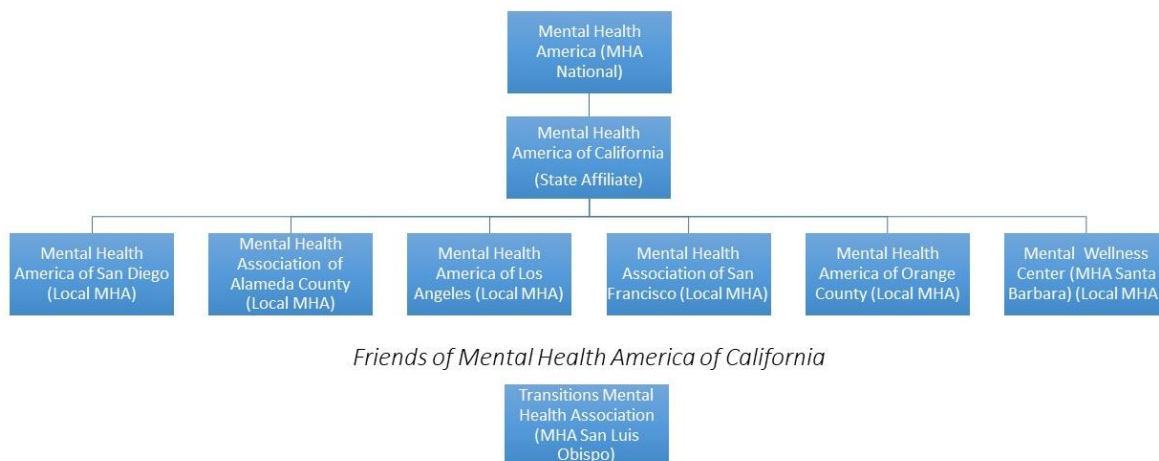


We are the Mental Health America of California Affiliate Network

You may have noticed that there are several organizations with the name Mental Health America, Mental Health Association, and other similar names. The structure can be confusing. Here is the breakdown.

MHAC Affiliate Network Structure



Mental Health America has three levels. National, state, and local. MHAs are autonomous organizations with their own federal tax identification numbers. Mental Health America is the national organization (MHA National) that focuses on federal policy, advocacy, and programing. State and local MHAs affiliate with MHA National.

Mental Health America of California (MHAC) is MHA National's designated statewide affiliate for California. MHAC focuses on statewide policy, advocacy, and programing.

Local chapters cover cities, counties, and in some cases, regions. Local MHAs affiliate with both MHAC and MHA National. California's local affiliates include the Mental Wellness Center/MHA Santa Barbara, MHA Los Angeles, MHA Alameda, MHA San Francisco, MHA San Diego, and MHA Orange County. Transitions Mental Health Association in San Luis Obispo's is a Friend of MHAC, a term used for organizations that are not full-fledged affiliates, and are instead partners/allies in the fight to improve mental health for all Californians.

MHAs throughout California provide a variety of services and supports including employment services, direct services, support groups, local advocacy activities, and much more. Please see the Affiliate Menu of Service document for more information.

Each of MHAC's affiliates has a seat on the MHAC Board. This structure allows for meaningful partnerships to advance shared goals between the affiliated organizations.

You may remember the name Mental Health Association. Several years ago, MHA National rebranded and changed its name from Mental Health Association to Mental Health America, and asked its affiliates to do the same. Most affiliates did, some did not as you will notice in the chart.

MHAC's expertise is in statewide policy and advocacy, youth mental health, workplace mental health, and coalition building. MHAC is the "go-to" agency in the MHA affiliate network for statewide mental health policy and advocacy issues and is home to the MHA affiliate network in California. MHAC works closely with its affiliates and partners to advance shared goals at the local and state levels to improve the lives of people living with mental health challenges.

MHAC is a 60-year old organization with a proud history of promoting innovation and change through advocacy, and through education of local leaders, lawmakers, and citizens on the importance and effectiveness of behavioral health supports and services.

MHAC develops and supports strategic programs, educates and advocates to help people with behavioral health conditions, believing especially in the possibilities for recovery and promoting quality methods to facilitate recovery.

MHAC promotes and develops B4Stage4 activities and approaches, which means reaching people before crises such as suicide, hospitalization, and homelessness and replacing "fail first" with "help first" strategies.

MHAC is a unique leader and partner – an individual with lived experience of mental health challenges founded our National organization and we keep our organization grounded in that tradition while at the same time being a diverse and broadly based group of concerned individuals.

MHAC brings attention and action to social justice issues to end the stigmatization of those with mental health issues, the discrimination against them, and the criminalization of mental illness and addiction including focus on transitional age youth and diverse communities.

Our Mission: Mental Health America of California (MHAC) supports people of all ages, sexual orientations, genders, and ethnicities who require behavioral health (mental health and substance use) services and supports so that they are able to live full and productive lives, receive timely access to behavioral health services and supports, and are not denied any other benefits, services, rights, or opportunities based on their need for services.

Learn more about MHAC at <http://www.mhac.org/>. Feel free to reach out to Zima Creason, President & CEO with questions, zcreason@mhac.org, 916-557-1167 ext. 110.