



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-2791, Agenda Item #: 7.

9/14/2023

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with the Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center d/b/a Integral Care for an expanded mobile crisis outreach team to provide mental health crises services in collaboration with City first responders, for an initial 12-month term beginning October 1, 2023, in an amount not to exceed \$3,265,229, with four 12-month renewal options not to exceed \$3,265,229 per renewal option, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$16,326,145.

Lead Department

Downtown Austin Community Court

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$3,265,229 is included in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Downtown Austin Community Court Operating Budget

Prior Council Action:

On August 16, 2023, Council approved Ordinance No. 20230816-008 adopting the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Operating Budget.

For More Information:

Robert Kingham, Court Administrator, Downtown Austin Community Court (512) 974-1394.

Additional Backup Information:

The Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (EMCOT) works with the City of Austin first responders to divert jail bookings and emergency department (ED) admissions and provide short-term community-based interventions to stabilize a person in a psychiatric crisis and link these individuals to Integral Care services or other appropriate care available in the community. EMCOT consists of a multidisciplinary team of mental health professionals who operate with a high level of autonomy in a community-based setting, review current medications, prescribe medications, and exercise professional judgement.

Disposition options for law enforcement and the Emergency Medical Services Department are costly to the system, traumatizing for the individual, unnecessarily restrictive, and can include emergency detention, arrest, and/or transport to the nearest emergency room. Additionally, these dispositions can interrupt or conflict with an individual's existing mental health treatment plan and break the continuity of care. Arrest dispositions are especially disruptive to an individual's ongoing treatment because Medicaid coverage is suspended until the individual is released.

The goals of EMCOT are to:

- 1) In the absence of a public safety issue or a medical emergency, EMCOT strives to release the first responder from the scene within the first 10-15 minutes of arrival so that they may go back to being available for public safety and other medical emergencies.
- 2) Perform evidenced-based crisis assessments including risk to harm self/others
- 3) Link the individual to the most appropriate level of care and/or ensure continuity of care

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- 4) Prevent the overuse and misuse of emergency room admissions, incarceration and peace officer's emergency detentions to a more appropriate level of care for the individual
 - 5) Ensure individuals in our community receive professional mental health services from the time they call 911 to the time a mental health professional arrives to assist and support
 - 6) Enhance service array by providing telehealth services to expand the scope of calls that EMCOT can respond to and decrease wait time for EMCOT's arrival
 - 7) Provide services in an individual's preferred language when the need is a language other than English.
 - 8) Provide mental health training to first responder partners