

WILLIAMSON COUNTY CRISIS SERVICES INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

THIS INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT (Agreement) for Crisis Services is made and entered into by and between WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS (County) and BLUEBONNET TRAILS COMMUNITY MHMR CENTER d/b/a BLUEBONNET TRAILS COMMUNITY SERVICES (BTCS) which are political subdivisions of the State of Texas ("the Parties").

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, Texas Government Code, Chapter 791, the Interlocal Cooperation Act provides that any one or more public agencies may contract with each other for the performance of governmental functions and for the joint use of facilities or services for the promotion and protection of the health and welfare of the inhabitants of this State and the mutual benefit of the Parties; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Texas has contracted with Local Mental Health Authorities to ensure provision of emergency mental health services throughout the 254 counties in Texas; and,

WHEREAS, BTCS is the Local Mental Health Authority for Williamson County and is responsible for ensuring access to needed behavioral health services for the citizens of Williamson County under contract for specific services with the state; and,

WHEREAS, the County, under the direction of Williamson County Emergency Services, provides assistance through 911 Dispatch addressing the emergent and urgent needs of callers through a collaborative response; and

WHEREAS, BTCS, as the Local Mental Health Authority for Williamson County provides behavioral health crisis services 24 hours a day in Williamson County; and,

WHEREAS, collaboration between Williamson County Emergency Services, Williamson County Sheriff's Office and BTCS will support the needs of persons accessing 911 Dispatch and law enforcement triage in order to resolve a mental health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the purpose for this agreement is to address coordination of crisis services in the community and conforms to The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) to do so; and,

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, the Parties agree as follows:

1. TERM OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be effective as of the latest date of the Parties' execution below and shall continue thereafter in force until December 31, 2022, unless terminated prior to such time in accordance with the termination provision set out herein (the "Initial Term"). Following the Initial Term, this Agreement shall automatically renew for additional terms of One (1) Year each

("Renewal Terms") beginning on October 1st of each year, unless either party terminates this Agreement prior to the expiration of the then existing Initial Term or Renewal Term in accordance with the terms hereof.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES, AGREEMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

The responsibilities, agreements and obligations of the Parties are outlined in Attachments A, B, and C, which are incorporated herein as if copied in full and made a part of this Agreement.

3. CONSIDERATION

The Parties agrees this Agreement is supported by adequate and valuable consideration; to wit: the mutual benefits received by the Parties from cooperating with one another and providing 24-hour mobile behavioral health services in Williamson County in the interest of the public health and safety of local communities.

4. TERMINATION

A Party to this Agreement has the right to terminate this Agreement by providing written notice to the other Party no less than ninety (90) days prior to the effective date of termination, after satisfying any liabilities (if any) of the withdrawing Party as stated herein.

5. EFFECT ON PRIOR AGREEMENTS

The Parties hereby agree that, upon the commencement of this Agreement, the current and existing Williamson County Mobile Crisis Services Interlocal Agreement between the Parties, being dated effective March 30, 2021 (the "Current Agreement") and any amendments thereto, shall be terminated and supplanted by this Agreement.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. SEVERABILITY. The Parties agree that in the event any provision of this Agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be in contradiction of any laws of the State of Texas, the Parties will immediately rectify the offending portions of this Agreement. The remainder of the Agreement shall be in full force and effect.
- B. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION. Williamson County and BTCS will maintain the confidentiality of information received pursuant to the performance of this Agreement, including medical records, and information, which discloses information about the identity of any person served, in accordance with applicable federal and state law.
- C. BUSINESS ASSOCIATE PROVISIONS. If Williamson County or BTCS receives any individually identifiable health information ("Protected Health Information" or "PHI"), from the other's agents, authorized personnel, employees, representatives and/or staff members of each party, or creates or receives any PHI on behalf of either Party, each Party shall maintain the security and confidentiality of such PHI as required of each Party by applicable laws and regulations, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") and the regulations promulgated thereunder. Without limiting the foregoing:
 - Use of PHI. Both Parties shall not use PHI otherwise than as expressly permitted by this agreement, or as required by law. However, both Parties may use PHI for purposes of

managing its internal business processes relating to its functions under this agreement.

- Disclosure of PHI. Both Parties shall not disclose PHI to any other person (other than members of Williamson County's Mobile Outreach Team (MOT), Williamson County Emergency Operations workforce or BTCS workforce), except as approved by each Party in writing. Any such disclosure shall be made only upon written agreement between Williamson County and BTCS, stating that both Parties are bound by the provisions of this section. Both Parties shall not disclose PHI to any member outside of its workforce unless they have advised such person of the Parties obligations under this section, and of the consequences for such person and for the party violating them. Either Party shall take appropriate disciplinary action against any member of its workforce who uses or discloses PHI in contravention of its agreement.

