
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 277 (Alanis) - Behavioral health centers, facilities, and programs: background checks

Version: June 2, 2026

Policy Vote: B., P. & E.D. 6 - 0, PUB. S. 6
- 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: Yes

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Consultant: Janelle Miyashiro

Bill Summary: AB 277 requires behavioral health treatment service providers who do not hold a license from a California state licensing board to undergo a Department of Justice (DOJ) fingerprint background check, as specified.

Fiscal Impact: Total costs of approximately \$506,000 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27, \$775,000 in FY 2027-28, and \$643,000 ongoing for DOJ's California Justice Information Services Division and Bureau of Criminal Information and Analysis to process additional Live Scan applications and background checks (Fingerprint Fees Account).

Background: Existing law defines "behavioral health treatment" to mean professional services and treatment programs, including applied behavior analysis and evidence-based behavior intervention programs, that develop or restore, to the maximum extent practicable, the functioning of an individual with a pervasive developmental disorder or autism and that meet all of the following criteria:

- The treatment is prescribed by a physician and licensed surgeon or is developed by a licensed psychologist.
- The treatment is provided under a treatment plan prescribed by a qualified autism service provider and is administered by a qualified autism service provider, or qualified autism service professional or paraprofessional supervised by a qualified autism service provider.
- The treatment plan has measurable goals over a specific timeline that are developed and approved by the qualified autism service provider for the specific patient being treated and periodically reviewed and modified whenever appropriate.

Proposed Law:

- Requires a person who provides behavioral health treatment for a behavioral health center, facility, or program to undergo a background check.
- Exempts individuals holding a current and valid license issued by a California state licensing board if the board's licensing process include a fingerprint based background check and the license is in good standing.

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