



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4027, **Agenda Item #:** 43.

2/15/2024

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation of an interlocal agreement with Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center d/b/a Integral Care for the Diversion Pilot, to implement a multi-partner mental health diversion pilot program, for a 12-month term beginning March 1, 2024, for an amount up to \$2,000,000.

Lead Department

Community Court.

Fiscal Note

Funding for this agreement in the amount of \$2,000,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Stabilization Reserve Fund.

For More Information:

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

Additional Backup Information:

The Mental Health Diversion Pilot (Pilot) is a collaboration between Travis County, Central Health, Integral Care, and Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC). The Pilot will leverage existing programs and facilities to expand community services to immediately address unmet deflection and diversion needs and provide members of the community experiencing behavioral health crises with access to services.

The Pilot will leverage Integral Care's Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) program on Airport Blvd. and repurpose Integral Care's 15th Street crisis residential program, located in a City-owned facility, for a Therapeutic Respite Center (TRP) to help address the following persistent challenges in our community:

1. Law enforcement and other emergency service entities do not have a consistent place to take individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis for services. As a result, individuals are taken to jail or a hospital, which are often not the appropriate setting to address a behavioral health crisis.
2. Individuals continually cycle in and out of jail, hospitals, and/or homelessness because there is no dedicated pathway for this population to concurrently receive extended clinical behavioral health treatment in a residential setting while being connected to long-term supportive housing.

The Pilot will expand service hours at PES to 24/7 operations including access to a prescriber onsite and 24-hour observation services. PES services will be run by Integral Care and funded by Central Health and Travis County.

The TRP component of the Pilot will provide access to up to 90 days of care including behavioral health services, peer support, and working toward connection to stable exit options through housing-focused case management services. TRP will be funded through Travis County and the City of Austin.

Approval of this item would authorize negotiation of up to \$2,000,000 for costs associated with the TRP component of the Pilot, including housing-focused case management, peer support services, and other operational expenses.

