

Steve Sisolak
Governor



COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Lisa Durette, M.D.
Chair

The Honorable Governor Steve Sisolak

Office of the Governor

101 North Carson Street, Suite 1

Carson City, Nevada 89701

October 14, 2021

Dear Governor Sisolak,

The State's adult psychiatric agencies provided their quarterly reports on September 23, 2021 during the scheduled Commission on Behavioral Health meeting. Lake's Crossing Center, Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, Sierra Regional Center and Rural Regional Center all shared that they are suffering significant staffing shortages. The state's other adult facilities: Stein Forensic Hospital, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, Sierra Regional Center, and Desert Regional Center, all expressed similar difficulties regarding both recruiting and retaining staff.

Our state's salary cap for front line staff working with the intellectually disabled and psychiatrically ill adults is far below that of large local employers such as Amazon and Walmart. Community supported living homes have had to close due to their inability to recruit and retain staff, leaving vulnerable Nevadans without a home.

In order to support our fellow Nevadans, who have the greatest need for assistance due to their psychiatric and intellectual disability, we, the Governor's Commission on Behavioral Health, strongly urge you to raise the state salary caps for our critical front-line staff to match a living wage, such as that provided by other local employers.

Respectfully,

Commissioner Lisa Durette, M.D., Chair

Commissioner Lisa Ruiz-Lee, Vice Chair

Commissioner Jasmine Troop

Commissioner Billie Miller

Commissioner Tabitha Johnson, MFT

Commissioner Arvin Operario, RN

Commissioner Natasha Mosby

Commissioner Gregory Giron, Ph.D.

Commissioner Braden Schrag

CC:

Richard Whitley, Director, DHHS

Lisa Sherych, DPBH Administrator

Ross Armstrong, DCFS Administrator

Dena Schmidt, ADSD Administrator

Joanne Malay, Deputy Administrator, DPBH Clinical Services

DRAFT