roles and Responsibilities of Commission & Department Staff**  
The Commissioners sought greater clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Assistant and LA County Department of Mental Health staff, especially those who serve as liaisons between the Commission and the Department. Commissioners raised particular interest in knowing how to access and navigate external resources available to the Director of Mental Health, the Board of Supervisors, and stakeholder groups, as well as knowing what formal and informal channels are available to them for navigating these relationships. They also requested that the Executive Committee serve as a resource when these governmental bodies are unresponsive.

- **Enhance Coordination through a Master Calendar**  
Commissioners suggested the need for a continuously updated master calendar that includes important dates and events from the LA County Department of Mental Health, the Board of Supervisors, the Commission, and relevant stakeholder groups. Commissioners believed these resources could help them deepen their understanding of key developments across the county, both within their districts and on a county-wide level. Access to this calendar could also facilitate better coordination and allow Commissioners to stay informed about events relevant to the goals of the Commission and to the Commissioner's districts.
- **Streamline Access to Key Data and Reports**  
In addition, Commissioners requested that the Executive Committee ensure that data and reports from the LA County Department of Mental Health are made readily available to the Commission on an ongoing basis. They emphasized the importance of understanding what data the Department has, how it can be accessed, and how it can aid in the implementation of their goals. Commissioners expressed that timely access to relevant information supports informed decision-making and effective tracking of strategic initiatives.

## Post-Retreat Action Items for Commissioners

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During the retreat, Commissioners elevated key action items crucial to the effective implementation of the Commission's goals and requested that they all commit to the following actions.

- **Attend Monthly Commission Meetings**  
Commissioners acknowledged the importance of attending monthly meetings to maintain momentum, stay informed, and contribute to discussions on goal implementation.
- **Volunteer for Leading Goal Implementation**  
Commissioners recognized that having clear leadership for each goal is essential to making progress. Having leads or co-leads over the implementation of a goal ensures that goals are actively managed, and progress is regularly shared with the Commission.
- **Serve on Ad Hoc Committees**  
Commissioners agreed that forming and participating in ad hoc committees can be an effective way to focus efforts on specific goals. These committees provide flexibility and targeted attention where needed.
- **Be Accessible for Goal Implementation and Collaboration**  
Commissioners highlighted the importance of being available to collaborate and contribute to goal implementation. This accessibility facilitates smoother coordination, quicker responses to challenges, and better use of collective knowledge, expertise, and relationships.
- **Engage in Mutual Accountability**  
Commissioners agreed that mutual accountability is essential to ensure that goals are implemented, with all members contributing toward the same strategic direction. This also helps ensure that each Commissioner fulfills their duties and responsibilities.
- **Deepen Relationships with External Stakeholders**  
Commissioners emphasized the importance of strengthening and maintaining relationships with the LA County Director of Mental Health, the Board of Supervisors, and other key stakeholders. Proactive engagement with these stakeholders can help Commissioners leverage relationships, gain insights, and support the implementation of the Commission's goals.

## Conclusion

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Gina Airey Consulting, Inc. thanks the Commission for entrusting GAC to design and facilitate this retreat. Throughout the retreat, the Commission established clear goals and objectives for implementation from September 2024 through June 2025, focusing on the support and accountability mechanisms needed to ensure progress and collaboration. With valuable input from the Commissioners, a strong foundation has been laid for the Commission to successfully and effectively implement its goals.