BUSINESS

Cliffside Malibu opens new Horizon Hills location

Facility is Malibu's latest premium addiction recovery option

By BARBARA BURKE
Special to The Malibu Times

Those fighting addiction have one more treatment option as Cliffside Malibu, a luxury residential and addiction treatment center, has opened a new location at Horizon Hills.

As one enters the luxurious property with majestic ocean views, he becomes immersed in a healing, calm space.

"We have truly created a place where clinical quality and excellence have always been at the forefront of what we do," said Cliffside Chief Executive Officer Kelly Stephenson. "For nearly 20 years, Cliffside has stayed the course to ensure that we move barriers, explore and implement evidence-based therapies, engage progressive new modalities, and create an environment unlike any place else. This is why we have been acknowledged by Newsweek as the best treatment program in Malibu."

The new Horizon Hills location, which was licensed on Sept. 15, offers what Stephenson characterizes as, "unparalleled clinical excellence in a premier, private setting."

At Horizon Hills, like Cliffside's six other Malibu venues, the focus is patient-centered and services are tailored to an individual's needs.

"Our three treatment pillars are the Stages of Change treatment, also known as the Transtheoretical Model, developed by Dr. James Prochasca, which recognizes that addicted individuals move through six stages of change: precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and termination." said Dane Fisher, Cliffside Malibu's chief operating officer. "Patients receive three weekly one-hour meetings with a licensed psychotherapist. The Therapeutic Alliance pillar ensures that every patient connects strongly with his therapist. We employ dialectical behavior therapy, which helps patients identify and regulate their out-of-control feelings that they previously controlled by using drugs and alcohol."

Fisher noted that the Stages of Change treatment is not a 12-step program, but that Horizon Hills and other Cliffside locations encourage patients to participate in 12-step programs as well as to engage in the community in some fashion.

"We transport our patients to community-based 12-step programs, and the Buddhists Recovery and Celebrate Recovery programs are available in Malibu as well." he said. "Patients choose a community of some kind because recovery is something you can't do alone."

Concierge medical treatment is provided by Malibu's Dr. Lisa Benya, with whom Cliffside has worked for more than a decade. Further, 24-hour nursing care is available. All medical care is overseen by Benya's board-certified addictionologist, Medical Director Dr. William Stanley, who is certified by the American Society of Addiction Medicine as well as the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

Patients are offered the opportunity to participate in hiking, meditation, yoga, sound baths, visiting beaches, working out at Malibu Fitness, playing pickleball, tennis, and swimming, along with other activities.

The final, and one of the most important, of Cliffside's pillars is providing patients with evidence-based therapeutic modalities provided by certified practitioners, treatments that are effective and meaningful for them, Fisher added.

Amenities and delicious cuisine abound

Creature comforts are important when one is re-assessing one's life and healing as he tries to recover from addiction. All of Cliffside's seven treatment venues are luxurious, spacious and welcoming. Some of the venues offer guest houses and suites.

Cuisine helps nurture both the body and the spirit.

"We have a staff of 12 chefs, led by Chef Jeffrey Jones and we have a pastry chef whose baking is wonderful, as well as chefs whose specialities are breakfast food and vegan food," Fisher said. "If a patient wants Thai food, we cook it and if they have other preferences, we accommodate them."

Food, Fisher added smiling, "is hugely important to everyone."







