



CARE COURT

Governor Newsom's Proposal to Get People with Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders the Support they Need

- Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court is a new proposal to get people with mental health and substance use disorders the support and care they need.
- CARE Court is aimed at helping the thousands of Californians who are suffering from untreated schizophrenia spectrum or psychotic disorders that too often lead to homelessness, incarceration, institutionalization, or premature death.
- California is taking a new approach to act early and get people the support they need and address underlying needs - and we're doing it without taking away people's rights.
- CARE Court includes accountability for everyone – on the individual and on local governments – with court orders for services.

SPONSORING NEW CARE COURT LEGISLATION

- In March the Governor unveiled the CARE Court framework, and engaged the public and stakeholders in community [roundtables](#) across the state and listening [sessions](#) with diverse [stakeholders](#).
- Legislation was introduced by Senator Umberg, Orange County and Senator Eggman, San Joaquin County ([SB 1338](#)). Legislative hearings which started in April, will continue to engage the public - including people living with mental illness, families, local government, community behavioral health care providers, first responders, judges, and more - and further develop CARE Court.
- To meet the urgent needs for care and housing we see in our communities, families, and streets, CARE Court must be enacted by July 1, and local partners can begin implementation in the following months.

FOCUSING UNPRECEDENTED FUNDING ON RESULTS

- Behavioral health is now funded at a record **\$11.6 billion each year** - up 70% from \$6.7 billion eight years ago. Funding comes from five major sources, including Prop 63 Mental Health Services Act, Medi-Cal and non-Medical Behavioral Health, and Realignment in 1991 and 2011. See CalHHS Funding Backgrounder for more details.
- Housing and homelessness investments totaled a historic **\$12 billion** in last year's budget. An additional **\$2 billion** is proposed this year - with \$1.5 billion focused on Behavioral Health Bridge Housing that will be prioritized to serve people in CARE Court.
- The Governor's May Revision to the Budget will include costs for the new Care Court process, including judges and appointed counsel.

HOW CARE COURT WORKS



CALIFORNIA'S CARE COURT

Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court is Governor Newsom's new plan to get Californians in crisis off the streets and into housing, treatment, and care.



ACTING EARLY TO GET PEOPLE THE SUPPORT THEY NEED

CARE Court is aimed at helping Californians who are suffering from untreated mental health and substance use disorders leading to homelessness, incarceration or worse.

Each person is connected with a court-ordered Care Plan and Supporter for up to 24 months.



SETTING THEM UP WITH AN INDIVIDUALIZED CARE PLAN

CARE Court connects a person with a care team in the community and can include clinically prescribed, individualized treatment with supportive services, stabilizing medication, and a housing plan.

CARE Court connects a person struggling with untreated mental illness – and often also substance use challenges – with a court-ordered Care Plan for up to 24 months. Each plan is managed by a care team in the community and can include clinically prescribed, individualized interventions with several supportive services, medication, and a housing plan. The client-centered approach also includes a public defender and supporter to help make self-directed care decisions in addition to their full clinical team, as well as opportunities for early engagement and settlement agreements for treatment plans.

CARE Court is designed on the evidence that many people can stabilize, begin healing, and exit homelessness in less restrictive, community-based care settings. It's a long-term strategy to positively impact the individual in care and the community around them. The plan advances an upstream diversion from more restrictive conservatorships or incarceration.

The CARE Court response can be initiated by family, county and community-based social services, behavioral health providers, or first responders. Individuals exiting a short-term involuntary hospital hold or a misdemeanor arrest may be especially good candidates for CARE Court. The Care Plan can be ordered for up to 12 months, with periodic review hearings and subsequent renewal for up to another 12 months.

CARE Court is based on accountability for all. Participants who do not successfully complete Care Plans may, under current law, be hospitalized or referred to conservatorship - with a new presumption that no suitable alternatives to community care are available. All counties across the state will participate in CARE Court under the proposal. If local governments do not meet their specified duties under court-ordered Care Plans, the court will have the ability to order sanctions and, in extreme cases, appoint a receiver to ensure services are provided.