

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

## Introduction to Clubhouse



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LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
**DEPARTMENT OF  
MENTAL HEALTH**  
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

## ▶▶ History of Clubhouse

- **1944** - Former patients of Rockland State Hospital begin meeting to help each other adjust to a return to the community, calling their small group WANA for “We Are Not Alone”.
- **1948** - Funds secured to purchase a small Brownstone in Manhattan. They call it “Fountain House.”
- **Mid-1950’s** - First professional staff joins the club at Fountain House. A vocationally-oriented day program and Transitional Employment Program are added.
- **1960’s – 70’s** - Clubhouse grows across the United States, including Horizon House (Philadelphia), Thresholds (Chicago), Center Club (Boston), and **Portals House (Los Angeles)**.

# *Key Restorative Constructs*

## *▶▶ Associated with Clubhouse Programs*

- **Sense of Belonging**
- **Self-Determination Empowerment**
- **Meaningful Activity**
  - **Self Efficacy**
  - **Self Esteem**
- **Dignity & Respect**



## ▶▶ Membership

- Voluntary and without time limits.
- Clubhouse controls acceptance of its new members.
- Members choose the way they utilize the Clubhouse, and the staff with whom they work. There are no agreements, contracts, schedules, or rules intended to enforce participation of members.
- All members have equal access to every Clubhouse opportunity.
- Members at their choice are involved in the writing of all records reflecting their participation in the Clubhouse. All such records are to be signed by both member and staff.
- Members have a right to immediate re-entry into the Clubhouse community after any length of absence.
- The Clubhouse provides an effective reach out system to members who are not attending, becoming isolated in the community or hospitalized.

## ▶▶ Membership cont..

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## ►► Relationships

- All Clubhouse meetings are open to both members and staff. There are no formal member only meetings or formal staff only meetings where program decisions and member issues are discussed.
- Clubhouse staff are sufficient to engage the membership, yet few enough to make carrying out their responsibilities impossible without member involvement.
- Clubhouse staff have generalist roles. All staff share employment, housing, evening and weekend, holiday and unit responsibilities. Clubhouse staff do not divide their time between Clubhouse and other major work responsibilities that conflict with the unique nature of member/staff relationships.
- Responsibility for the operation of the Clubhouse lies with the members and staff and ultimately with the Clubhouse director. Central to this responsibility is the engagement of members and staff in all aspects of Clubhouse operation.

## ▶▶ Key Features

- **Work-Ordered Day.** In a Clubhouse, Mondays through Fridays are structured into a “work-ordered day” in which members participate in Clubhouse functions in collaboration with staff using their strengths and talents.
- **Evening, Weekend, and Holiday Activities.** Clubhouses provide structured opportunities for socialization and recreation on evenings, weekends, and holidays.
- **Community Support Services.** Clubhouse staff connect members to physical, behavioral, and social services available outside of the Clubhouse that help improve overall health and independence by addressing needs like meals and personal care.
- **Employment Programs.** Clubhouses support members in obtaining competitive employment and helping them manage challenges as they restore, maintain, or sustain employment. Clubhouses often have an employment specialist as one of its core staff to support members in their employment goals.

## ▶▶ Key Features cont..

- **Supported Education.** Clubhouses assist members to reach their vocational and educational goals by helping them access community-based educational resources and opportunities.
- **Housing Supports.** Clubhouse staff support members in securing and sustaining safe and affordable housing, and support them in managing challenges to maintaining housing.
- **Reach Out Services.** Clubhouse members provide and staff reach out to current members who have stopped attending, who are becoming isolated in the community, and who are hospitalized. Clubhouse staff also identify and engage new members who may benefit from Clubhouse services. outbound communication to other members to keep them engaged in services.
- **Decision-Making and Governance.** Members participate in decision-making for all matters of Clubhouse operations.

## ▶▶ Clubhouse Accreditation

- Accreditation is a research-based, quality assurance program to ensure Clubhouses are operating effectively and in alignment with the Clubhouse Quality Standards.
- Standards are reviewed every two years by Clubhouse International's Standards Review Committee.
- Accreditation can be a time-intensive process that includes a self-study, site visit, and detailed findings report.
- Clubhouses may bill for up to **one year before beginning the accreditation process**, and for up to **3 years while actively pursuing accreditation**.
- Clubhouses cannot claim Medi-Cal payment for more than four years total before achieving Accreditation.
- DHCS may adjust accreditation timelines if there becomes a "backlog" of clubhouses awaiting accreditation by Clubhouse International.

## ▶▶ Next Steps: Program Rollout

**DMH is transitioning its Peer Resource Centers (PRCs) into Clubhouses systemwide**

**The PRC in Service Area 6 has already begun the transition process by adding in elements of the Clubhouse model**

**Clubhouse team and community trainings will begin in January 2026**

**Clubhouses in Service Areas 1, 4, 6,7 are set to open in July 2026**

Various work units, in a work-ordered-day

Structured Program Activities

Collaboration with Homeboy Industries, for food handling and preparation training