



Regional Crisis Response Agency
Executive Board Meeting
September 4, 2025

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual Zoom link:

<https://kirklandwa-gov.zoom.us/j/88652463332?pwd=tMWV1gTzBTjGGwt31yO27xtajkIZIM.1>

Meeting ID: 886 5246 3332

Passcode: 849977

--On-site option available--

Kirkland City Hall

123 5th Ave, Kirkland, WA, 98033

Norkirk Room, Upper Level

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Items from the Audience
- 4) Approval of the Minutes
 - a. Minutes from Regular Meeting August 7, 2025
- 5) Discussion of Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response
- 6) Longitudinal Service Data Analysis Report
- 7) Executive Director Report
- 8) Good of the Order
- 9) Adjournment



Regional Crisis Response Agency Executive Board Meeting Minutes August 7, 2025

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual Zoom link:

<https://kirklandwa.gov.zoom.us/j/88652463332?pwd=tMWV1gTzBTjGGwt31yO27xtajklZIM.1>

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Norkirk Room, Upper Level

- 1) Call to Order
President Kurt Triplett called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m.
- 2) Roll Call
Members Present: Kurt Triplett, Kyle Stannert, Phillip Hill, Bristol Ellington
Members Absent: Stephanie Lucash (Excused)
- 3) Items from the Audience
None presented.
- 4) Approval of the Minutes
 - a. Minutes from Regular Meeting June 5, 2025
Phillip Hill moved to approve the June 5, 2025 meeting minutes, seconded by Kyle Stannert.
Vote: Motion approved 4-0
Yes: Kurt Triplett, Kyle Stannert, Phillip Hill, Bristol Ellington
- 5) Adoption of Resolution R-2025-02 Amending the Authorized Signers for the Agency
Bristol Ellington moved to approve Resolution R-2025-02, seconded by Phillip Hill.
Vote: Motion approved 4-0
Yes: Kurt Triplett, Kyle Stannert, Phillip Hill, Bristol Ellington
- 6) 2025 Quarter 2 Budget to Actuals Report
Treasurer and Kirkland's Director of Finance and Administration presented a 2025 Quarter 2 Year-to-Date Financial Update Summary that included a Fiscal Agent fee review for FY 2024 and the Quarter 2 Budget to Actuals highlights.
- 7) 2025 Quarter 2 Data Dashboard
RCR Executive Director Brook Buettner presented the 2025 Quarter 2 Data

Dashboard. The Board requested that staff provide a time-based analysis of response data, including the duration Crisis Responders spend in jurisdictions and on calls, presented in graphical form to identify trends.

8) Executive Director Report

RCR Executive Director, Brook Buettner reported on the following:

a. Governance

RCR staff will bring Fiscal Policy drafts to future meetings for Board review and approval.

b. Operations Update

i. Crisis Responder Lead position recruitment is in progress.

ii. AFSCME discussions are ongoing for AFSCME member requests and a process for changes to assigned shifts.

iii. Pending turnover with staff promotions and resignations.

c. Budget and Grants

i. DOJ: Subcontract with Center for Human Services, implementation year to begin in October 2025.

ii. HCA: COSSUP First year contract finalized.

iii. WASPC: 2025-2027 awarded, contract pending.

d. Landscape: 2025 Legislative Session

i. HB 2015 was signed by the Governor and is effective as of July 27, 2025 – “Improving public safety funding by providing resources to local governments and state and local criminal justice agencies, and authorizing a local option tax”

ii. King County Council approved the Safe and Stable Communities Sales Tax

iii. Co-Responder Outreach Alliance is still finalizing their legislative agenda for 2026

iv. SOUND’s Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Teams are deployed out of 988 as an outpatient behavioral health response and are an available resource to the City of Redmond and RCR Principal cities.

e. RCR in the Community

i. RCR was at National Night Out events with Police partners.

ii. Shared successful interactions between Crisis Responders, Police partners and community members who have experienced a crisis.

9) Good of the Order

Sgt. Maurice Parrish, Lake Forest Park Police Department is retiring August 28, 2025.

Chief Cherie Harris, Kirkland Police Department is retiring Sept 3, 2025. Deputy Police Chief Michel St. Jean has been appointed as interim chief upon Harris’s retirement.

10) Adjournment

President Kurt Triplett adjourned the meeting at 11:39 a.m.



REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE AGENCY
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033
425-587-3504
info@rcrwa.org

MEMORANDUM

To: RCR Executive Board

From: Brook Buettner, Executive Director
Heather Lantz-Brazil, Administrative Assistant

Date: August 28, 2025

Subject: Discussion of Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Executive Board review the proposed Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response and provide feedback on the draft language. Based on the Board's input, staff will return to the next Executive Board meeting with a resolution for approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Staff requests the Executive Board review the draft Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response and provide feedback on the proposed language.
- This memo is the first formal discussion; staff will return at the next meeting with a resolution for action and immediate implementation if approved.
- The policy outlines conditions under which food and beverages may be purchased for recognition events, partner engagement, mission-critical operations, and community engagement.
- Expenditures must be modest, non-luxurious, equitable across groups, and within federal GSA per diem meal limits.
- All purchases must align with Washington State law, particularly the prohibition against gifts of public funds.
- Routine staff meetings, casual gatherings, and alcohol are excluded from allowable purchases.
- The draft policy has been reviewed and approved by City of Kirkland Fiscal Agent staff.

BACKGROUND:

Currently, RCR defaults to fiscal agent City of Kirkland policies in the absence of its own policies. While the City of Kirkland has an existing Food Purchase Policy (Attachment 2) that governs its internal operations, RCR's role creates unique operational needs that require a broader approach. Specifically, RCR provides food and beverages in contexts such as community crisis response, de-escalation efforts, and inter-agency partner recognition, in addition to certain training and meeting settings.

