



October 27, 2022

Jacey Cooper, Chief Deputy Director & Medicaid Director
California Department of Health Care Services
1500 Capitol Avenue, MS 0000
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Pinoleville Pomo Nation and Lake County Collaboration

Dear Ms. Cooper:

On behalf of the Pinoleville Pomo Nation and Lake County, we respectfully request your expedited review and support for our proposed intergovernmental financing process between our two government entities for the provision of behavioral health services to Medi-Cal beneficiaries. As we have been working diligently with your staff across multiple areas over the past 3 years, we have reached a point where we need clear direction so we can continue to serve patients at the Tribe's 638 clinic (aka, New Life Clinic) in Ukiah, California without negatively impacting the budget of Lake County.

Pinoleville's Tribal 638 clinic began operations in August 2021 and was the first tribal NTP in Mendocino County. As you know, there are very few NTP clinics in Northern California, making the opioid crisis even more acute for patients in our rural area because they lack basic access to medication assisted treatment services. The Tribe not only recognized a critical need for its tribal citizens, but also for the surrounding community. Since opening, New Life Clinic patients have continued to come from not only Mendocino, but also Lake and surrounding counties. Further, New Life Clinic has had great success – achieving very high scores on all outside audits and reviews and constantly receiving glowing patient testimonials. The Tribe and its staff at New Life Clinic desire to treat the whole patient, to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate treatment, and to offer the very highest level of patient care of any NTP in California. The Clinic's total current patient census as of this letter is approximately 150 patients, with more than 30 patients from Lake County. With one of the highest overdose rates in the state of California, Lake County is thrilled to have these critical services for residents that have been either forced to travel hours for treatment or have their addiction left untreated. However, the patient

caseload was much higher than initially projected and the county's fiscal situation is not robust enough to support these expenditures.

The Tribal 638 rate, as you know, is established annually by the federal government. Recognizing that the impact of the nonfederal share for Lake County residents would be potentially significant, the Tribe offered, and Lake County accepted, to provide the nonfederal share for the patients that are otherwise the county's responsibility. We believe this intergovernmental agreement is in keeping with both state and federal law as well as established practice in California's Medi-Cal program for other governmental entities.

Lake County has reached a point in which it is no longer able to finance the share of patients being seen at New Life Clinic and would very much like to implement the processes with Pinoleville to allow for the Tribe to provide the nonfederal share for the Lake County's Medi-Cal patients. We have worked with your staff to discuss this and have provided a proposed process for the Department to review.

Your attention to this is most critical, especially since patients are still receiving services, but claims are not being processed and our contract remains unexecuted.

Sincerely,

Hon. Leona Williams, Chairperson
Pinoleville Pomo Nation

Todd Metcalf, Director
Lake County Behavioral Health Plan