

Tripped up on their chemical studies

Delays at state panel that vets psychedelics for medical therapies frustrate scientists.

By Emily Alpert Reyes

At the Pacific Neuroscience Institute in Santa Monica, scientists are eager to explore whether a psychedelic chemical found in a toad could help people whose depression has not eased with typical treatments. Patients regularly call or send emails about joining clinical trials to test that and other compounds, but the research center is turning them away.

“We have to tell them we don’t have any studies enrolling right now,” said Dr. Keith Heinzerling, director of the institute’s TRIP Center, which focuses on treatment and research on psychedelics. “We’ve been put on hold by the state.”

Across the state, dozens of such studies are in limbo thanks to a little-known government panel that monitors research on federally restricted drugs and addiction treatment.

The holdup, tied to a state law requiring government meetings to be held in public, has dragged on since the fall and galvanized some scientists to push for the panel to be dissolved.

Lawmakers in Sacramento established the Research Advisory Panel of California more than half a century ago to vet studies involving cannabis, hallucinogens and treatments for “abuse of controlled substances,” according to the state’s health and safety code.

The panel, which includes representatives of state agencies and universities, has the power to reject studies if they are poorly conceived, would produce little of scientific value or would expose Californians who sign on as research subjects to excessive risk. It also monitors ongoing research and can revoke its approval if studies veer from what it approved.

[See Psychedelics, A10]



BRANDON BELL/Getty Images

THE TEXAS National Guard continued blocking Border Patrol agents’ access to the Rio Grande in Eagle Pass after Wednesday’s deadline.

Response to Uvalde massacre plagued by ‘cascading failures’

Justice Dept. issues highly critical report on Texas school shooting

By Eric Tucker, Acacia Coronado, Lindsay Whitehurst and Jake Bleiberg

UVALDE, Texas — Police officials who responded to the deadly Uvalde, Texas, elementary school shooting waited far too long to confront the gunman, acted with “no urgency” in establishing a command post and communicated inaccurate information to grieving families, according to a Justice Department report released Thursday that identifies “cascading failures” in law enforcement’s handling of the massacre.

The Justice Department report, the most comprehensive federal accounting of the maligned police response to the May 24, 2022, shooting at Robb Elementary School, catalogs a sweeping array of training, communication, leadership and technology problems that federal officials say contributed to the crisis lasting far longer than necessary. All the while, the report says, terrified students inside the classrooms called 911 and

[See Massacre, A5]



ERIC GAY/Associated Press

DORA MENDOZA, right, whose granddaughter was killed at the school, gets a hug after a meeting with Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland.

TEXAS DEFIES FEDS IN BORDER DISPUTE

State arrests migrants, keeps blocking patrols despite the threat of federal response.

By Alexandra E. Petri

Texas officials arrested migrants on suspicion of criminal trespassing at a park in Eagle Pass, Texas, late Wednesday night, intensifying a legal battle between Gov. Greg Abbott and the Biden administration and escalating a showdown over border security policies.

Tensions in Texas come amid a record-high influx of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border, which could spell problems for President Biden in an election year.

For weeks, Texas has denied U.S. Border Patrol agents entry into Shelby Park and the surrounding area, which is restricted with fencing and concertina wire.

A woman and two children drowned Friday while trying to cross the Rio Grande from Mexico near the area that Texas has sealed off from federal agents.

The deaths have spurred a dispute between the federal government and Texas authorities over whether the lack of access to the area played a role.

The arrests by state authorities came as Texas defied a federal cease-and-desist letter to Texas Atty. Gen. Ken Paxton that said the state had until Wednesday night to stop blocking Border Patrol agents from having full access to the Shelby Park area or it would refer the matter to the Justice Department “for appropriate action.”

Under the U.S. Constitution, states have no authority to enforce immigration laws, which fall under federal jurisdiction.

But Texas has creatively applied state laws, such as misdemeanor trespassing, to arrest border-crossers.

[See Border, A5]



YURI GRIPAS/Associated Press

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AVERTED

Congress sends a stopgap spending bill to Biden over the objection of some House Republicans. Above, Speaker Mike Johnson with visitors. **NATION, A4**

Wildfire recovery marred, suit says

A state worker alleges a boss sexually harassed her, then made her job difficult. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

The year that remade cinema

How one documentary in 1999 predicted the future of Hollywood and films. **CALENDAR, E1**

Weather

Increasing clouds. L.A. Basin: 65/54. **B6**



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Returning to office? First, charm school

For workers with rusty in-person skills, bosses turn to professional etiquette classes.

By Samantha Masunaga

You walk into the office kitchen to heat up your lunch and are greeted by a mess. Your co-worker Bridget has left the communal area in disarray — again.

You’re frustrated. Where do you go from here?

Do you shame Bridget and make her feel bad? That might make you feel righteous in the moment, but is that actually helpful? Are you helping to improve your workplace — and most important, ensuring a clean kitchen the next time — by unloading on her? What’s the end goal here?

This is a hypothetical scenario, one used fre-

quently by business etiquette trainer Kate Zabriskie as she helps office workers and managers think through best practices for harmonious and productive workplaces. But workers throughout the U.S. are dealing with their own Bridgets every day — or are one.

As companies increasingly recall workers to the office, employees and managers alike are finding that the pandemic made us all a little rusty with in-person conduct. Co-workers are too loud at their desks. People are on their phones during meetings. Shaking hands is no longer a given. Small talk at networking events is ... awkward.

Bosses’ solution to this stilted behavior? Charm school.

More than 6 in 10 companies will send their employees to office etiquette classes [See Etiquette, A7]



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