This draft policy presented as Attachment 1 reflects those distinct needs while maintaining compliance with Washington State law and State Auditor guidance. It also incorporates provisions for accountability, spending limits, and equity across groups to ensure fiscal responsibility.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response allows expenditures for employee and volunteer recognition, partner appreciation, mission-critical events, and community engagement. It ensures that all food purchases directly benefit the agency's mission, morale, or operational effectiveness, rather than individual participants. Spending limits, equity provisions, and documentation requirements are included to maintain accountability and fairness. By reviewing and providing feedback on this proposed policy, the Board will strengthen RCR's financial stewardship and reduce the risk of audit findings.

NEXT STEPS:

If the Executive Board provides feedback on the draft policy language, staff will incorporate the Board's direction and return to the next scheduled meeting with a resolution for approval. If adopted, the policy will be implemented immediately.

If the Board does not provide feedback at this time, implementation will be delayed until a consensus is reached and formal action is taken.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – Proposed Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response
Attachment 2 – City of Kirkland Food Purchase Policy (APM 3-07)



Regional Crisis Response Agency
Food and Beverage Purchase Policy Supporting Crisis Response
Effective Date: TBD

PURPOSE:

This policy establishes the conditions under which the Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency may purchase food and non-alcoholic beverages for employee, volunteer, and public safety partner recognition events, engaging with community members in crisis, and certain agency functions. It ensures that such expenditures comply with applicable laws and reflects RCR's obligation as a municipal corporation to use public funds thoughtfully and in support of its mission.

This policy allows reasonable purchases of food and non-alcoholic beverages for mission-critical operations, community member engagement efforts, and recognition or appreciation events, provided these expenditures are directly tied to RCR's public purpose and deliver a primary benefit to the agency, rather than to individual participants.

GOAL & SCOPE:

RCR identifies recognition events and limited food provisions can support workforce morale, strengthen inter-agency collaboration, and advance agency effectiveness, provided such expenditures are reasonable, non-luxurious, and appropriately documented.

This policy applies to all RCR employees, volunteers, and public safety partners, and events where RCR funds are used for food or beverages, excluding grant-funded activities governed by specific contracts.

POLICY:

1. Allowable Food and Beverages Purchases

RCR funds may be used to purchase food and non-alcoholic beverages for:

- a. **Employee and Volunteer Recognition Events** – Annual or periodic events intended to acknowledge contributions and service milestones for employees or volunteers, including:
 - i. Social Worker Week
 - ii. National Mental Health Provider Appreciation Day
 - iii. Administrative Professionals Day
 - iv. National Co-Responder Week
- b. **Partner Appreciation Events** – Functions that strengthen relationships with law enforcement, fire, EMS, and other partner agencies vital to RCR's mission, including:
 - i. Police Week
 - ii. National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week
 - iii. International Firefighters' Day
 - iv. 988 Day

- c. **Mission-Critical Events** – Trainings, meetings, interview panels, or extended operations where food provision supports effectiveness with internal and external stakeholders (e.g., multi-hour training or debriefings or meetings spanning meal periods), including:
 - i. Principals Assembly
 - ii. Operations Board
 - iii. Community Advisory Group
 - iv. Executive Board Budget Retreat
- d. **Community Member Engagement** – Food or beverages purchased to aid Crisis Responders in the de-escalation and engagement with community members experiencing a crisis, given in accordance with official duties or community-building events that promote community partnerships. Examples include but are not limited to the following:
 - i. Food or beverages for crisis response services where the purchase of these items builds engagement or helps alleviate the crisis
 - ii. National Night Out
 - iii. Principal Cities' Safety Day Events

2. Compliance with Washington State Law

- a. All expenditures must satisfy the “public purpose” requirement under Washington Constitution, Article VIII, Section 7 and must not constitute a gift of public funds.
- b. Events must directly relate to RCR’s operational goals and benefit the agency’s efficiency, morale, or collaboration with partner agencies (AGO 2005 No 7 and SAO Local Government Guidelines).
- c. All funds must be fully accounted for per RCW 43.09.210.

3. Approval and Documentation

- a. All food and beverage purchases not listed under the allowable purchases in Section 1 must be pre-approved by the Executive Director or a Crisis Responder Supervisor, and budgeted funds must be available.
- b. The pre-approval request must include:
 - i. Description of the event and purpose
 - ii. Estimated attendees (employees, volunteers, partners)
 - iii. Budget source and estimated costs
- c. Final documentation for all food and beverage purchases must include:
 - i. Detailed itemized receipt
 - ii. Event agenda or description
 - iii. Attendee roster or headcount

4. Spending Limits

- a. Expenditures must be modest and non-luxurious, as would be deemed reasonable by a typical taxpayer (State Auditor’s BARS Manual).
- b. Costs per person shall not exceed the federal GSA per diem meal rates.
- c. Gratuity may not exceed 20% of pre-tax food costs.

5. Equity

- a. Recognition events shall be carried out in a manner that ensures equitable access and treatment across roles. Equity shall mean:
 - i. All employees, volunteers, and partners performing similar functions are eligible for comparable recognition within the same calendar year.
 - ii. No group shall be favored with more frequency or more costly food and beverage expenditures than other comparable groups.
 - iii. Where scheduling or operational constraints require separate events (e.g., shift work, remote teams), efforts must be made to provide equivalent recognition opportunities across groups and shifts.
- b. Allowable food and beverages purchased must deliver a primary benefit to the agency (e.g., morale, efficiency, effectiveness, retention), not to individual participants.

6. Exclusions

- a. Food or beverage purchases for routine staff meetings, casual gatherings, or purely social purposes are not permitted.
- b. Alcohol is prohibited at any RCR-funded event and is never reimbursable or payable with public funds (Article VIII, Section 7, Washington Constitution; State Auditor's Office BARS Manual Guidance).

