

Melanie Rhodes, LMFT, LPCC, CCISM is the Behavioral Health Bureau Chief / Director of Behavioral Health for the County of Monterey. Prior to her appointment to the position of Interim Bureau Chief December 2024 and Bureau Chief May 2025, she served as a Deputy Director of Behavioral Health overseeing Access to Treatment, Adult, Crisis, and Justice Involved Services for 3 ½ years.

Melanie started her career with the County of Monterey Health Department Behavioral Health Bureau in 2005 as a Psychiatric Social Worker with the Adult System of Care (ASOC) in the Salinas region working on a multi-disciplinary team serving those with severe mental illness as well as those with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder conditions. She was promoted to Unit Supervisor in ASOC Salinas in 2007 and then to Forensic Services Program Manager in 2016. As the Forensic Services Program Manager, she has been responsible for overseeing the provision of adult justice involved services including Therapeutic Justice / Collaborative Court Programs, Misdemeanor Incompetent to Stand Trial, Mental Health Diversion, and AB109. She successfully launched Mobile Crisis Services in Monterey County in 2015 and played a pivotal role in the expansion of Countywide Mobile Crisis Services to 24/7/365 as of December 31, 2023.

As the Behavioral Health liaison with the county jail, parole, public safety, and law enforcement, Melanie has also coordinated the Behavioral Health Specialty Teams since 2015. Specifically, the Hostage/Crisis Negotiation Team, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team and the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). She is a Certified CIT Coordinator by CIT International and has been the Behavioral Health coordinator and facilitator of the 40-hour CIT Academy in Monterey County since 2015. Melanie is a trainer for behavioral health and first responder personnel in the areas of mental health, crisis intervention, safety, self-care, verbal intervention and de-escalation. She has also been certified as an approved instructor through the Crisis Prevention Institute, Mental Health First Aid USA, and the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, and has provided training to over 1000 personnel in behavioral health, emergency public safety and community agencies.

Melanie is recognized as a CSAC Credentialed Senior Executive by the William “Bill” Chiat Institute for Excellence in County Government. She serves on the Judicial Council of California Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee, appointed to a three-year term effective September 15, 2023, and also serves on the Mental Health Sub-

Committee. She is a licensed clinician with over 26 years of experience working with those impacted by severe mental illness and co-occurring conditions in a public mental health / behavioral health setting. She is passionate about advocating for those with severe mental illness and substance use disorder conditions, seeking to eliminate stigma, break down barriers, engage stakeholders and collaborate within and across systems so individuals and families can access needed services, support and treatment that is strength-based and trauma-informed in a timely, equitable and humanistic manner.