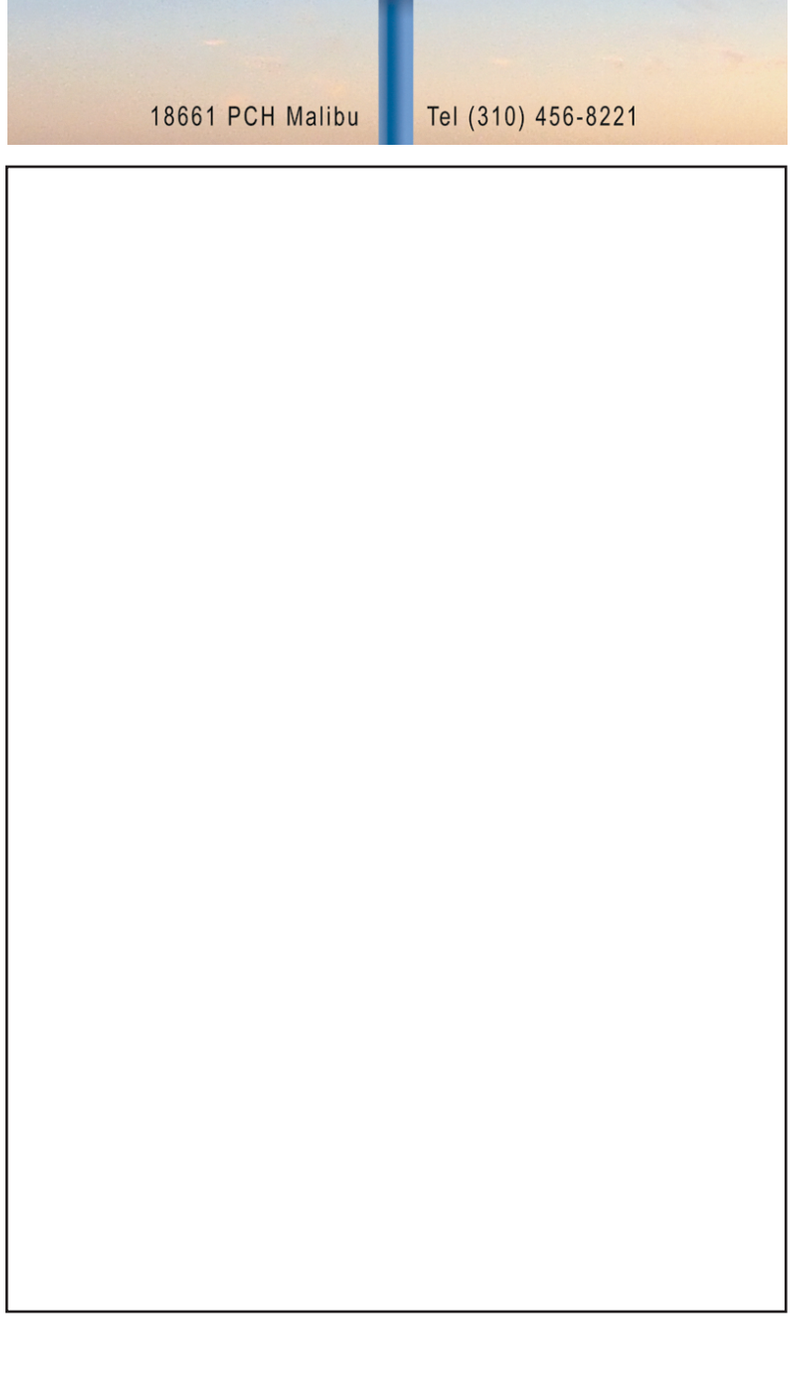
Horizon Hills, Cliffside Malibu addiction treatment center's new location, offers majestic ocean views and a healing, calm space. Contributed Photos

Delicious cuisine is not the only feature offered by Cliffside that distinguishes one's treatment experience and eases the addiction recovery process.

"The importance of the patients interacting with our very involved alumni cannot be overstated," Fisher said. "When a person is 12 hours into sobriety, it's hard to envision what 12 years out after choosing sobriety looks like."

Once a week, patients interact with alumni, often hearing their success stories and life accomplishments. Learning from and hearing about the experiences shared by the facility's alumni inspires patients' hope, optimism, and determination.

Stephenson sums up what Horizon Hills is all about: "Our sole mission is to provide our patients the opportunity to achieve the best possible outcomes for long-term recovery."



California strengthens worker mobility, non-compete, and cannabis rights

Gov. Newsom signs law strengthening stance against job restrictions, altering marijuana employment discrimination rules

By BARBARA BURKE
Special to The Malibu Times

California has long had a strong public policy against restrictive covenants in employment contracts with very limited exceptions. Section 16600 of the California Business and Professions Code states that "every contract by which anyone is restrained from engaging in a lawful profession, trade, or business of any kind is to that extent void." Over the years, California courts have strictly enforced that provision.

Section 16600 carves out narrow exceptions to that imprimatur. Non-compete agreements are enforceable if they are incident to the sale of a business, a partnership dissolution, or upon the dissolution or termination of limited liability company interest.

All California businesses should be aware that as the state legislature's season drew to a close, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed two new laws that expand the scope and consequences of the state's policies against such non-compete clauses by expanding the ways that employees can challenge non-compete agreements in the state.

Effective Jan. 1, 2024, SB goes into effect as Section 16600.5 of the Code and establishes that non-compete agreements are void in California regardless of where the employee worked, when the agreement was entered, and/or where such an agreement was signed. The new law also prohibits employers from both entering into or attempting to enforce non-compete agreements, which are void under state law.