RELATED AUTHORITY & POLICIES:

- Washington Constitution, Article VIII, Section 7 – Prohibits gifts of public funds; public expenditures must serve a governmental purpose
- RCW 35A.11.020 – Authorizes general powers of municipal corporations to enact policies necessary for governance
- RCW 43.09.210 – Requires accountability for use of public resources
- AGO 2005 No. 7 – Permits employee recognition and morale expenditures when primarily benefiting the agency, not individuals
- Washington State Auditor's BARS Manual (3.9.3., 3.9.9) – Provides guidance on employee recognition, meals and morale expenditures

Responsibility for Review:	Name, Title
Date for Next Review	YYYY-MM-DD

Food Purchase Policy

Chapter 3 - Finance

Policy 3-07

Effective Date: April 2025

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy on purchasing food for meetings is to ensure public funds are used with thoughtful attention to cost effectiveness and appropriate scenarios. It is intended to help determine when it is reasonable to provide meals for meetings.

POLICY

Prior Approval

All food purchases for meetings must be pre-approved by the appropriate department director or their designee. Purchases for recurring meetings only require approval once. Pre-approval should be documented in writing (email is acceptable). Budgeted funds must be available for expenditures out of the department's budget.

This policy does not obligate the City to provide meals under any circumstances.

Under no circumstances may alcohol be provided at City expense.

“Light Refreshments” Standard: Generally, only light refreshments like snacks, coffee, and water are allowed unless the meeting is extended or requires a full meal for effective participation.

Compliance with City Policies

Purchases must adhere to all City policies, specifically:

- Credit Card Policy and Procedures ([APM 3-1](#)) which states in section “3. Accounting” the detailed receipt must be submitted; a summary charge slip is not considered the full receipt unless it is the greatest level of detail provided by that establishment.
- Reimbursable Expense Policy ([APM 3-2](#)), see section “V. Other Food Expense” for allowable expenses.
- Employee/Volunteer Recognition Policy ([APM 4-42](#)), see section “E. Guidelines” regarding budgetary specifics.
- Charges must be supported by a detailed receipt, meeting agenda including list of participants, and pre-approval documentation (as mentioned above).

Criteria / Cost Effectiveness

When determining the necessity of food being provided at a meeting, consider:

- The purpose of the meeting must be to conduct official City business or to provide training for City employees or City officials.
- The duration of the meeting is long enough to require sustenance, generally at least three hours and/or if the meeting is scheduled over a mealtime.
- Food will contribute to productive discussions.

Examples of situations where a meal may be justified:

- Extended Meetings
 - When meetings are significantly long or exceeding a typical workday, a meal may be necessary to maintain focus.
- Working Lunches
 - When an employee is required to perform work over a standard meal period.
- Training Sessions
 - Providing a meal during intensive training sessions.
- Client Meetings
 - Hosting important external clients.
- Interview Panels
 - Providing lunch for panelists if interviews and/or time to debrief are required over the lunch hour.

City-purchased food is not justified for standard recurring staff meetings or for social purposes. If a special team meeting is required over a standard meal period and approved, box lunches or similar may be provided with proper approval.

Cost Limitations

Set reasonable budget limits for food purchases considering the total project budget, meeting length, and number of attendees. Any food or beverage purchase must be considered a non-luxury item by the typical person and be available at a reasonable price. As of 2025, average cost for buffet lunch catering is \$25-32 per person or box lunches \$15-20 per person.

Meal costs should not exceed local GSA per diem meal rates. Breakdown of per meal rates can be found at the GSA web site at: [Per diem rates | GSA](#). Any added tip or gratuity may not exceed 20% of the cost of food, excluding tax. Under no circumstances may alcohol be provided at City expense.

Screenshot from GSA website taken March 2025



Meals and incidental expenses (M&IE) rates and breakdown

The M&IE total is the full daily amount for a single calendar day when that day is neither the first nor last day of travel. The amount received on the first and last day of travel equals 75% of the M&IE total. See [M&IE breakdowns](#) for information related to the individual meal amounts.

Filter results...

Primary destination ⓘ	County ⓘ	M&IE total	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Incidental expenses	First and last day of travel
Seattle	King	\$92	\$23	\$26	\$38	\$5	\$69.00

Other Considerations

- When providing food, consider offering a variety of options to accommodate dietary restrictions.
- Purchase food from local Kirkland businesses when able.



REGIONAL CRISIS RESPONSE AGENCY
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MEMORANDUM

To: RCR Executive Board

From: Brook Buettner, Executive Director
Heather Lantz-Brazil, Administrative Assistant

Date: August 28, 2025

Subject: Longitudinal Service Data Analysis

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Executive Board review the attached longitudinal data and ask any questions.

BACKGROUND:

At the August 7, 2025 RCR Executive Board meeting, Executive Board members received the 2025 Q2 Quarterly Data Dashboard and asked questions, including about changes over time to service levels within jurisdictions. Specifically, Board Members requested information on Crisis Responder time spent by jurisdiction, and quarterly data on number of individuals served and total encounters.

The attached product includes data and analysis of the following:

- Time spent by jurisdiction by average weekly staff schedule
- Time spent by jurisdiction by encounter time, broken down on a quarterly basis
- Number of individuals served by jurisdiction, broken down on a quarterly basis
- Total number of encounters by jurisdiction, broken down on a quarterly basis

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Trend lines in the longitudinal data rise as would be expected to reflect program growth over time and increased staff time with additional personnel, and roughly reflect population proportions across the cities, with occasional peaks or valleys related to staffing changes.

NEXT STEPS:

None recommended at this time.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – RCR Longitudinal Service Data Analysis Report

Regional Crisis Response Agency Longitudinal Service Data Analysis

Prepared for the RCR Executive Board Meeting September 4, 2025

Summary

Based on a request for further analysis from the Executive Board, RCR staff pulled and collated data on Crisis Responder staff time in each city, time spent on encounters with individuals in crisis in each city, number of individuals served over time, and number of encounters over time broken down by city.

