

# Community Assisted Response & Engagement

## 2026 Proposed Budget Overview

Dr. Amy Barden, Chief  
September 2025

Seattle City Council Select Budget Committee



**City of Seattle**

# CARE Mission and Values

---

**We answer the call, ensuring the best first response for a safer, stronger Seattle.**

**Collaboration:** We believe that a collaborative and coordinated approach with Police, Fire & EMS services is essential to holistically meet the needs of community members.

**Adaptability:** We believe the community's needs are complex and varied, requiring diverse skill sets, perspectives, and resources. We are adaptive and responsive to emerging trends.

**Responsibility:** We believe prevention and diversion are essential to minimizing the need for coercion. We believe in balancing compassion with the broader needs of community.

**Empathy:** We believe people can change and acknowledge that every life has equal value. We advocate for an unbiased system designed to heal and rehabilitate.

# Summary

CARE has improved 911 operations, expanded first response, and convened vital public safety collaborations while continuing to be fiscally diligent and highly efficient.

Through this 2026 funding, CARE will build on its 2025 citywide expansion by increasing hours of operation, scope of service, and locations.



TOTAL BUDGET (\$000s)	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
General Fund	\$32,815	\$36,490	\$45,433
Other Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
FTE	189	189	239

# Investment in Seattle 911

The 9-1-1 Center continues to develop and innovate. Improvements in training, staff development, and operational refinements have positively impacted response metrics, staff turnover, and overtime costs.

- Add 12 Call-taker positions (reducing reliance on overtime hours) and 3 trainers
- Convert 3 business support positions to permanent (Payroll, Finance, HR)



	((\$000s))	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
General Fund		\$28,456	\$29,991	\$32,105	7%
Other Funds		--	--	--	--
FTE		158	158	176	11%

# Investment in CARE Crisis Response

There are now over 6,000 CARE events, and CARE responders have done the work for 2 years without incident. Community members deserve the right first response to a 911 call.

Objective: **Double CARE coverage hours (20 hours a day)**

- 31 new positions (24 CCRs, 6 Supervisors, 1 Training manager)
- 8 additional vehicles
- Additional office space



(\$000s)	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
General Fund	\$4,358	\$6,499	\$13,328	105%
Other Funds	--	--	--	--
FTE	32	32	63	97%

# Business Case for CARE

---

## **CARE is designed to break the cycles of crisis through system coordination and integration**

- High utilizer workgroups to glean insight into what interventions may be most effective across City and County teams
- LEAD oversight: records kept private in CARE's CJIS environment to ensure individuals are connected to their case manager
- New partnership with King County Prosecuting Attorney Office to provide a direct line from KC Jail to CARE responders for folks exiting in crisis
- 988/911 coordination and integration
- Investigating direct clinical resource line to CARE for organizations serving populations often experiencing behavioral health crisis

# Ethical Case for CARE

---

Bureaucratic silos preclude our most vulnerable neighbors from simple access to all the needed resources.

Providing **the right first response** can inspire confidence in the public safety system and hope in individual lives.

Community members deserve accountable and transparent public servants **who value people over process.**



# Discussion

---