The legislative intent stated in the enactment elucidates why the lawmakers chose to amplify existing restrictive covenant provisions. First, the legislative findings state that the possibility of litigation due to any attempts to enforce such restrictive covenants "has a chilling effect on employee mobility." Further, the legislative history states, "California employers increasingly face the challenge of employers outside of California attempting to prevent the hiring of former employees." However, "California's public policy against restraint of trade trumps other state laws when an employee seeks employment in California, even if the employee signed the contractual restraint while living outside of California and working for a non-California employer."

The new law provides that "[a]ny contract that is void under this chapter is unenforceable regardless of where and when the contract was signed." Importantly, the new law also expands employers' potential exposure to legal liability in this context by providing a former employee or prospective employee the right to "bring a private action to enforce" the law and allows a prevailing plaintiff in such a proceeding to recover either injunctive relief or actual damages, or both, as well as "reasonable attorneys' fees and costs." Before the new law's enactment, many lawsuits addressing restrictive covenants sought a declaratory judgment, finding such a provision void, and the law did not provide employees or prior employees with a private right of action.

Employers must proactively inform employees that non-compete contracts are void

AB 1076, codified as Section 1600.1 of the Code, adds a fairly onerous and time-sensitive burden on employers. The provision requires employers to notify current and former employees who were employed after Jan. 1, 2022, in writing by Feb. 14, 2024, that any non-compete contracts they have entered into are void, unless if falls within the narrow exceptions enumerated above. This notice must be provided to employees in written, individualized communication delivered to the previous or current employee's last known physical address and email address.

Prohibition against discrimination based on cannabis use

On Oct. 7, Newsom signed Senate Bill 700, amending Section 12954 of the Government Code, relating to employment discrimination. The new law goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2024, and restricts employers from asking an applicant about their prior marijuana use. The provision also clarifies that the law against discrimination on the basis of such use includes information an employer may obtain from an applicant's or an employee's criminal history.

Therefore, the new enactment expands current law, which prohibits employers from discriminating against employees who use cannabis off the job and away from a workplace. The law also prohibits employers from conducting certain tests for existing employees as well as applicants.

The new law does have some exceptions. It does not apply to the building and construction trades and does not preempt federal or state laws mandating employees to be tested under certain circumstances. Specifically, the law does not apply to applicants or employees hired for positions that require a federal government background investigation or security clearance in accordance with federal law. Government Code Section 12954 (b)-(e) now states that the new law does not preempt state or federal laws requiring applicants or employees to be tested for controlled substances either as a condition of employment, for federally funded positions or jobs that involve federal contracts or federal licensing-related benefits.

Proposition 64, passed by voters in 2016 and legalizing marijuana, continues to expressly state that employers may prohibit marijuana in the workplace and that employers do not have to accommodate an employee's marijuana use.

Malibu & Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce

Women's Leadership Committee Member Spotlight Feature:

Erica Segel



Founder, Malibu Moves

Short Bio:

Erica Segel is a passionate advocate for community building and personal empowerment. Over the course of her 8-year tenure as Manager and Race Director of the Malibu Half Marathon and 5K she handled all aspects of managing the event including brand development, social media, grassroots outreach, sponsorships, permits, and event production. Additionally, she designated The Boys & Girls Club of Malibu as the primary charity benefactor and initiated a highly successful charity program, consistently surpassing fundraising goals. Her efforts have raised well over $200,000 for the Club, exemplifying her dedication to supporting local causes.

In 2017 she was recognized by California State Senator Henry Stern for her substantial contributions to the community, and now serves on the Executive Board of Directors for the Malibu & Pacific Palisades Chamber of Commerce and leads as Chair of the Women's Leadership Committee.

Erica deeply values the transformative power of community and connection. Her belief in inclusivity led her to founding Malibu Moves to address the need for diversity in the racing world. Malibu Moves is a movement festival and community event where people of all ages, sizes, bodies, and fitness levels, can feel uplifted and empowered.

Something Personal:

After earning a Master's degree in Management Engineering in Rome, Italy, Erica embarked on a journey that led her to Barcelona, Spain, and eventually Malibu where she began her career as an Event Coordinator for the Priyan Foundation, which sought to spread the humanitarian message of renowned Ambassador of Peace, Prem Rawat. Working extensively with the foundation, Erica traveled to and worked in over 40 countries developing a deep appreciation for diverse cultures.

Hobby/Interest:

In her personal life, Erica finds joy in gardening and nurturing over 40 species of indoor plants. Experimenting with propagation techniques, she creates a tranquil environment at her home. She also enjoys hosting friends and preparing homemade meals.

Contact Information:
Email: erica@malibumoves.com
Phone: (310) 745-8231