Staff pulled all available data, which has been recorded in the current database since the beginning of 2021, and through the second quarter of this year. Trends are as expected, with service numbers rising over time as the programs grew and staffing levels increased, with occasional peaks or valleys related to more granular staffing changes.

Scope

Crisis Responder scheduled time in each city is based on an average, fully-staffed week with our current team.

Other data pulled from the following date range: January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025

All available aggregate program data was included in the analysis, including data from RCR predecessor programs the RADAR Navigator Program and the Kirkland Community Responder Program, as those programs were using the same database to collect data, the "Navigator" Database.

The "Navigator" Database is a simple, bespoke data collection tool created by NORCOM under contract with the RADAR Navigator Program. The database collects basic demographic data as required by program funders as well as basic encounter data which allows staff to provide continuity to community members receiving services. It was launched for use January 1, 2021. Prior to the launch of the database tool, data was being collected in various spreadsheets kept by individual contracted RADAR Navigators.

Section 1: Time in City

1.a. Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule

Although Crisis Responders deploy across jurisdictions, they are generally stationed for part or all of any shift at a specific city. Primary office spaces in larger cities with more physical space and larger call volumes. Crisis Responders are stationed in Bothell

Police Department (also monitoring Lake Forest Park), Kirkland Police Department, and Shoreline Police Department (also monitoring Kenmore).

RCR staff has also been very intentional about physically stationing Crisis Responder staff at Lake Forest Park and Kenmore Police Departments so that they will become more known to officers and deputies and will increase RCR familiarity with the territory, even with lower call volume over time. Currently, the five cities have the following total Crisis Responder hours each week:

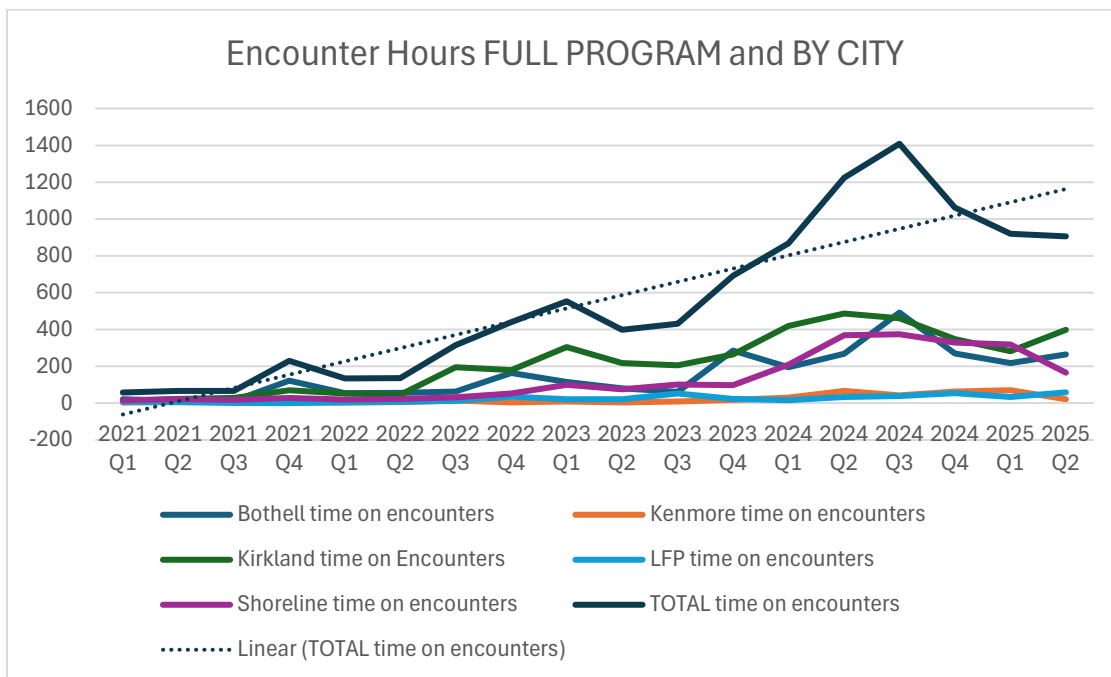
Average scheduled weekly Crisis Responder staff hours by City as of August 2025

