

Request:

Requesting approval of a grant agreement with Caring for Denver Foundation for a total amount of \$785,163.00 for three years with an end date of 10/31/2028. The purpose of this agreement is to provide funding for behavioral health clinicians at the 911 Communications Center who will offer crisis intervention and give resource navigation/consultation to dispatchers, call takers, and responders. (SAFTY-202581701).

Key Takeaways:

- This request is for the 9-1-1 Crisis Diversion Program that aims to enhance and support the existing mental health crisis services (STAR, CO-Response, Victim Support Unit, Roads2Recovery, etc.) in the City and County of Denver.
- This pilot program will embed behavioral health clinicians in Denver 9-1-1 to assist with triaging, consultation, de-escalation, and provide immediate telephone assistance to callers who may be experiencing a behavioral health crisis.
- The award will fund three FTE's that would be City and County of Denver employees. Denver 9-1-1 will absorb any administrative costs related to this grant in its existing operational budget.
- This grant will support a model like the Denver Health Nurse Line; however, the three full-time positions will be dedicated to behavioral health and staffed by clinicians serving as subject matter experts.
- The grant provides funding for a three-year period, and Denver 9-1-1 intends to utilize the funding for the duration of its availability.

Background:

Denver 9-1-1 is seeking to further support City and County of Denver initiatives such as STAR, Roads2Recovery, All-In-Mile-High, and others. The expansion of clinical expertise within the communications center will significantly enhance 9-1-1's ability to shepherd calls with a mental health or behavioral health nexus, to the appropriate response and supports. Caring For Denver will provide funding to Denver 9-1-1 for the explicit purpose of recruiting, hiring, and compensating clinical staff to be embedded within the 9-1-1 communications center. In return,

Denver 9-1-1 will submit periodic reports and share mutually agreed-upon data with Caring for Denver to support project evaluation and continuous improvement.

The grant also supports Denver 9-1-1's training efforts to provide 9-1-1 and non-emergency line staff skills to identify behavioral health-related calls and respond in ways that promote safer, more effective outcomes. **Clinical staff responsibilities include:**

- Reviewing pending calls for service to identify behavioral health needs and connect individuals to appropriate care.
- Diverting behavioral health-related calls from unnecessary in-person responses or criminal justice involvement.
- Managing internal transfers of behavioral health calls that do not present immediate safety risks, providing crisis intervention and support.
- Gathering collateral information to assist field responders and reduce risk during in-person engagements.
- De-escalating behavioral health crises prior to the arrival of first responders.
- Providing real-time consultation and guidance to first responders on mental health issues, crisis intervention strategies, and available resources.
- Conducting follow-up with individuals after a crisis, when appropriate, to support ongoing care and stabilization.

The grant will support continued collaboration with the STAR program to advance behavioral health initiatives within the 9-1-1 department. The Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) is aware of the proposed implementation and fully supports Denver 9-1-1 in receiving this funding.