Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: BL2021-834, **Version:** 1

An ordinance approving an agreement between the Mental Health Cooperative (“MHC”), and the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by and through the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (“MNPD”), for the purpose of ensuring the provision, integration and coordination of behavioral health services for individuals who are mutually served by both organizations.

WHEREAS, the agreement attached hereto and incorporated herein outlines the coordination of behavioral health services between the MHC and the MNPD;

WHEREAS, it is to the benefit of the citizens of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County that this agreement be approved.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the agreement by and between the Mental Health Cooperative (“MHC”), and the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, by and through the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (“MNPD”), for the purpose of ensuring the provision, integration and coordination of behavioral health services for individuals who are mutually served by both organizations, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby approved.

Section 2. That this ordinance shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

Analysis

This ordinance approves an agreement between the Mental Health Cooperative (“MHC”) and the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (“MNPD”) for the purpose of ensuring the provision, integration, and coordination of behavioral health services.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between MHC and MNPD outlines the program design and the responsibilities of the parties. Pursuant to this agreement, MHC personnel will support MNPD by responding to mental illness crisis calls for service. The Co-Response Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program is designed to improve the outcome of police encounters with individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.

Under the agreement, MHC agrees to provide crisis counselors to respond alongside MNPD officers and accept mobile crisis referrals of adults, children, and adolescents using an agreed upon referral process. MHC would further provide consultation to MNPD through mobile crisis and provide crisis assessment when clinically appropriate. MHC agrees to provide mental health training to MNPD officers. If no co-response team is on duty, MHC would provide a crisis counselor to a specified location upon request of MNPD and as resources may allow.

Under the agreement, MNPD agrees provides an opportunity for training on major topics such as recognizing signs and symptoms of mental illness, suicide risk, and verbal de-escalation for MNPD officers. For MHC's Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) members, MNPD agrees to provide training regarding police procedure, safely responding to calls for service, and other relevant curriculum. MNPD agrees that, when MNPD officers are dispatched to or otherwise encounter an individual who may be experiencing a mental health crisis, the MNPD officers will contact the CIT. If CIT is unavailable, officers will contact the MHC's MCRT by telephone.

If MNPD makes a determination that an individual is experiencing a mental health crisis and poses an immediate "substantial likelihood of serious harm" the officer shall take that person into custody pursuant to T.C.A. § 33-6-402. The officer will then contact MCH MCRT for consult and a potential evaluation by a mental health professional. If an individual is transported to the MHC by MNPD, or needs to be assessed by MCRT on scene, the officer is required to remain with the individual and provide assistance until released by MHC MCRT. If an individual has outstanding criminal warrants and requires a mental health evaluation, the officer shall, if possible, refrain from serving the warrants and notify his or her supervisor, consistent with department policy.

Both MHC and MNPD will provide a point person dedicated to addressing any issues that may arise. The parties will also comply with all federal and state regulations, including HIPAA, regarding consumer privacy and confidentiality.

This agreement commences upon approval of both parties and the Metropolitan Council. Either party may terminate the agreement without cause upon 30 days prior written notice.

Fiscal Note: The MNPD academy will provide training to the Mental Health Cooperative Staff participating in the program and the Mental Health Cooperative will be providing training to MNPD officers. However, there is a possibility that the Mental Health Cooperative will not be able to provide training to all officers and if that is the case, then potentially a third party may be necessary to provide that training which may end up in additional training costs to MNPD. Currently, the MNPD has an immediate need to create a Lieutenant position to oversee this program and may potentially need two additional Sergeants as the program expands in the near future.