



# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

hope. recovery. wellbeing.

LISA H. WONG, Psy.D.  
Director

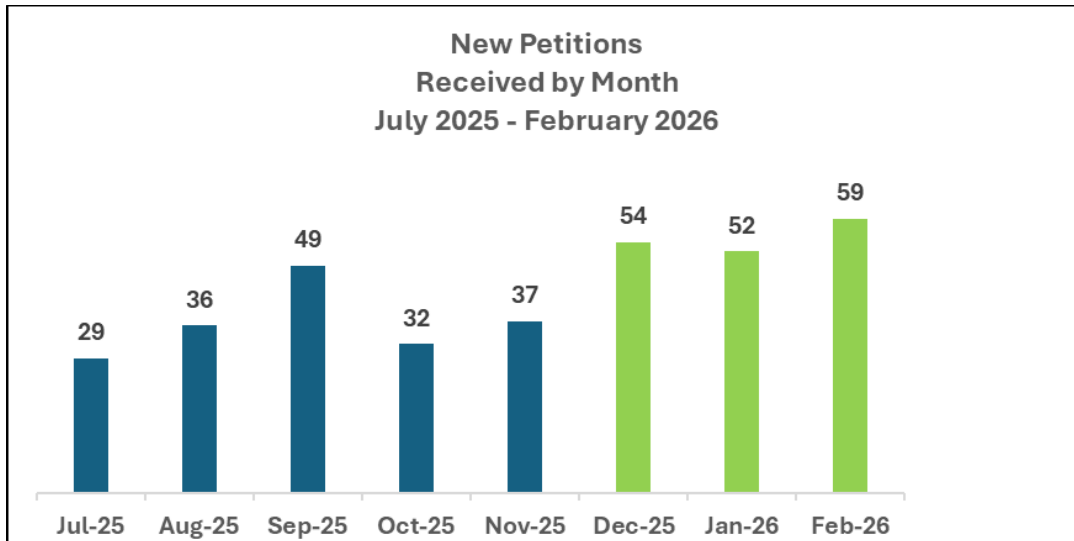
Curley L. Bonds, M.D.  
Chief Medical Officer

Rimmi Hundal, M.A.  
Chief Deputy Director

## Department of Mental Health Director's Update – March 12, 2026 Community Assistance, Recovery, Empowerment Act (CARE) Court Update

CARE was successfully implemented in Los Angeles County on December 1, 2023. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) collects and monitors the key metrics below which are used to inform processes and develop quality improvements. In recent months, the number of Petitions filed in Los Angeles County (the County) has risen significantly: 54 in December 2025, 52 in January 2026, and 59 in February 2026. These specific numbers represent strong upward movement in terms of the number of petitions currently being filed in the County. However, the number of petitions filed reflect only one aspect of the CARE Program's (Program) achievement. The Program receives petitions, referrals, and a large volume of orders from the Mental Health Competency Court (Senate Bill 317) to determine suitability. The Program's positive forward momentum is noted by, not only the 12 successful graduates, but also the 32 individuals who have completed their initial 12-month period in the program and opted to continue for an additional 12 months. Please see the data below that illustrates an increase in performance.

<b>Program Outcomes (12/1/2023 through 3/4/2026):</b>	
<b>Respondent Initiated</b> (Completed 12-month program but opted to extend in CARE Court)	29
<b>DMH Initiated</b> (Completed 12-month program but DMH recommended an extension in CARE Court)	3
<b>Graduated</b> (Completed CARE Court 12-month program)	12
Upcoming 12-Month Scheduled Graduation	3
<b>Total Program Outcomes</b>	<b>47</b>
CARE Agreements	177
CARE Plans	6
<b>Total CARE Agreements and CARE Plans</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>SELF-HELP CENTER:</b>	
Calls	137
Face to Face Consults	253
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>



**Petitions (12/1/2023 through 3/4/2026)**

Family Initiated Petitions	485
Provider Network Initiated Petitions	31
Self	9
DMH Initiated Petitions Referral Sources:	144
CDJR Referral	31
DHS to CARE Court Pilot Referrals	152
<b>Total Petitions</b>	<b>853</b>
<b>Dismissed Petitions to Date</b>	<b>371</b>
<b>Active Petitions to Date</b>	<b>482</b>

**General Referrals Not Petitioned (as of 3/4/2026)**

Disposition	Number of General Referrals
Connected to an alternative DMH service/program	220
Unable to Locate/Passed Away	41
Incarcerated	6
Out of LA County	6
Actively Outreach and Engagement (O&E)	80

The strategies that have been and are instrumental in the current upward trend include the following:

- Collaboration with first responders including fire and paramedics,
- Additional efforts include collaboration with public and private hospitals, in reach into jails and collaboration with homeless providers,
- Coordination and support to clients who are not engaged by their current Full-Service Partnership (FSP) program,
- Bi-weekly meetings and joint visits with Public Guardian staff to assess conservatees' readiness to step down into the CARE Court program,
- A strong social media and website presence to continue to elevate and promote the availability and visibility of the program,
- Continued focus upon staff recruitment and retention, and
- Information, dissemination, and presentations to various stakeholders and community members to heighten the awareness regarding the inclusion of Bipolar I Disorder as an expanded eligible diagnostic criterion.

The above will continue to strengthen the Los Angeles County CARE Courts' efforts to ensure that the CARE Act services are widely available throughout the County and that the most vulnerable individuals are offered mental health services.

Below is a story of a client with schizophrenia living in unstable housing that was referred to the CARE Court Program provided by a CARE program Senior Community Health Worker.

"When I would go get him to take him to appointments in the community, he had all of these concerns. He was afraid to go outside and communicate with other people. I said, 'Is the world going to end if you go? We can't control how people think or expect them to think the way we do.' To overcome my own challenges, I've had to accept that and stay focused on what I can control."

After building trust and engagement through consistent peer support, the client began regularly going to his therapy appointments on his own, and is now living in stable, independent housing and able to manage weekly activities.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me, or staff can contact Martin Jones, Mental Health Program Manager IV over CARE Court, at [MJones@dmh.lacounty.gov](mailto:MJones@dmh.lacounty.gov).