

CAPT confirms PIP positions already filled are safe

Vacant positions will be converted

A team of CAPT representatives met yesterday, September 1, with CDCR/CCHCS representatives to discuss the Budget Change Proposal, adopted in SB 129, that eliminates our Psych Tech vacant positions inside the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Psychiatric Inpatient Programs. Present at the meeting were CAPT chapter presidents Toni King, Kim Souza, and Walter Lewis and State President Eric Soto, and CAPT consultants Ann Lyles and Coby Pizzotti.

Initially, the BCP sought to eliminate 250 Psych Tech positions and replace them with Registered Nurses and Certified Nursing Assistants inside the PIPs at SVSP, CMF, CHCF-Stockton, CIW, and SQSP. Through its lobbying efforts, CAPT was able to secure the PT and SPT PIP positions already filled from being laid off. At yesterday's meeting, CAPT confirmed that no PT or SPT would lose their job. The converted positions will not impact any PT or SPT currently working in the PIP. The conversions to unlicensed CNA positions will take place through attrition. CNA new hires will fill the vacant PT positions, meaning the overtime mandates at facilities like Stockton, where many vacant positions remain, will continue until the positions get filled. Even then, CNA turnover expectations will likely impact the number of mandates further down the road. CAPT learned years ago that the department's preference to hire CNAs over PTAs was about the bottom line. CNAs cost the department less to employ.

The new staffing model also eliminates PT career enhancement and upward mobility. The new staffing model does not include new positions for SPTs. Through attrition, Registered Nurses will act as Shift Leads.

The BCP presents a significant policy shift in how CDCR operates its licensed PIPs and delivers care to its mentally ill inmates. The new staffing model abandons the DSH treatment staffing model for a CDCR custody-based model. The elimination of licensed staff within psychiatric units neglects best nursing practices and will undoubtedly hurt inmates' therapeutic care. The move to convert PT positions to unlicensed CNAs, whose duties are limited, is absurd. Nonetheless, CDCR believes the staffing model, which expects unlicensed staff to perform licensed duties, is acceptable under Title 22.

A breakdown of the converted positions is provided below for each affected PIP. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your local chapter for assistance.



Prison	PTs	SPTs
SVSP	6.2	0
CMF	8.3	0
CHCF-Stockton	194.4	12
CIW	26.9	4
SQSP	10.3	4