

Date of Hearing: August 5, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

SB 479 (Arreguín) – As Amended July 2, 2026

Policy Committee:	Human Services	Vote:	7 - 0
	Privacy and Consumer Protection		15 - 0

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

SUMMARY:

This bill authorizes a city designated as a local health jurisdiction to establish a homeless adult and family multidisciplinary personnel team (MDT) to better coordinate services for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Similar to the existing authorization for counties, authorizes a city designated as a local health jurisdiction to establish a homeless adult and family MDT to facilitate the expedited identification, assessment, and linkage of homeless individuals to housing and supportive services within that county or city and to allow provider agencies and members of the personnel team to share confidential information to ensure continuity of care.
- 2) If a county containing a city with a homeless adult and family MDT requests to participate on that team, requires the city to allow the appropriate county personnel, as determined by the city, to participate unless the city determines participation by the county would hinder compliance with state law or otherwise conflict with the city's goals and objectives.
- 3) Authorizes members of a homeless adult and family MDT to disclose and exchange information designated as confidential under state law with other participating agencies if the member of the team reasonably believes the information assists with the identification, reduction, or elimination of homelessness or the provision of services.
- 4) Requires notes of telephonic communication to be maintained by the MDT in any open and corresponding case file and retained as part of the official record.
- 5) Requires a city establishing a homeless adult and family MDT in a county that also has a team to coordinate the city's MDT personnel qualifications and oversight practices with those of the county's team and establishes a similar requirement for a county establishing a homeless adult and family MDT in a county in which a city has established such a team.
- 6) Requires a city that has a homeless adult and family MDT to create protocols, as specified, describing how information may be shared to ensure confidentiality and requires the city to distribute a copy of the protocols to each member agency of the MDT, post the protocols on the city's website, and provide them to the California Department of Social Services.

- 7) Requires a city establishing a homeless adult and family MDT in a county that also has a team to coordinate the city's protocols with the county's protocols and their respective teams' jurisdictional boundaries, activity schedules, referrals to services, placements into permanent housing resources in the community, and any other key operational processes.
- 8) Specifies the provisions of this bill do not affect the applicability of existing state or federal privacy laws, including, but not limited to, the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the Information Practices Act of 1977, as it relates to state employees and agencies, and the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act.

FISCAL EFFECT:

No state costs. Local costs of an unknown amount to each authorized city that creates and administers a homeless adult and family MDT. This is an optional activity for these cities and is therefore not reimbursable by the state.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

[This bill] will authorize the City of Berkeley, a [local health jurisdiction] currently operating their own homeless response team, to share crucial information between outreach teams to better coordinate services for our unsheltered neighbors. Currently, only counties have the authority to share specified information to coordinate homelessness services. Due to their unique needs, Berkeley created their own homeless response teams that are doing great work to serve the unhoused constituents of SD 7. However, current statute has limited their efficacy because different teams can't communicate information with each other. This bill will allow Berkeley to serve unhoused residents more effectively by authorizing information sharing between departments to coordinate services and care.

This bill is sponsored by the City of Berkeley. Recent amendments in the Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection removed all opposition.

- 2) **Background. County MDTs.** Existing law, established by AB 210 (Santiago), Chapter 544, Statutes of 2017, authorizes a county to form a homeless adult and family MDT to facilitate identification and assessment of homeless individuals and link homeless individuals to housing and supportive services. Service providers may share confidential information to ensure continuity of care, including information related to mental health treatment, substance use, and criminal history, when doing so is reasonably relevant to identifying, reducing, or eliminating a person's homelessness or coordinating their services.

Local Health Jurisdictions. Under existing law and regulations administered by the California Department of Public Health, a local health jurisdiction is an entity that has accepted responsibility for carrying out specified public health functions within a defined geographic area. Existing law assigns local public health authority to counties, and most cities receive public health services through their county health department. However, some cities have historically maintained their own public health departments and are designated by

the state as a local health jurisdiction independent of the county. Cities with this designation, such as Long Beach, Berkeley, and Pasadena, operate their own health departments, receive direct state and federal public health funding, and carry independent programmatic responsibility for functions such as communicable disease control, environmental health, and public health emergency response.

This bill additionally authorizes a city designated as a local health jurisdiction to establish a homeless adult and family MDT.

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