



North Sound BH-ASO

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PROVIDER QUESTION SUBMISSION

Request for Proposals: Island County: Mobile Crisis Response, DCR Services, and Integrated First Responder Deployment

The following questions were submitted by providers interested in submitting a response for the above mentioned RFP.

1. The RFP states that DCR services will be rendered at a centralized location identified by North Sound BH-ASO and Island County partners. Has a specific location been identified, and if so, when will that information be provided to applicants?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

A final centralized location has not yet been confirmed. North Sound BH-ASO and Island County partners are evaluating potential locations on Whidbey Island. If a location or other material information is confirmed before proposals are due, it will be communicated to all applicants in writing.

2. Will the County provide the facility and cover occupancy-related costs (e.g., lease, utilities, maintenance), or are these costs expected to be included in the provider's budget?

North Sound BH-ASO Response: Unless North Sound BH-ASO provides different information in writing, applicants should assume that facility and occupancy-related costs are part of the proposed operating budget. Applicants should clearly identify assumptions regarding rent, utilities, maintenance, security, technology, and other occupancy costs.

If a County-provided location may become available but is not guaranteed, applicants may separately explain how that would affect their proposed budget.

3. If the centralized DCR location is not provided by the County, what facility requirements are expected (e.g., office space, interview rooms, after-hours access, secure records storage, technology infrastructure), and should these costs be incorporated into the proposal budget?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

At this time, North Sound BH-ASO and Island County are currently planning on identifying and providing a centralized DCR location. If this changes, the provider is responsible for securing the centralized location that supports reliable, locally based DCR operations and field deployment on a 24/7 basis. At minimum, it should provide:

- Private space for confidential work and interviews;

- Secure records and technology systems;
- Reliable telephone and internet access;
- Appropriate staff-safety measures;
- After-hours access;
- Accessibility for individuals with disabilities; and
- Compliance with applicable BHA licensing, privacy, safety, and contractual requirements.

4. The RFP references both arranging transportation and coordinating transportation for ITA investigations and post-ITA placement. Does the County expect the contracted provider to directly provide transportation services, contract for transportation services, or solely coordinate transportation resources available through community partners?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

The selected provider will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate behavioral health transportation can be arranged, but the RFP does not require one specific transportation model. An applicant may propose to:

- Provide transportation directly when legally and clinically appropriate;
- Contract with a qualified transportation provider;
- Coordinate transportation through existing community partners; or
- Use a combination of these approaches.

The proposal should clearly identify who will provide transportation in different circumstances, how transportation will be available after hours and out of county, how costs will be covered, and what contingency arrangements will be used when the primary option is unavailable.

5. For individuals detained under the ITA who require secure transport between facilities (e.g., Whidbey Health to an E&T facility), what specific transportation responsibilities are expected of the provider versus hospitals, law enforcement, ambulance services, or designated transport vendors?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

The DCR and crisis provider will be expected to complete the applicable evaluation, legal and clinical documentation, placement coordination, partner communication, and handoff activities.

Physical transportation following an ITA detention may be provided by law enforcement, EMS or ambulance services, a hospital, or another authorized transportation provider, depending on the circumstances and applicable law and protocols.

Applicants should describe their proposed workflow and how they will prevent transportation or placement coordination from creating avoidable delays. Final responsibilities will be further defined through operational protocols and partner agreements.

6. Does the County envision that DCR staff will remain physically present at the centralized location twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week, or is on-site coverage only expected during specified hours with field response occurring as needed?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

The expectation is that the DCR staff will remain physically present at the centralized location 24/7, 7 days a week. This requirement may not be met through telehealth-only or primarily off-island on-call models.

North Sound BH-ASO and winning bidder will work together to identify workflows for those times when a DCR conducts field, hospital, court or other authorized activities. Applicants should describe how DCRs will be based locally, deployed into the community, and supported by backup coverage when the assigned DCR is already engaged.

7. For DCR referrals received while a DCR is actively engaged in another investigation, what performance expectations will be applied regarding response times and staffing redundancy?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

The RFP requires reliable 24/7 DCR coverage but does not require multiple DCRs to be concurrently available at all times. When a DCR is already conducting an investigation, the provider must have a process to:

- Promptly review and prioritize the new referral;
- Communicate with the referring party;
- Activate backup or on-call coverage when necessary;
- Obtain supervisory or clinical consultation;
- Coordinate an appropriate interim safety response; and
- Meet applicable crisis-response and ITA requirements.