- Safeguards. Both Parties shall use appropriate safeguards to prevent use or disclosure of PHI otherwise than permitted by this agreement. Both Parties shall provide the other with such information concerning such safeguards as either Party may from time to time request, and shall, upon reasonable request, give either Party access for inspection and copying to either Parties facilities used for the maintenance or processing of PHI, and to its books, records, practices, policies and procedures concerning the use and disclosure of PHI, for the purpose of determining either Parties compliance with this agreement.

- Accounting/Reporting of Disclosures. Both Parties shall maintain a record of all disclosures of PHI made otherwise than the purposes of this agreement, including the date of the disclosure, the name and, if known, the address of the recipient of the PHI, a brief description of the PHI disclosed, and the purpose of the disclosure. Either Party shall make such record available to the other Party on request. Both Parties shall report to the other Party any unauthorized use or disclosure of PHI by the Party or its workforce, and the remedial action taken or purposed to be taken with respect to such use or disclosure.

- Disclosure to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If either Party is required by law to obtain the following undertaking from the other Party, that Party shall make its internal practices, books, and records relating to the use and disclosure of health information received from either Party available to the Subscriber and to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, for the purposes of determining the Covered Entity's compliance with HIPAA.

- Amendment. Upon the enactment of any law or regulation affecting the use or disclosure of PHI, or the publication of any decision of a court of the United States or of this state relating to any such law, or the publication of any interpretive policy or opinion of any governmental agency charged with the enforcement of any such law or regulation, either Party may, by written notice to the other Party, amend this agreement in such manner as either Party determines necessary to comply with such law or regulation. If either Party disagrees with any such amendment, it shall so notify the other Party in writing within thirty (30) days of notice. If the parties are unable to agree on an amendment within thirty (30) days thereafter, either of them may terminate this agreement on written notice to the other.

- Breach. If either Party breaches its obligations under this section, the other Party may, at its option, exercise any of its rights of access and inspection under the above paragraph in this section regarding "Safeguards"; require either Party to submit to a plan of monitoring and reporting, as either Party may determine necessary to maintain compliance with this agreement, and such a plan shall become part of this agreement; terminate this agreement, with or without an opportunity to cure the breach. When appropriate, notification to the

applicable licensure board will be made.

- Procedure upon Termination. Upon termination of this agreement both Parties shall return or destroy all PHI that it maintains in any form, and shall retain no copies of such information or, if the parties agree that return or destruction is not feasible, it shall continue to extend the protections of this agreement to such information, and limit further use of the information to those purposes that make the return or destruction of the information infeasible.

- D. **INSURANCE.** Each Party will be responsible for insuring or self-insuring its own officers and employees.
- E. **CHOICE OF LAW.** This Agreement shall be performable in Williamson County, Texas.
- F. **AMENDMENT.** This Agreement may be amended if agreed upon by the Parties and approved by the governing body of each Party. The Parties agree to review this Agreement at least annually and before each annual budget period.
- G. **ASSIGNMENT.** Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, the rights and duties of the Parties may not be assigned or delegated without the written consent of all Parties to this Agreement. Any attempt to assign or delegate such rights or duties shall be consistent with the terms of any contracts, resolutions, indemnities, and other obligations of this Agreement. This Agreement shall inure to the benefit of, and be binding upon, the successors and assigns of the Parties. All other existing arrangements between County and BTCS will be honored under this Agreement.
- H. **NO PERSONAL BENEFIT.** No Party intends to benefit any person who is not named as a Party to this Agreement, to assume any special duty to supervise the operations of another Party, to provide for the safety of any specific person or to assume any other duty other than that imposed by general law.
- I. **NOTICE.** Any notice given hereunder shall be in writing, and may be affected by personal delivery, or by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, at the address of the respective Parties indicated below:

WILLIAMSON COUNTY:
c/o COUNTY JUDGE
710 MAIN STREET
GEORGETOWN, TX 78626

BLUEBONNET TRAILS COMMUNITY SERVICES:
c/o EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
1009 NORTH GEORGETOWN STREET
ROUND ROCK, TX 78664

Address for notice may be changed at any time by delivering written notice of change to the other Party in accordance with the notice requirements of this section.