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
130	20	160	30	100

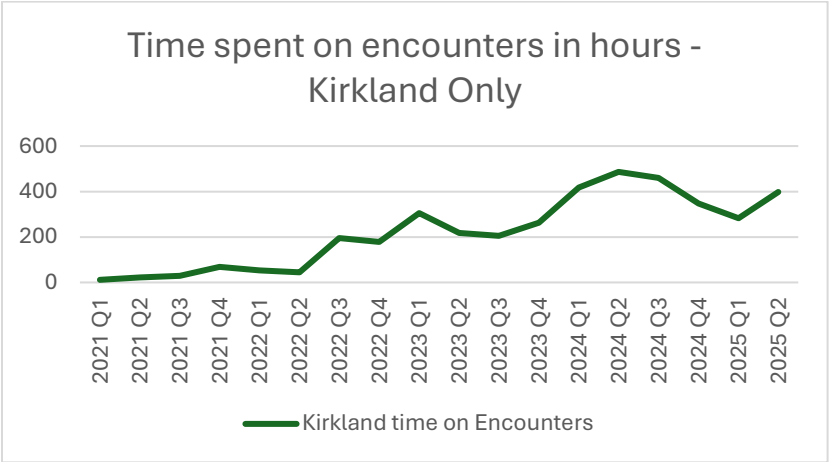
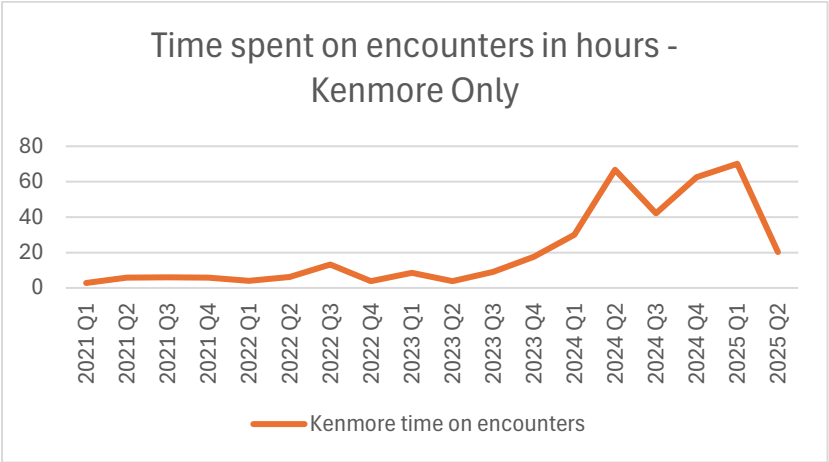
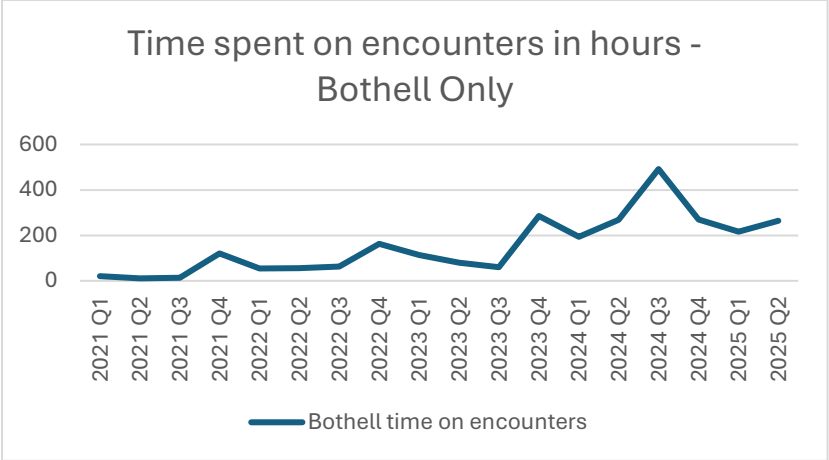
1.b. Encounter Hours

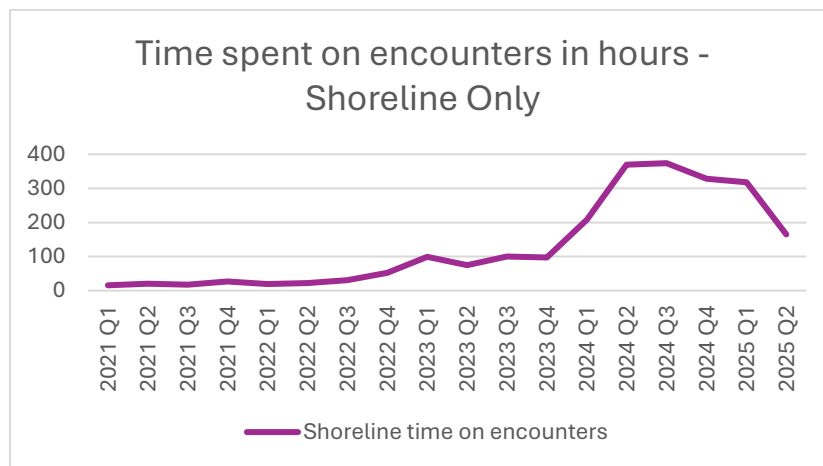
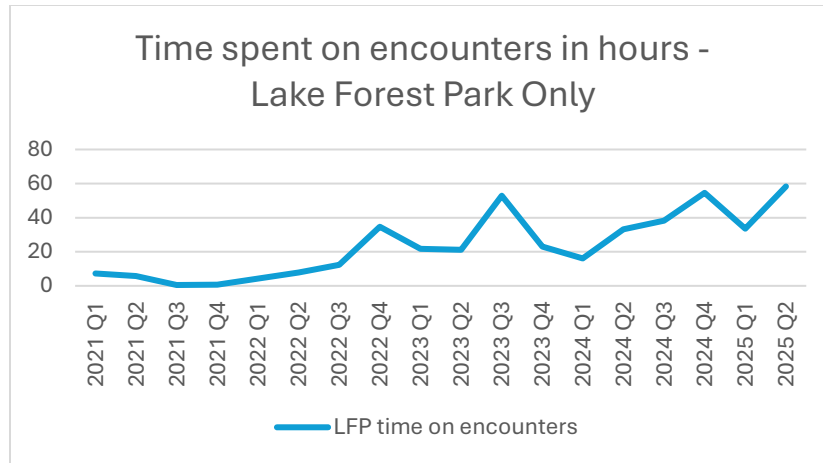
The Encounter Hours data point is the recorded Crisis Responder time, in hours, spent on an encounter with a community member. Encounters may range from multi-hour responses to in-progress 911 calls, to check in phone calls to make sure an individual connected with a service provider. Encounter time totals will naturally rise and fall with staffing levels.

1.b.i. Full Program Overview



1.b.ii. Total Encounter Hours by City (full reporting period)





1.b.iii. Total Encounter Hours by City

The chart below represents total hours spent by staff working with community members during the whole of the reporting period (January 1, 2021-June 30, 2025)

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
2,747	379	3,986	426	2,340

1.b.iv. Average Weekly Encounter Hours by City

The chart below represents average weekly hours spent by staff working with Community Members during the whole of the reporting period (January 1, 2021-June 30, 2025)

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline

12	2	17	2	10
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The chart below represents average weekly hours spent by staff working with community members only during the one-year period of July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025. The average weekly numbers break down higher in recent years because of higher staffing levels.

