



## Administrative Office of the Courts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Administrative Office of the Courts names new Behavioral Health Integration and Reform Administrator

SANTA FE – The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) today announced Esperanza Lucero as the new Behavioral Health Integration and Reform Administrator, tasked with implementing major components of newly enacted behavioral health reforms.

“I am passionate about strengthening behavioral health services delivery in New Mexico,” said Behavioral Health Integration and Reform Administrator Esperanza Lucero. “It’s an honor to serve in this capacity. I see the Judiciary as uniquely suited to providing the leadership to bring together local stakeholders and providers in a meaningful way.”

“Esperanza is a great fit for this inaugural position,” said AOC Director Karl W. Reifsteck. “Her experience working extensively with state and local agencies to implement policy, strategies and initiatives will help in laying the groundwork for behavioral health system improvements required by state law.”

The Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act ([Senate Bill 3](#)), signed into law earlier this year, creates a framework for expanding behavioral health services in New Mexico. In part, the Act mandates the AOC to coordinate the development of regional behavioral plans by convening local stakeholders and complete sequential intercept mapping (SIM) of the state to catalog locally available behavioral health resources and identify gaps in services.

SIM [community mapping](#) is already underway. In October 2024, the AOC recently completed mapping in Taos, Union, and Colfax counties (Eighth Judicial District), and Rio Arriba County (First Judicial District) in December 2024. Scheduled events in June will complete mapping in the First and Fourth Judicial Districts.

“Esperanza’s first order of business is to assess the SIM initiatives already in place through assisted outpatient treatment and competency diversion pilots and to bring stakeholders together to begin to create effective, thorough regional plans that improve statewide behavioral health services,” said Supreme Court Chief Justice David K. Thomson.

Before accepting the position with the state court system, Esperanza served as director of the Department of Health's Center for Health Protection and led the Adult Protective Services Division for the Aging and Long-Term Services Department from 2021 to 2024.

Esperanza holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from New Mexico State University, a Master of Social Work from New Mexico Highlands University, and a Master of Business Administration from New Mexico Highlands University.



**Esperanza Lucero, Behavioral Health Integration and Reform Administrator**

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