



Mental Health Commission

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 8, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Mental Health Commission
 Submitted by: Ajay Krishnan, Chairperson, Mental Health Commission
 Subject: Appointment of Patricia Fontana-Narell to the Mental Health Commission

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution approving the recommendation for appointment of Patricia Fontana-Narell to the Mental Health Commission. Patricia Fontana-Narell will be a representative of the Special Public Interest Category, family member, beginning her 3-year term on July 9, 2025 and end on July 8, 2028.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Mental Health Commission is authorized to be composed of thirteen members. However, there are presently four vacancies on the Commission. The Mental Health Commission is actively seeking candidates with the ability to fulfill the state law duties for Commissioners, including reviewing and evaluating the community's needs, services, facilities and special problems.

Approval of the recommended action will fill a vacancy and allow the Commission to move one step closer to having a full complement of commissioners to review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, resources and programs.

BACKGROUND

California State law requires that appointments to the Mental Health Commission meet specific categories, who may serve up to nine years consecutively. Patricia Fontana-Narell meets the category of special interest, family. The general public interest category may include anyone who has an interest in and some knowledge of mental health services. The special public interest category includes direct consumers of public mental health services and family members of consumers, which together must constitute at least fifty percent or seven of the commission seats. Direct consumers and family members shall each constitute at least 20% of the commission membership.

The Mental Health Commission recommends Patricia Fontana-Narell as a representative of the special interest appointment on the Mental Health Commission for the city of Berkeley for a three-year term. Patricia is a retired architect and a parent to a Berkeley Mental Health Client. She has been involved in advocacy in Berkeley, co-founded a group, "Voices of Mother", spearheaded to get assisted outpatient treatment adopted by the Board of Supervisors in Alameda County and on the steering committee for FASMI (Families Advocating for the Seriously Mentally Ill).

Patricia is concerned about the lack of housing support, understaffing at Berkeley Mental Health and laws and policies that make it difficult to access care early on. She would like to incorporate family advocates into case management teams and advocate for equity and diversity within the system.

The Mental Health Commission passed the following motions at the April 30, 2025 Special meeting:

Interview and vote for new applicant – Patricia Fontana-Narell

M/S/C (Gu, Turner) Motion to accept Patricia Fontana–Narell’s application to send to city council

PASSED

Ayes: Gu, Opton, Sol, Teague, Turner; **Noes:** None; **Abstentions:** None; **Absent:** Jones, Krishnan, Tregub, Prichett

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Approval of the recommended action will allow the Mental Health Commission to move one step closer to having a full complement of commissioners to review and evaluate the community’s mental health needs, resources, and programs.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager concurs with the content and recommendations of the Commission’s Report.

CONTACT PERSON

Jamie Works-Wright, Commission Secretary, HHCS, 510-981-7721

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

APPOINTMENT OF PATRICIA FONTANTA-NARELL TO THE MENTAL HEALTH
COMMISSION

WHEREAS, membership of the Mental Health Commission is composed of thirteen appointments by the City Council as a whole, including one appointment by the Mayor (*or designee*), seven special public interest appointments, and five general public interest appointments; and

WHEREAS, with the ongoing implementation of the Mental Health Services Act, the City of Berkeley will need to have a full complement of appointees to the Commission to review and evaluate the community's mental health needs, resources, and programs and to fulfill its mandate; and

WHEREAS, Patricia Fontana-Narell has been involved in advocacy in the county and City of Berkeley for mental health needs and supporting family members; and

WHEREAS, The Mental Health Commission at its April 30, 2025 Special meeting recommended the appointment of Patricia Fontana-Narell.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the Council appoints Patricia Fontana-Narell as a representative of the Special Interest category, family member to complete her first term ending July 8, 2028.

