

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 16 (Blakespear) – As Amended June 25, 2026

Policy Committee:	Health	Vote:	14 - 0
	Judiciary		12 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: Yes

SUMMARY:

This bill requires a county behavioral health director develop procedures for a county to designate and train professionals who will be designated to detain persons pursuant to Section 5150 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires, rather than allows, a county behavioral health director develop procedures for a county's designation and training of professionals who will be designated to detain persons pursuant to Section 5150 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.
- 2) Requires, rather than allows, the procedures for designation and training include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a) The license types, practice disciplines, and clinical experience of professionals eligible to be designated by the county.
 - b) The initial and ongoing training and testing requirements for professionals eligible to be designated by the county.
 - c) The application and approval processes for professionals seeking to be designated by the county, including the timeframe for initial designation and procedures for renewal of the designation.
 - d) The county's process for monitoring and reviewing professionals designated by the county to ensure appropriate compliance with state law, regulations, and county procedures.
- 3) Specifies that the above requirements do not require a county behavioral health director to designate each individual that meets the requirements specified in item 1, above.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Costs of an unknown amount, likely hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, to county behavioral health agencies, to develop procedures related to Section 5150 designations. Additional cost pressures, potentially high hundreds of thousands of dollars or more, annually, for counties to comply with new obligations to manage notifications of denials and revocations of 5150 designations and to conduct training, oversight, and management of new designations, to

the extent the counties implement the newly developed procedures. The County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA) and the California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators (CAPAPGPC) jointly estimate costs of this bill to counties would total \$1.0 million to \$2.7 million upon implementation and up to \$2.4 million annually thereafter (local funds). Although this bill indicates costs may be state-reimbursable, CBHDA and CAPAPGPC state the bill creates an unfunded mandate.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill is sponsored by the California State Association of Psychiatrists. According to the author:

California is investing heavily in mobile crisis teams and other alternatives to law enforcement response for people experiencing behavioral health crises, but these efforts depend on the availability of qualified clinicians who are authorized to perform functions under Welfare and Institutions Code 5150. Although current law allows counties to establish designation and training procedures for these professionals, it does not require them to do so. As a result, designation processes vary significantly across the state and may create unnecessary barriers for qualified clinicians. SB 16 is a workforce and accountability measure that requires counties to maintain transparent procedures for designation, training, and oversight while preserving local control and existing patient protections.

- 2) **Background.** The Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) Act provides for involuntary detentions of persons for varying lengths of time for the purpose of providing evaluation and behavioral health treatment under specified conditions, including that the individual is taken to a county-designated facility and the person making the initial detention has enough evidence to justify the detention. Counties have the authority under existing law to determine which professionals the county wishes to “designate” as having the authority to detain persons for evaluation pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 5150, which allows peace officers and designated professionals to involuntarily detain a person for up to 72 hours for an assessment, evaluation and crisis intervention, or placement for evaluation and treatment in a facility designated by the county, if the person is determined to be a danger either to themselves or to others, or gravely disabled, because of a mental health disorder.
- 3) **Opposition.** CBHDA and CAPAPGPC jointly state that, for nearly 60 years, counties have been developing procedures to designate and train professionals who will be designated to perform the functions under WIC 5150. The counties note that without dedicated resources, this bill would create a new unfunded mandate at a time when local and state resources are strained.
- 4) **Related Legislation.** AB 416 (Krell), Chapter 691, Statutes of 2025, requires counties to include emergency physicians as one of the practice disciplines eligible to be designated by the county to cause a person to be taken into custody under WIC 5150.