



ASSEMBLYMEMBER DIANE DIXON

72ND ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 3 – Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facility Deinstitutionalization Act

Background

AB 3 will ensure the original intent of the Legislature to deinstitutionalize drug and alcohol treatment facilities.

Existing California law authorizes the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to license nonmedical facilities with six beds or fewer to operate in residential zoning. There are currently 500 of these types of facilities operating in California.

Problem Being Addressed

In the 1970s, California began to close institutionalized services for mental health care and roll out community-integrated treatment. The goal was that individuals struggling with mental health or drug and alcohol abuse would be able to better assimilate into the community during and after treatment.

Currently, DHCS is able to license residentially located facilities with six or fewer beds that offer nonmedical treatment.

However, as more facilities have emerged, we have seen predatory practices from bad operators that are trying to maximize their facilities at the detriment of care to residents. In an audit completed in October of 2024, the California State Auditor's Office noted there are facilities closely located that share the same amenities, staff, and directors.

These facilities are effectively operating as a larger facility, over the six resident maximum, by sharing critical infrastructure and creating an institutionalized environment.

With alcohol and drug abuse rising in not only California but across the nation, it is critical that there is adequate access to high quality and diverse styles of treatment.

Which code section is affected?

This bill would amend section 11834.23 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to alcohol and drug treatment facilities.

Summary

AB 3 will limit licenses for drug and alcohol treatment facilities licensed under DHCS when facilities are nearby and share the same amenities, staff, and ownership.

Staff Contact

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Supporters

Pending

You can access the full audit at <https://www.auditor.ca.gov/reports/2023-120/>