
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2343 (Patel) - Alcohol and other drug programs: consumer protection platform

Version: July 2, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: HEALTH 10 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 2343 would require certain facilities and programs that provide substance use disorder services to participate in a public consumer protection platform.

Fiscal Impact: Unknown ongoing costs, potentially low millions, for the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to establish and maintain the platform (Residential and Outpatient Program Licensing Fund). While the bill would authorize the DHCS to charge fees to cover the costs, the department may need one-time General Fund dollars for initial start-up costs until the new fee structure is established.

Background: The DHCS licenses and regulates adult alcohol or other drug recovery or treatment facilities (RTFs) which provide nonmedical recovery, treatment and detoxification services. The services provided by RTFs include group and individual counseling, educational sessions, and alcoholism or drug abuse recovery and treatment planning. DHCS is also responsible for the certification of alcohol or other drug programs that provide one or more of the following services to clients: treatment, recovery, detoxification services, or medications for addiction treatment. As part of the licensing and certification functions, DHCS conducts reviews of RTFs and programs; checks for compliance with statute, regulations, and certification standards to ensure the health and safety of clients; investigates all complaints; and has the authority to suspend or revoke a license or certification for violations.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Define “consumer protection platform” to mean a publicly accessible, independent resource administered by the DHCS or by a nonprofit entity designated by the DHCS that meets all of the following requirements:
 - Is available at no cost to individuals and families seeking substance use disorder care in California.
 - Does not accept payment, fees, or any financial consideration from treatment providers listed on the platform, and has no financial relationship with any listed provider that could compromise its independence or objectivity.
 - Ensures that all information displayed is grounded in peer-reviewed research and reflects established best practices in substance use disorder care.
 - Employs validation protocols to verify the internal and external consistency of information submitted by treatment providers prior to public display.

- Provides transparent, publicly accessible information on each listed facility's clinical practices, including the facility's alignment with recognized, evidence-based standards of substance use disorder care.
- Enables individuals and family members to submit reviews of listed treatment facilities and displays those reviews publicly.
- Reviews all submitted consumer feedback and refers any submission indicating a potential quality-of-care concern to the DHCS or the appropriate regulatory authority for further review and investigation.
- Require that in order to be licensed or certified by DHCS, the facility/program must participate in a public consumer protection platform designated or designed by the DHCS; and provide that this requirement does not apply to a facility/program contracted to provide Medi-Cal treatment services or contracted with the DHCS, a county behavioral health department, or a county substance use disorder division for the provision of substance use disorder services or to facilities/programs that receive funding through state, county, or federal substance use disorder programs.
- Provide that participation in the public consumer protection platform is required only if the DHCS determines that sufficient funding has been appropriated or otherwise secured to cover the costs of participation in the platform, including, but not limited to, costs associated with platform operation and maintenance; authorize DHCS to charge a reasonable fee to facilities/programs required to enroll in the platform necessary to cover the costs of implementation; require all costs associated with the development, implementation, operation, maintenance, oversight, auditing, and enforcement of the consumer protection platform to be fully covered by the fees collected or other specifically appropriated funds; prohibit costs from being subsidized through increases to existing fees or through other DHCS fee structures; and provide that if sufficient funding is not available to fully support the consumer protection platform without increasing existing fees, participation in the platform is not required.
- Require that if the DHCS contracts an external administrator for the public consumer protection platform, the administrator cannot engage in practices that constitute a conflict of interest, as specified.
- Require the consumer protection platform, if managed by an entity other than the DHCS, to collect and publicly display information from each participating treatment provider on the provider's adoption of evidence-based practices in substance use disorder care, as specified.
- Authorize DHCS to verify compliance with participation in the public consumer protection platform as part of its licensing/certification process, as specified.
- Prohibit participation in the consumer protection platform from being used as a criterion in evaluating bids, proposals, network participation, reimbursement, or contract performance for publicly funded substance use disorder treatment services.