



Via Email

September 14, 2026

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Re: Follow-Up to DRC's Findings and Recommendations Regarding Butte County Jail's Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) and Substance Use Disorder-Related Services

Dear Sheriff Honea, Undersheriff Calkins, and Counsel:

DRC sent our Initial Findings Letter and Recommendations Regarding Butte County Jail's Medication Assisted Treatment ("MAT") and Substance Use Disorder ("SUD")-Related Services on July 27, 2026. We requested an update by September 10, 2026. We have not yet received such update. While we agreed to extend the deadline for a response to our other draft findings letter to September 24, 2026, that agreement did not affect our request for an update on MAT and SUD services by September 10, 2026.

At the parties' May 29, 2026 meeting and in subsequent discussions, Sheriff's Office staff and Wellpath informed us that the Sheriff's Office intended to submit a budget request for implementation of the CalAIM/Justice-Involved Reentry Initiative ("JI Initiative")-required expansion of MAT and reentry services for consideration at the September 8, 2026 Butte County Board of Supervisors meeting. That appears to have not occurred. This is concerning, especially given the October 1, 2026 JI Initiative implementation deadline.

The JI Initiative is crucial to the Jail providing adequate health care to individuals with SUD. **We request an update as to the County's JI Initiative-related plan,**

including as to funding for MAT services at the Butte County Jail. Please address each of the following items:

1. MAT Induction: The JI Initiative requires county jails to provide both MAT induction and MAT continuation services. As of the sending of our findings letter on July 27, 2026, Butte County Jail (the “Jail”) did not provide MAT induction services. MAT induction services are essential to treat people with SUD/Opioid Use Disorder (“OUD”) disabilities who are at high risk for withdrawal, overdose, and relapse. That five incarcerated individuals had to be treated after overdosing while in the Jail in August further illustrates the critical, immediate need for expanded MAT treatment at the Jail.¹ Indeed, a growing number of federal courts have affirmed that denying an incarcerated person access to medication for OUD without individual assessment violates both the ADA and the Eighth Amendment.²

Given the State’s requirements and consistent with federal court case law, the Jail must begin conducting individual assessments on currently incarcerated individuals identified with OUD not already enrolled in the MAT program and newly incarcerated individuals at intake to determine whether they meet clinical criteria for participation in a MAT program.

2. Medication-in-hand: Under the JI Initiative, counties are required to provide individuals leaving jail with 30 days of necessary medications at release. When we met with the County in May, the Jail was not providing all individuals leaving jail with medication in hand. Instead, most individuals had prescriptions called into local pharmacies, while only the individuals on the Special Needs lists received medication in hand. DRC has not received any update as to the expansion of the population at the Jail receiving medication-in-hand upon release.

Please provide DRC with an update as to whether any expansion has occurred or will occur.

In addition to the specific provisions of the JI Initiative, DRC’s July 27, 2026 findings letter raised additional concerns. We respectfully request an update as to the following:

1. Voluntary Long-Acting Injectables: In our findings letter, we urged the Jail to offer long-acting injectables (“LAI”) as an alternative to discontinuing individuals suspected of diverting oral medication from the MAT program. In response to our recent inquiry regarding one incarcerated person with MAT-related concerns,

¹ Butte County Sheriff’s Office, *Butte County Jail Staff Respond to Multiple Suspected Opioid Overdoses* (Aug. 17, 2026), <https://bcsa.citizenrims.com/press-releases>.

² *Edwards v. Witherspoon*, 2026 WL 2661096, at *16–*17 (4th Cir. Sept. 10, 2026) (holding that the right to MOUD is clearly established); *Pesce v. Coppinger*, 355 F. Supp. 3d 35, 47–48 (D. Mass. 2018); *Smith v. Aroostook Cty.*, 376 F. Supp. 3d 146, 159–61 (D. Me. 2019), *aff’d*, 922 F.3d 41 (1st Cir. 2019).

Wellpath counsel informed us on September 10, 2026, that this person had been prescribed Brixadi, a long-acting injectable. DRC applauds the Jail for implementation of an LAI alternative for MAT participants.

Please provide an update as the rollout of LAI at the Jail, including new procedures and the number of individuals who have been evaluated and initiated on such medication, both during their detention and prior to release.

2. Withdrawal Protocol: In our July 27, 2026 findings letter, DRC raised concerns regarding the adequacy and reliability of documentation of opioid withdrawal symptoms. When we met with Wellpath and Jail officials, Wellpath informed us that it shared our concerns and was putting systems in place to improve documentation. What is the status of this effort?

DRC kindly requests that the County (and Wellpath, as appropriate) provide a written update regarding issues raised in our July 27, 2026 letter, as well as the issues set forth above, **by September 24, 2026**.

If you have questions or would like to discuss, please reach out at coty.meibeyer@disabilityrightsca.org.

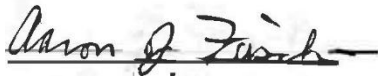
Sincerely,



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