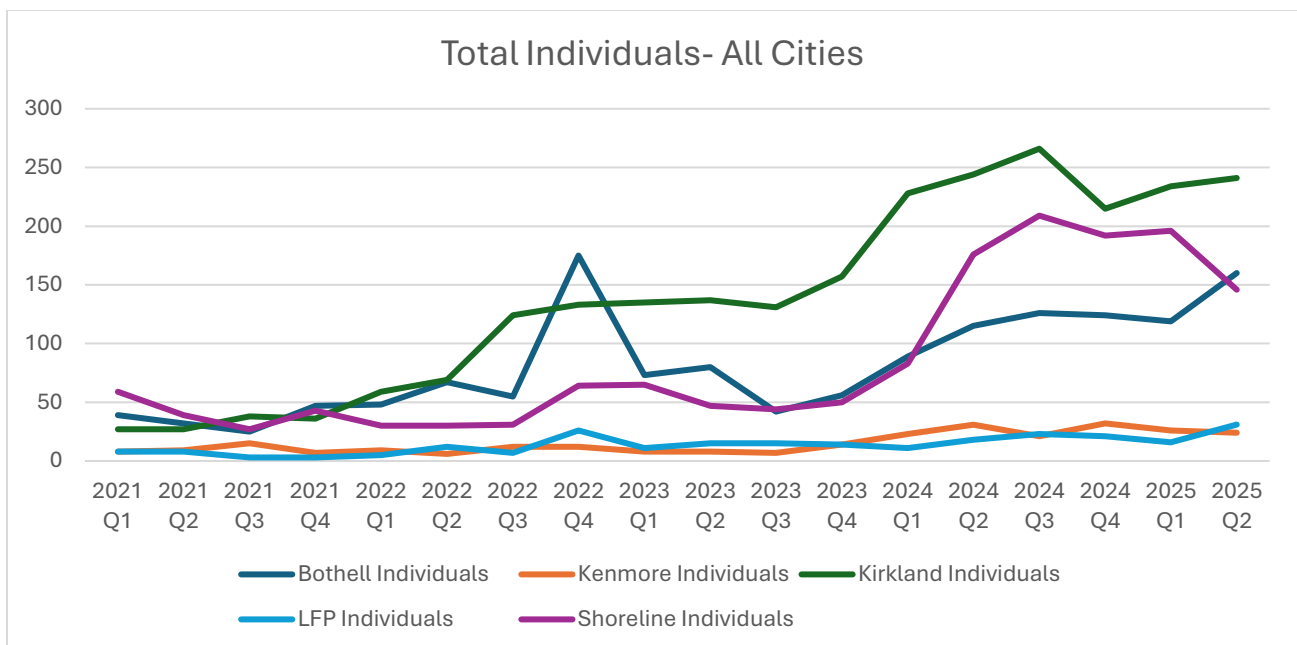
Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
53	7	77	8	45

Section 2: Service Level Data

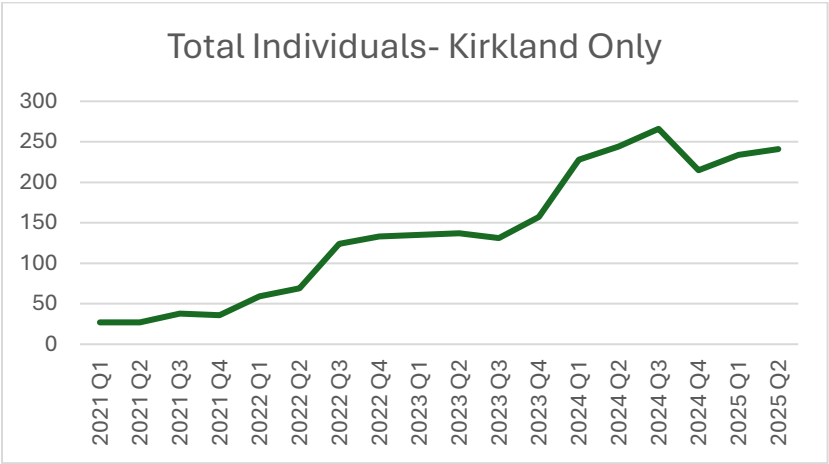
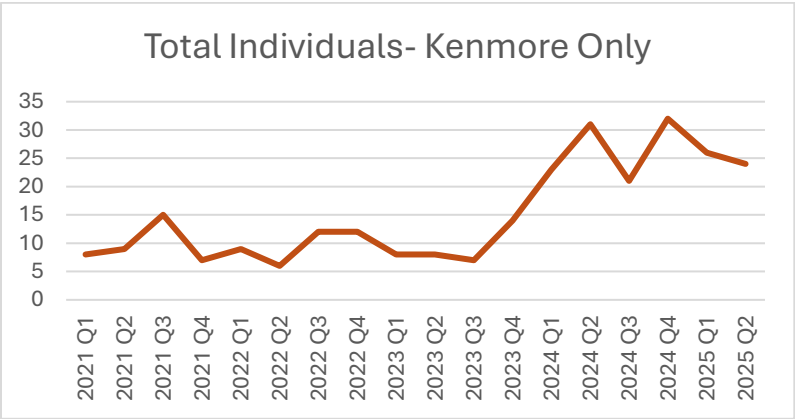
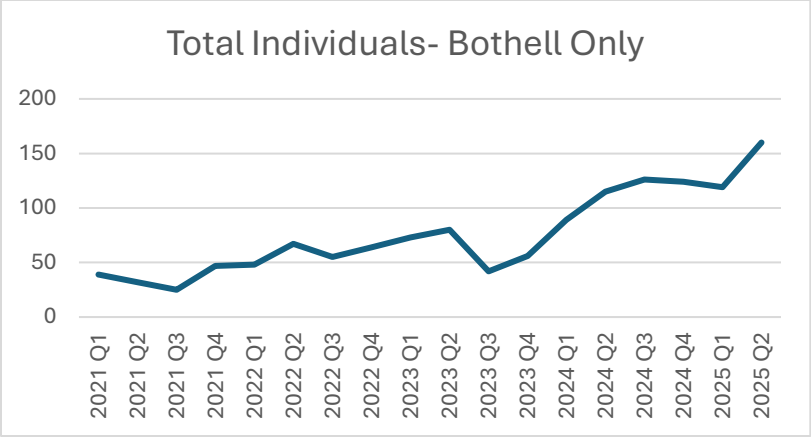
2.a. Individuals Served