HCA's crisis-response standards remain one hour for a behavioral health emergency, two hours for an emergent care crisis, and 24 hours for an urgent behavioral health situation. DCR investigations must also comply with applicable ITA statutes, DCR protocols, and documentation requirements. The proposal should demonstrate sufficient backup, leave, vacancy, and simultaneous-demand coverage without assuming that two DCRs must be continuously staffed.

The requirement for a trained second person or first responder when needed for private-location safety is separate from the requirement for backup DCR coverage.

8. What level of integration with ICOM 911 is anticipated (e.g., direct dispatch capability, radio access, co-location, CAD access, or participation through established communication channels)?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

At minimum, the selected provider will be expected to participate in established North Sound regional crisis dispatch protocols and maintain real-time communication and referral coordination with ICOM/911.

Direct CAD access, radio access, co-location, or direct dispatch authority should not be assumed unless specifically confirmed by the applicable public-safety partner. Applicants should describe:

- Their preferred integration model;
- Required technology and partner dependencies;
- Prior experience with 911 integration;
- How they would operate if direct CAD or radio access is unavailable; and
- The steps they would take during the first 90 days to establish operational protocols with ICOM and first responders.

The final technical and operational model will be developed with ICOM, North Sound BH-ASO, Island County, and other participating partners.

9. The RFP references law enforcement warm hand-offs and post-crisis stabilization. Can the County provide examples of the anticipated workflow and expectations for provider involvement in these transitions?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

A warm handoff means an active transfer of care—not simply giving an individual a telephone number or referral list. Examples may include:

- Law enforcement or EMS connecting the individual directly with the MRRCT at the scene;
- MRRCT contacting the DCR, providing relevant information, and coordinating the transition for an ITA evaluation;
- Crisis staff directly connecting an individual with outpatient, substance use disorder, peer, or stabilization services;
- Coordinating discharge follow-up with WhidbeyHealth or a crisis facility; and
- Confirming that the receiving provider has accepted the referral and understands the immediate follow-up needs.

Subject to appropriate consent and legal authority, the provider should share relevant information, document the handoff, and provide post-crisis stabilization based on individual need. This may include safety-plan review, peer support, family support, care coordination, connection or reconnection to treatment, and other activities intended to reduce repeat crisis, emergency department use, or law-enforcement involvement.

10. Will one-time startup costs (facility setup, vehicles, technology, recruiting, training, furnishings, etc.) be funded separately, or are applicants expected to include all startup expenses within the proposed operating budget?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

Applicants should identify assumptions for recruiting, training, technology, furnishings, facility setup, and other implementation needs. As stated in the RFP, proposed vehicle costs must be based on leasing rather than vehicle purchase. All proposed costs remain subject to available funding and applicable funding restrictions.

11. Will any existing county-owned resources, equipment, vehicles, communication systems, or office infrastructure be made available to the successful bidder?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

No County-owned facility, vehicle, equipment, technology, communication system, or other resource should be assumed to be available unless specifically identified by North Sound BH-ASO in writing.

Applicants should therefore submit a self-sufficient staffing and operating model and clearly identify any assumptions regarding partner-provided resources. If specific resources are confirmed before proposals are due, that information will be provided equally to all applicants. Additional resource-sharing arrangements may be developed after award through the implementation and MOU process but should not be relied upon in the applicant's base budget.

12. May vehicles be purchased?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

No, vehicles may not purchased. Only leasing of vehicles is allowed.

13. Is it allowable under this RFP (Island County Mobile Crisis Response, Designated Crisis Responder Services, and Integrated First Responder Deployment) for agencies to apply for only a portion of the outlined scope of work – e.g., is it allowable for an agency to apply to provide DCR Services *only*? And, if so, how do the parameters and expectations (staffing framework, location, budget, scope requirements, etc) for the RFP change as a result?

North Sound BH-ASO Response

North Sound BH-ASO response: Yes, it is allowable under this RFP for agencies to apply for only a portion of the outlines scope of work. In such case, you would respond only to the parameters and expectations of the RFP pertinent to the body of work you are applying for. Given that the program does identify two distinct bodies of work in DCR staffing as well as MRRCT, it is possible North Sound might select, based on bidders' willingness, a DCR program from one organization and an MRRCT program from another. If you are only applying for one portion of the RFP, the total RFP bid that you make must be only a portion

of the overall funding allowable for this RFP. A winning bidder, approaching DCR work only, for example, would not be expected to request the full \$2 million budget as the DCR work.