



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-2877, **Agenda Item #:** 11.

9/17/2020

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of Amendment No. 4 to the interlocal agreement with the Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center D/B/A Integral Care for the Expanded Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, which offers a first response team for mental health crises in collaboration with City first responders, to increase funding for the three remaining renewal options by \$1,350,000 per renewal option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$4,050,000.

Lead Department

Community Court

Fiscal Note

Funding for this amendment and the second renewal option in the amount of \$3,265,229 is included in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Operating Budget of the Downtown Austin Community Court.

Prior Council Action:

December 13, 2018 - City Council approved to authorize the negotiation and execution an interlocal agreement.

September 19, 2019 - City Council approved the addition of four 12-month renewal options, with the first renewal option in an amount not to exceed \$1,749,229 and the three remaining renewal options in an amount not to exceed \$1,915,229, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$8,642,145.

For More Information:

Peter Valdez, Court Administrator, Downtown Austin Community Court, (512) 974-4873; Robert Kingham, Operations Manager, 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. The team also follows up with individuals to offer treatment and access to services through Integral Care and/or other community-based providers. EMCOT consists of licensed mental health professionals and medical providers who operate with a high level of autonomy in a community-based setting, review current medications, prescribe medications, and exercise clinical judgement.

Disposition options for law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are costly to the system, traumatizing for the individual, unnecessarily restrictive, and can include emergency detention, arrest, and/or transport to the nearest emergency department. 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.

This additional funding that was included in the approved FY 2020-21 Budget will help fully implement the recommendations from the Meadows Report related to mental health response. The additions will include expanding the staff to ensure 24/7 access, increasing access to telehealth resources by deploying 500 tablets to first responders, which provides access to one full-time Advanced Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner and a Psychiatrist to bring specialty psychiatric care to people in the community.

The goal of EMCOT is to address these issues in three ways:

- 1) Release the officer or paramedic from the scene within 15 minutes on average
- 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

City Council adopted the FY20-21 budget which included \$3,265,229 of funding for Integral Care to continue the EMCOT program and implement program expansions including telehealth deployment and mental health integrated dispatch. Approval of this item will allow Integral Care to begin work on expanding the EMCOT program once the second renewal option begins on October 1, 2020.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Safety, Health and Environment, Economic Opportunity and Affordability