- J. **PARAGRAPH HEADINGS.** The various paragraph headings are inserted for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the meaning or interpretation of this Agreement or any section thereof.
- K. **ATTORNEY FEES.** In any lawsuit concerning this Agreement, the prevailing Party, shall be entitled to recover reasonable attorney's fees from the non-prevailing Party, plus all out-of-pocket expenses such as deposition costs, telephone calls, travel expenses, expert witness fees, court costs, and other reasonable expenses.
- L. **GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY.** The Parties do not waive, modify, or alter to any extent whatsoever the availability of the defense of governmental immunity. Each Party shall be responsible for its own employees and the acts of its own employees.
- M. **COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS.** The Parties hereby agree to comply with all applicable ordinances, laws, rules, regulations and lawful orders of any public authority with jurisdiction.
- N. **ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties hereto, and supersedes all their oral and written negotiations, agreements and understandings of every kind. The Parties understand, agree, and declare that no promise, warranty, statement, or representation of any kind whatsoever, which is not expressly stated in this Agreement, has been made by any Party hereto or its officer, employees, or other agents to induce execution of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have duly executed and delivered this Agreement effective as of the last party's execution below.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS


By: 
By: [Bill Gravell \(Dec 15, 2021 10:57 CST\)](#)

Printed Name: Bill Gravell

Title: County Judge

Date: Dec 15, 2021

BLUEBONNET TRAILS COMMUNITY SERVICES

By: 

Printed Name: Andrea Richardson

Title: Executive Director

Date: November 22,, 20 21

Attachment A

CRISIS SERVICES:

RESPONSIBILITIES, AGREEMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. County 9-1-1 Dispatch and BTCS Crisis Hotline will deploy a BTCS mobile crisis outreach team (MCOT) to provide mobile crisis services 24 hours per day throughout the County; provided, however, the Parties may, by separate agreement, modify or exclude this responsibility based on a separate agreement for mobile crisis outreach services within a specific jurisdiction.
2. Continuity of care following a crisis event will be provided by BTCS to persons enrolled in BTCS outpatient, residential or inpatient services; or, upon consent of the individual, with any identified provider of psychiatric or medical health care for the individual.
3. BTCS will be contacted by first responders, at the discretion of the first responder agency, through the 24-hour crisis hotline at 800-841-1255; through the BTCS mobile crisis Red Phone (512) 701-1982; or through 911 Dispatch. [Refer to Attachment B]
4. BTCS will provide:
 - a. behavioral health services at the County's Jail through jail-based coordinators;
 - b. coordination of services for justice-involved individuals in Williamson County courts through a court-based coordinator;
 - c. mobile crisis outreach services when activated by Williamson County Independent School District personnel; and
 - d. crisis behavioral health services in Williamson County hospitals 24 hours per day.
5. BTCS supports the medical practice within the Williamson County Jail with payment of the salary of a Physician Assistant (PA) through a time-limited grant. Specifically, BTCS shall provide \$80,000 of the PA's salary and benefits through a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant and the delta needed to fund the remainder of the position will be funded by County through ARPA funding.
6. BTCS is responsible for data collection for their hours of crisis service, necessary for behavioral health system operations and improvements. The purpose of the data collection is to inform the practice as well as Commissioners Court and respective leadership of progress and trends related to crisis service delivery in Williamson County.
7. BTCS agrees to participate in scheduled discussions with Williamson County representatives of departments and agencies involved in the crisis services system to review the status and report performance metrics captured as a result of this Agreement in order to ultimately achieve the intent and spirit set out herein. The performance metrics will be defined by agreement with BTCS and County.
8. As defined in their state contract, BTCS will continue to make available to all persons in

the community a crisis hotline (800-841-1255) for 24-hour assistance.

9. A key component to the success of meeting performance goals is to educate law enforcement and other stakeholders of the responsibilities identified within Paragraphs 1-5, above. BTCS will work collaboratively with the Williamson County Sheriff's Office and law enforcement on this educational effort.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

BTCS is accountable for the ongoing staffing costs of these services as described above. Services requested beyond the scope of this Attachment will be negotiated by County and BTCS and set forth in a written amendment to this Agreement.

| Service | Rate |
|--|---|
| 24-Hour Mobile Crisis Services in Community and 24-Hour Crisis Hotline Operation | At no cost to County; Ongoing through BTCS |
| Non-Crisis-related Services considered to be Welfare Checks on Individuals in Community | At cost to be negotiated by BTCS and County and set forth in a written amendment to this Agreement. |
| Physician Assistant (PA) employed by Williamson County Jail | A salary amount not to exceed \$120,000 per year paid as set out in this Attachment A. |
| Jail-based care coordination by qualified mental health professionals serving in Williamson County Jail | At no cost to County; Ongoing through BTCS |
| Court-based services coordination by qualified mental health professional serving in Williamson County Courts | At no cost to County; funded through time-limited federal grant awarded to BTCS ending 09-30-2023 |

Attachment B

911 DISPATCH – CRISIS CALL DIVERSION: RESPONSIBILITIES, AGREEMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES

SCOPE OF SERVICES

In an effort to de-escalate mental health-related calls to Williamson County 911 Dispatch for the purpose of a timely response; meaningful diversion from deployment of law enforcement and other emergency services; and connection/referral to appropriate care:

