



Law Enforcement / DCR Direct Access Pilot



Proposed Expansion to Include Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

Objective: Provide deputies in designated areas of unincorporated Snohomish County with direct access to Designated Crisis Responders (DCRs) when responding to behavioral health involved calls.

Background: In July 2019, Snohomish County Human Services' Crisis Services Program and Everett Police Department initiated a pilot that provides Everett police officers direct access 24/7 to DCRs via one phone number. Snohomish County DCRs respond to any behavioral health crisis where the officer has determined that it would be beneficial for the individual to have a DCR involved.

Snohomish County's DCRs provide both voluntary crisis outreach services and involuntary investigation and detention services. Snohomish County's DCRs are licensed, master level clinicians and are designated the authority to detain individuals against their will if the statutory requirements outlined in RCW 71.05 or RCW 71.34 are met and all other efforts to stabilize and resolve the crisis have been unsuccessful. Snohomish County's DCRs strive for a 30-minute, on-site response time within the Everett city limits. The pilot allows for earlier and more immediate intervention resulting in individuals getting better care and law enforcement taking fewer people to emergency rooms and the jail.

Snohomish County Council allocated funding in the 2021 budget to allow for two additional DCRs and a supervisory FTE to be hired during second quarter of 2021 to initiate a similar pilot within Snohomish County's Sheriff's Office.

SCSO Pilot Development Steps:

1. A planning committee was convened with leadership from SCSO and Human Services' Crisis Services Program. This committee took into consideration staffing capacity, geographical spread and potential case volume when identifying the two area beats where the pilot will be initiated.
2. The planning committee reviewed available data and selected area beats B1 and C1 to initiate the SCSO pilot expansion. These area beats are adjacent to the City of Everett boundary, are considered to be more easily accessible for responded DCRs and data analysis indicated a significant need for behavioral health crisis outreach services in these two areas.
3. The planning committee determined parameters to allow for the highest opportunity of success including staffing capacity, geographical connectivity to current operations and case or incident volume in unincorporated area beats. DCRs will receive calls directly from deputies patrolling B1 and C1 area beats 24/7. Space will be made available for DCRs to use within the South Precinct.
4. The planning committee identified training needs and messaging necessary to successfully launch the pilot. SCSO and Snohomish County Human Services will prepare a training for SCSO deputies at the South Precinct. This training will incorporate the dissemination of the Direct Access telephone number as well as capacity of DCR's to provide immediate intervention for those in crisis as well as follow up with individuals who frequently experience crisis but do not reach the level of emergent detention (high utilizers).



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5. Data collection will be conducted in accordance with existing data collection practices by Human Services.
6. The Planning Committee is in agreement that ongoing collaboration and communication is critical for the success of the pilot. A SCSO Sergeant will be assigned to oversee this pilot. The Sergeant will initially meet weekly with DCR Supervisors to foster strong communications and to problem-solve unexpected issues that are likely to arise.

Committee Recommendation: The planning committee concluded the area which provides the greatest opportunity to impact the largest number of citizens needing crisis services via law enforcement direct access is by expanding current direct access services into the unincorporated area beats of B1 and C1.