# COUNTY OF ERIE

**MARK C. POLONCARZ**
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

October 30, 2026

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street – Fourth Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

**Re: Authorization to award The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth (TLC) funding related to their response to the Request for Proposal and to enter into a contract for related services**

Dear Honorable Members:

Please find attached a resolution requesting legislative authorization to award TLC $500,000 in funding related to their response to the Request for Proposal (RFP), entitled Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services-RFP# 2026-048VF.

Attached for your Honorable Body's review is a summary of the rationale for the Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services proposal being selected and the template of the scoring matrix used during the review process.

If your Honorable Body requires any further information, please contact Commissioner Sarah Bonk at the Department of Mental Health. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/dvs
Enclosure

cc: Sarah A. Bonk, Commissioner

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
**From:** Erie County Department of Mental Health
**Re:** Authorization to award The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth (TLC) funding related to their response to the Request for Proposal and to enter into a contract for related services
**Date:** October 30, 2026

## SUMMARY

Funding available to the Erie County Department of Mental Health (ECDMH) will be awarded and allocated to The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth (TLC) to implement a clinical service that will coordinate with the Buffalo Police Department (BPD) in responding to behavioral health related calls for service within the City of Buffalo.

## FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The funding for this pilot initiative in the amount of $500,000 is derived from $200,000 of unutilized 2026 County share and $300,000 of unallocated Federal Salary Sharing. The award is subject to annual contract renewal, which includes funds availability and demonstrated fiscal and programmatic stability of TLC.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

A Request for Proposal (RFP), entitled Behavioral Health Crisis Response Services-RFP #2026-048VF was solicited and a review process, consistent with Erie County Administrative Code, was completed. Upon completion of the review process, which included two very satisfactory virtual meetings with the highest-ranking applicant, TLC, the Review and Selection Committee recommended that TLC be awarded the funding to provide the service as outlined in the RFP. TLC was the highest ranked applicant of the four (4) eligible applicants by three (3) of the four (4) Review and Selection Committee members. The fourth member had TLC ranked as the second-best proposal. In addition, by notable margins, TLC also had the highest total points based on rankings, and the highest cumulative score.

Based on the collective evaluation of various criteria such as 1) Alignment with BPD Objectives; 2) Staffing and Retention; 3) Community Commitment; and 4) Operational Adaptability, the Selection Committee determined that TLC submitted the most comprehensive proposal with the highest potential for operational success.

While not a local service provider, TLC possesses the infrastructure, experience and vision to partner effectively with the BPD on this initiative.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The RFP was initiated by ECDMH to implement a clinical service that will coordinate with the BPD in responding to behavioral health-related calls for service within the City of Buffalo. The pilot program is designed to deploy licensed clinicians to support real time, clinically informed responses to those experiencing behavioral health crises.

If approved, funding will be allocated and contract compliance will be monitored through ECDMH.

## CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Failure to approve this action would result in a missed opportunity to determine whether a cutting-edge program such as this could really make a positive impact in the community. If successful, this pilot could become a model for other locations to follow, ultimately bringing more hopeful outcomes to residents of WNY and beyond.

## STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

A contract by and between the County of Erie and acting by and through the ECDMH and TLC will be initiated to include this service, and the ECDMH will monitor this provider's program operations, performance goals and contract compliance activities as it pertains to this service. The effective date of this contract would be 1/1/2027.

# A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Re: Authorization to award The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth (TLC) funding related to their response to the Request for Proposal and to enter into a contract for related services

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Mental Health is responsible for the delivery of a comprehensive range of mental health and chemical dependency services for the residents of Erie County; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Mental Health has funding in the amount of $500,000 for the provision of the Behavioral Health Crisis Response service; and

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Mental Health solicited a Request for Proposal for the provision of the Behavioral Health Crisis Response service; and

WHEREAS, after conducting a thorough review process, The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth (TLC) as the highest-ranking applicant, was recommended by the Selection Committee to be the recipient of the RFP award and subsequently approved by the Deputy County Executive; and

WHEREAS, a budget appropriation needs to be created for TLC not to exceed $500,000; and

WHEREAS, no additional County funds are necessary for this request.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the Department of Mental Health to amend its 2026 General Fund Budget (Fund 110, Funds Center 12410) as follows:

Department of Mental Health
Fund 110, Funds Center 12410

| **REVENUES** | **CHANGE** |
|---|---|
| 411000 – MH Fed Med Salary Share | $300,000 |
| TOTAL | $300,000 |

| **APPROPRIATIONS** | **CHANGE** |
|---|---|
| 516020 – Prof Svcs Contracts and Fees | $500,000 |
| 517780 – Save the Michaels ASA | ($100,000) |
| 517821 – Suicide Prevention ASA | ($100,000) |
| TOTAL | $300,000 |

and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to the County Executive or Deputy County Executive to enter into contract with the Lincoln Center for Family and Youth in an amount not to exceed $500,000; and be it further

RESOLVED, that authorization is hereby given to the Division of Budget and Management to make any technical adjustments necessary to effectuate this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be furnished to the County Executive's Office, Division of Budget and Management, Comptroller's Office, Department of Law and Department of Mental Health.

Scoring Tool for RFP# 2026-048VF

| Committee member | Mid-Erie Mental Health Services | Suicide Prevention & Crisis Service Inc. | The Lincoln Center | TrueCare24, Inc. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 82 | 88 | 94 | 46 |
| 2 | 84 | 84 | 87 | 55 |
| 3 | 96 | 92 | 92 | 63 |
| 4 | 82 | 80 | 96 | 53 |
| Total Score | 344 | 344 | 369 | 217 |
| Overall Rank | 2/3 | 2/3 | 1 | 4 |

The Selection Committee is confident that The Lincoln Center possesses the infrastructure, experience, and vision to partner effectively with the BPD. If you would like further details regarding this recommendation, the committee is more than willing to accommodate.

The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth does not currently have a contract with Erie County. Upon approval from the County Executive's office and the Erie County Legislature, the Department of Mental Health will execute the contract effective 1/1/2027.

Submitted By: Julianna Everdyke, LMSW
Erie County Selection Committee Chair (RFP #2026-048VF)

Date: 10/26/26

Approval By: Sarah A. Bonk, LMSW
Erie County Commissioner of Mental Health

Date: 26/10/2026

Approval By: Lisa Chimera
Erie County Deputy County Executive

Date: 10/27/26