



Legislation Text

File #: Res 32026, Version: 3

CITY OF SEATTLE

RESOLUTION _____

A RESOLUTION requesting King County and the State of Washington to increase services to address behavioral health conditions.

WHEREAS, the term “behavioral health services” is understood to incorporate mental health services and substance use disorder treatment; and

WHEREAS, King County created and operates the King County Integrated Care Network, which encompasses all behavioral health providers in King County who provide Medicaid-funded behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, King County is the Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization for the county, which is responsible for the provision of behavioral health services to people who are in crisis; and

WHEREAS, the State of Washington has substantial influence over the availability of services and stability of the behavioral health workforce, including through investments in the newly created 988 hotline for mental health crises, setting behavioral health Medicaid rates, and provision of non-Medicaid behavioral health resources; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Point-in-Time Count of people experiencing homelessness in King County estimates that 54 percent of people experiencing homelessness have a psychiatric or emotional condition, 44 percent have a substance use disorder, and 47 percent have post-traumatic stress disorder; and

WHEREAS, the most recent results from the Washington State Syringe Exchange Health Survey conducted by the University of Washington found that 82 percent of respondents whose main drug was heroin and 48 percent whose main drug was methamphetamine were interested in reducing or stopping their drug use;

and

WHEREAS, the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 487,000 people in Washington need but do not receive treatment at a specialty facility for substance use; and

WHEREAS, the February 1, 2021, results of the Household Pulse Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 46.3 percent of adults in Washington reported symptoms of anxiety or depression and 30.1 percent were unable to get needed counseling or therapy; and

WHEREAS, the most recent National Survey on Drug Use and Health conducted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 52 percent of Washingtonians ages 12 through 17 who have depression did not receive any care in the last year; and

WHEREAS, research published by Veronica Dupéré in the *Journal of Adolescent Health* indicates that high school students with depression are more than twice as likely to drop out of school as their peers; and

WHEREAS, in March 2021, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee signed an emergency proclamation declaring a children and youth mental health crisis and directed the Washington Health Care Authority and Department of Health to immediately begin work on recommendations for supporting the behavioral health needs of children and youth over the next six to 12 months and to address and triage the full spectrum of rising pediatric behavioral health needs; and

WHEREAS, Public Health-Seattle and King County reports a 30 percent increase in behavioral health crisis calls from January 2020 to September 2021; and

WHEREAS, a ranking by Mental Health America of low prevalence of mental illness and high access to care in 2020 places Washington forty-sixth out of all states and the District of Columbia; and

WHEREAS, King County currently funds the Crisis Solutions Center, a voluntary crisis stabilization facility that provides up to 72 hours of stabilization, monitoring, and referral services for individuals in behavioral crisis and up to 14 days of additional residential services for individuals who are homeless or

at risk of homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the Crisis Solutions Center typically accepts referrals from first responders and designated crisis responders, not a broader range of service domains and agencies, such as behavioral health agencies, homelessness service providers, or diversion programs; and

WHEREAS, King County funds three Mobile Crisis Teams of mental health and substance use disorder professionals that help individuals in crisis stabilize and connect with services; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that three additional Mobile Crisis Teams would be necessary to provide coverage to the entire county 24 hours per day, seven days per week; and

WHEREAS, the existing post-crisis follow-up teams may meet only one-sixth of the total need for these services in the county; and

WHEREAS, a meeting of providers and local leaders in October 2021 to discuss the behavioral health services in King County identified 18 recommendations to strengthen the system; and

WHEREAS, the City budget, through multiple budget actions, provides funds to expand behavioral health services, including school-based services; NOW, THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The Council supports requests presented to King County's Department of Community and Human Services to increase funding for behavioral health resources to substantially increase the availability of a mobile crisis response, post-crisis follow-up teams, crisis stabilization facilities, and other treatment programs.

Section 2. The Council urges the Governor, State Legislature, Washington State Health Care Authority, and U.S. federal government to provide additional support for behavioral health services, both through Medicaid and with non-Medicaid resources.

Section 3. The Council declares that funds provided in the 2022 Adopted Budget to expand school-

based mental health services, Community Based Partnerships, and mobile behavioral health crisis services and high-acuity services for people with behavioral health conditions who also experience homelessness, are provided in acknowledgement of the shared role that all levels of government have in creating and maintaining a strong behavioral health system and with the expectation that King County is also making new investments to expand components of the behavioral health service system in the county.

Section 4. The Council requests that the Office of Intergovernmental Relations communicate these positions and actions to the King County Council, King County Executive, Washington State Legislature, Governor of Washington, and the elected officials representing Seattle at the federal level.

Adopted by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2021, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this _____ day of _____, 2021.

President _____ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the _____ day of _____, 2021.

Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2021.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)