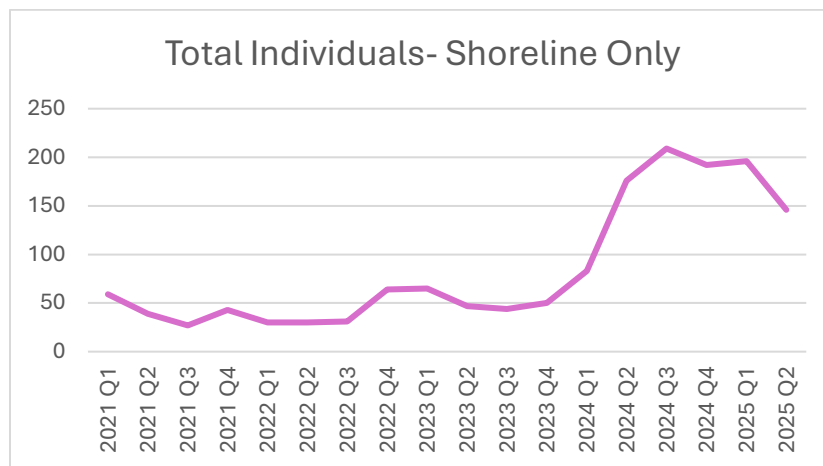
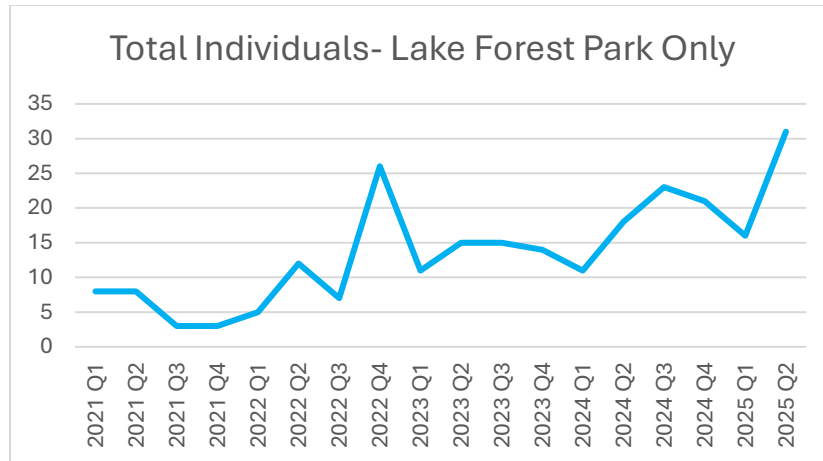
The number of individuals served represents total community members who received services during the reporting period.

