



Taos County Administration

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September 30, 2025

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Brent P. Jaramillo
County Manager

Esperanza Lucero, MSW, MBA
Behavioral Health Integration and Reform Administrator
Administrative Office of the Courts
202 East Marcy Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Re: Letter of Intent SB3 Behavioral Health Regional Infrastructure Act (BHRIA) Planning Grant

Dear Ms. Lucero,

On behalf of Taos County, I am pleased to submit this Letter of Intent in response to the SB3 Behavioral Health Regional Infrastructure Act (BHRIA) Planning Grant. Taos County is committed to serving as the Accountable Entity for Region 8, our Behavioral Health Region, and to advancing a collaborative, inclusive planning process that strengthens the continuum of behavioral health services across northern New Mexico.

Our region faces urgent and longstanding challenges in behavioral health. As a rural area, we struggle with limited behavioral health resources and workforce shortages, and our system of care has historically been siloed, fragmented, and under-resourced. Too often, individuals and families encounter barriers to timely and coordinated care, and services vary widely across counties and communities. In challenging times, with funding uncertainties and high community need, it is more important than ever to come together to develop evidence-based, outcome-driven, and collaborative solutions that ensure care coordination and comprehensive services for those living with behavioral health challenges.

The SB3 BHRIA Planning Grant represents a critical opportunity to break down silos, strengthen partnerships, and build a regionally owned and sustainable behavioral health system. Taos County's goal in serving as the Accountable Entity is to facilitate a planning process that shores up scarce resources, promotes equity, and ensures a true continuum of care — from prevention and crisis intervention to treatment and recovery supports.

Taos County is well prepared to take on this role. Over the past decade, the County has demonstrated its capacity to convene diverse partners, including the Taos County Health Council, regional health collaboratives, behavioral health providers, local courts, law enforcement, schools, and community-based organizations. We have facilitated community listening sessions, coordinated opioid settlement planning, and participated in cross-county initiatives to improve health and human services. This track record illustrates our ability to bring stakeholders together, manage complex initiatives, and ensure that rural and underserved voices are at the center of planning efforts.

Scope of Work

As the Accountable Entity, Taos County will carry out the following scope of work in alignment with BHRIA requirements:

1. Establish and Convene a Regional Stakeholder Planning Committee

- Recruit inclusive representation from all counties, tribes, pueblos, judicial representatives, behavioral health providers, youth, adults with lived experience, and local health councils.
- Set a consistent meeting schedule to ensure transparency, momentum, and collaborative decision-making.
- Provide translation and accessibility supports to maximize equitable participation.

2. Coordinate Enhanced Sequential Intercept Mapping (E-SIM) Workshops

- Partner with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center (UNM-HSC) to plan and host the required E-SIM workshop.
- Secure appropriate venues, provide hospitality, and ensure the integration of data and findings into the regional plan.
- Use the E-SIM results to identify system gaps, set regional priorities, and align strategies across counties.

3. Facilitate Community Outreach and Listening Sessions

- Host at least one community listening session (or more if feasible) with support from AOC.
- Gather community perspectives, particularly from underserved and rural populations, and integrate findings into the regional plan.
- Document outreach processes demonstrate inclusivity and responsiveness.

4. Develop a Comprehensive Regional Behavioral Health Plan

- Formalize a regional coalition through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with participating counties, tribes, and pueblos.
- Identify gaps, opportunities, and priorities across the continuum of care, from prevention through re-entry services.
- Incorporate stakeholder feedback, data from UNM-HSC and HCA, and lessons from community engagement.
- Submit draft and final plans on schedule (by April 30, 2026 for draft; June 30, 2026 for final).

5. Strengthen the System of Care Framework

- Map regional behavioral health resources across the continuum of services (prevention, crisis, treatment, recovery).
- Identify existing funding sources, including Medicaid, opioid settlement funds, and other grants, to braid and leverage resources for sustainability.
- Apply equity indicators to ensure planning reflects the needs of historically underserved groups.

6. Ensure Accountability and Reporting

- Submit monthly progress updates, participate in technical assistance sessions, and respond to requests from AOC.
- Track expenditures and comply with all invoicing and reporting requirements.
- Identify and mitigate potential conflicts of interest in the planning process.

Budget Commitment

Taos County intends to request the full \$45,000 allocation, aligned with the recommended structure:

- Regional Stakeholder Planning Committee & Meeting-Related Expenses – \$15,000
- Community Outreach – \$5,000
- Development and Completion of the Regional Behavioral Health Plan – \$25,000
- Total Requested: \$45,000

In addition, Taos County commits to contributing an in-kind match valued at approximately \$15,750 (35% match), exceeding the 25% minimum benchmark:

- County Facilities Use (meeting rooms, workshop venues, technology) – \$3,000
- Staff Time (Health & Human Services Department staff, project coordination, administrative support, estimated 120 hours @ \$45/hour) – \$5,400
- Opioid Settlement Funds (dedicated to planning-related data gathering and engagement) – \$6,500
- Community Contributions & Volunteer Hours (advisory board participation, estimated 50 hours @ \$17/hour value) – \$850

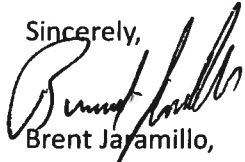
Total In-Kind/Leveraged Resources: \$15,750

This combined investment ensures that regional planning efforts will be adequately resourced, inclusive, and designed for long-term impact.

Taos County is committed to working in full partnership with AOC, UNM-HSC, and our regional stakeholders to deliver a behavioral health planning process that reflects the needs of our communities, strengthens collaboration, and builds the foundation of a behavioral health system that is coordinated, sustainable, and effective for years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to lead this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Jaramillo", written over the printed name.

Brent Jaramillo,
Taos County Manager