



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MENTAL HEALTH & PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENTS TO IMPLEMENT NEW DEFINITION TO “GRAVE DISABILITY” UNDER CONSERVATORSHIP LAW IN 2026

LOS ANGELES, CA — On January 1, 2026, the Los Angeles County Departments of Mental Health (LACDMH) and Public Health will implement Senate Bill 43, the law that expands the definition of “gravely disabled” under California’s Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act.

Under the expanded definition, individuals may now be considered “gravely disabled” if they have a severe substance use disorder, including both a co-occurring mental health AND severe substance use condition and are unable to provide for their basic personal needs, including food, clothing, and shelter. The revised criteria also incorporate considerations related to personal safety and necessary medical care.

“The county-wide implementation of Senate Bill 43 is a positive step for providing hope and wellbeing to some of our most vulnerable and highest-risk Los Angeles County residents,” said LACDMH Director Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D.

“Senate Bill 43 is an opportunity to support the diverse needs of our residents,” said Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed., Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. “We look forward to working with our partners at the Department of Mental Health to ensure we provide connections to lifesaving services to the vulnerable people we serve.”

LACDMH and Public Health have already partnered to increase public awareness and education for the upcoming conservatorship law changes. The departments have launched a dedicated [webpage](#) with downloadable materials, social media outreach and community presentations to inform the public of these changes. Materials are available in a variety of threshold languages, including English, Spanish, Korean, Armenian, Tagalog, and traditional and simplified Chinese.

Senate Bill 43 passed in 2023 as part of a [statewide effort](#) to modernize California's mental health and substance use disorder services. It amends the LPS Act to provide expanded care to individuals facing mental health and severe substance use challenges.

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About the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH)

As the nation's largest public mental health department, we ensure access to care and treatment for our most vulnerable residents in a region nearing 10 million people. With an annual budget exceeding \$4.4 billion and over 7,600 budgeted positions, LACDMH is dedicated to hope, recovery, and wellbeing for everyone across the County. For more information, visit dmh.lacounty.gov or follow @LACDMH on [Facebook](#), [Twitter \(X\)](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

About the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is committed to promoting health equity and ensuring optimal health and well-being for all 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health comprises nearly 4,500 employees and has an annual budget of \$1.2 billion. To learn more, visit PublicHealth.LACounty.gov, and follow Public Health on social media at twitter.com/LAPublicHealth, facebook.com/LAPublicHealth, and youtube.com/LAPublicHealth.