1. Williamson County Emergency Services, Williamson County Sheriff's Office and BTCS will design a workflow allowing for 911 Dispatch to access a dedicated BTCS qualified mental health professional (QMHP) to respond to callers indicating a mental health need.
2. Williamson County Sheriff's Office will conduct background checks with fingerprints on potential QMHP applicants to determine if they meet criteria for unescorted badge access into the Williamson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The QMHP applicant selected will not be able to access systems or access information derived from Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) for their use. QMHP will sign an FBI Security Addendum and take the CJIS Security Awareness Training.
3. BTCS will provide an employee maintaining the credentials as a licensed professional of the healing arts (LPHA) to this partnership with Williamson County Emergency Services at Dispatch for consultation and clinical support to the QMHP.
4. Williamson County Emergency Services and BTCS will:
 - a. Develop qualifying questions prompting transfer of a call from 911 Dispatch to the BTCS QMHP.
 - b. Identify, collect and report outcome data to understand the impact of the BTCS QMHP at 911 Dispatch as well assess opportunities to fine-tune the workflow and outcome measurement over time.
 - c. Partner on training for 911 Dispatch and BTCS staff.
 - d. Seek to continually improve the process through collaboration and modification.
 - e. Adhere to respective standards, rules and guidelines under which Williamson County Emergency Services and BTCS are individually and collectively obliged.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

BTCS is accountable for the ongoing staffing costs of the mental health professionals responding to 911 Dispatch calls. The County assumes the ongoing costs for utilities and maintenance of the space dedicated to the Williamson County Emergency Operations Center:

| Service | Rate |
|--|---|
| Utilities and Maintenance of Emergency Operations Center | At no cost to BTCS: Ongoing through the County |

**Staffing of BTCS Mental Health
Professionals Assigned to 911 Dispatch**

At no cost to County:
Ongoing through BTCS

Attachment C

RESPONSIBILITIES, AGREEMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PARTIES: 23-HOUR OBSERVATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT TRIAGE PROGRAM

This Attachment C of the Agreement is to establish a secure therapeutic acute care program within an existing facility owned by Williamson County in Georgetown, Texas. The program demonstrates a local partnership between the Williamson County Sheriff's Office, BTCS and partnering Williamson County law enforcement agencies. The purpose of this program, available 24/7 to law enforcement, is to divert persons from unnecessary stays in local emergency rooms while BTCS coordinates an appropriate level of care for adults experiencing acute psychiatric crises thereby allowing law enforcement to expeditiously return to duty in the community. Williamson County supports this effort by co-locating Williamson County Crisis Intervention Team in the building housing the program.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

- A. BTCS will establish the 23-Hour Observation and Triage Program in the Lott Building within 3,000 square feet of the Williamson County-owned facility located at 107 Holly Street, Georgetown, Texas 78626. The renovation accommodating the 23-Hour Observation and Triage Center supporting law enforcement officers is made possible through Williamson County CARES Act funding.
- B. BTCS will collaborate with the Williamson County Sheriff's Office in designing the admission criteria and curricula serving the needs of the designated population including therapies, medications and education and discharge planning ensuring a seamless episode of care, maximizing the use of available resources and plan for the successful return of the individual to their home community and school or transfer to other appropriate care setting.
- C. BTCS will coordinate planning with all Williamson County Law Enforcement Agencies accessing the facility, as defined by the admission criteria, in I.B.
- D. BTCS will uphold the intent of the Emergency Order GA-8 to isolate and contain the COVID-19 virus in all counties in Texas by using appropriate precautions including, but not limited to, wearing personal protective equipment to safely serve during the pandemic.
- E. BTCS will provide written reports to the County accounting for the beds supporting admissions, by law enforcement agency. These reports will be provided at a frequency requested by the County and participating law enforcement agencies. Operational procedures and outcomes demonstrated through this program will be shared during the Williamson County Law Enforcement Committee discussions.
- F. If requested by County,
 - 1. BTCS will ensure access to psychiatric services and medications; either in house, or by contractual relationship.
 - 2. Services will be provided in person and/or via tele-video by BTCS providers.
 - 3. BTCS will maintain, provide a copy of, and inform the County within five (5) business days of any changes to all certifications, licensure, or registrations required by law.
 - 4. BTCS will maintain general and professional liability insurance in the minimum

amount of onemillion dollars (\$1,000,000) for each occurrence.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

BTCS is accountable for the ongoing staffing costs for operation of this program. The County will assume the ongoing costs for utilities and maintenance of the space dedicated to the 23-Hour Observation and Law Enforcement Triage Program:

| Service | Rate |
|---|---|
| Utilities and Maintenance of 23-Hour Observation and Triage Program Space | At no cost to BTCS: Ongoing through the County |
| Staffing and Operation of 23-Hour Observation and Triage Program | At no cost to County: Ongoing through BTCS |