2.a.i. Full Program Overview



2.a.ii. City Breakdown

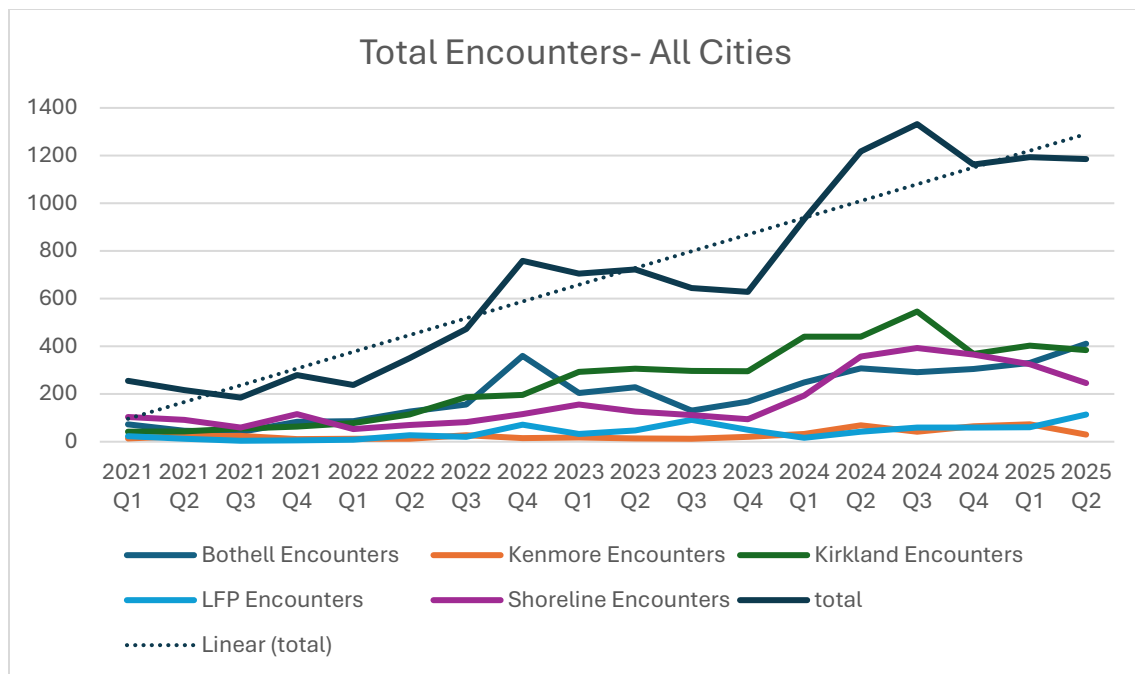




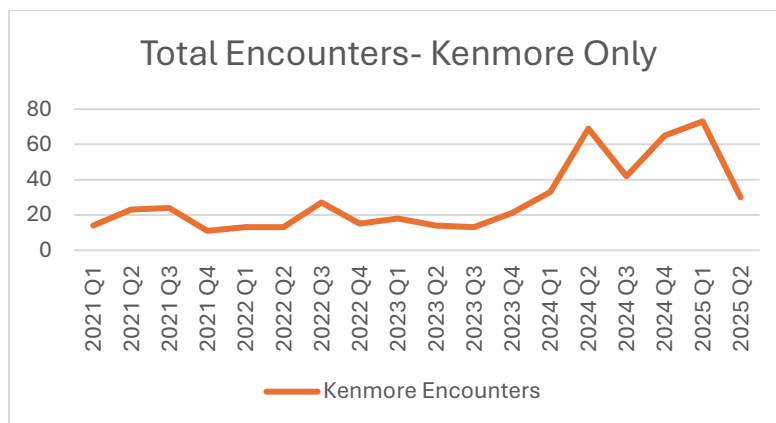
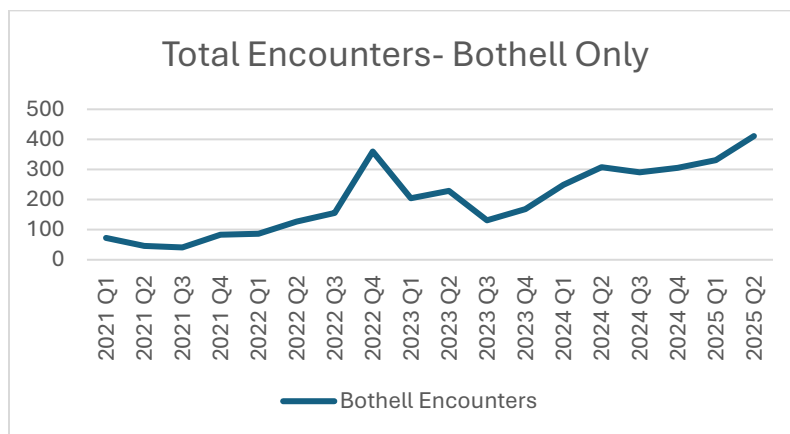
2.b. Total number of encounters

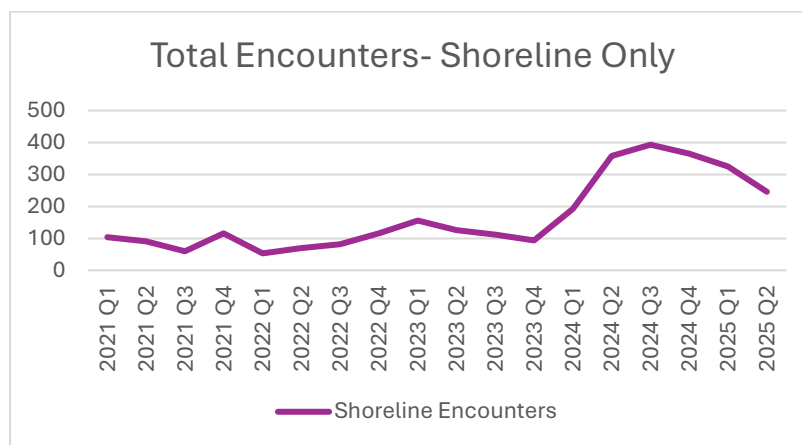
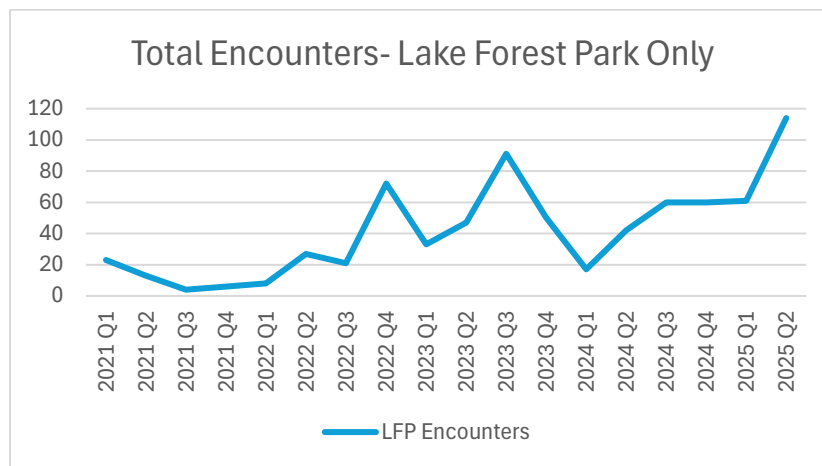
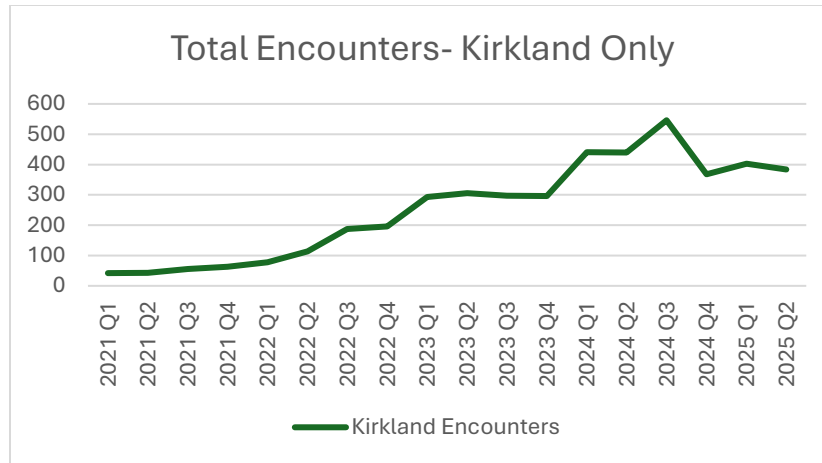
The number of times any individual receives services. One individual may have multiple encounters. Encounters may range from multi-hour responses to in-progress 911 calls, to check in phone calls to make sure an individual connected with a service provider.

2.b.i. Full Program Overview



2.b.ii. City Breakdown





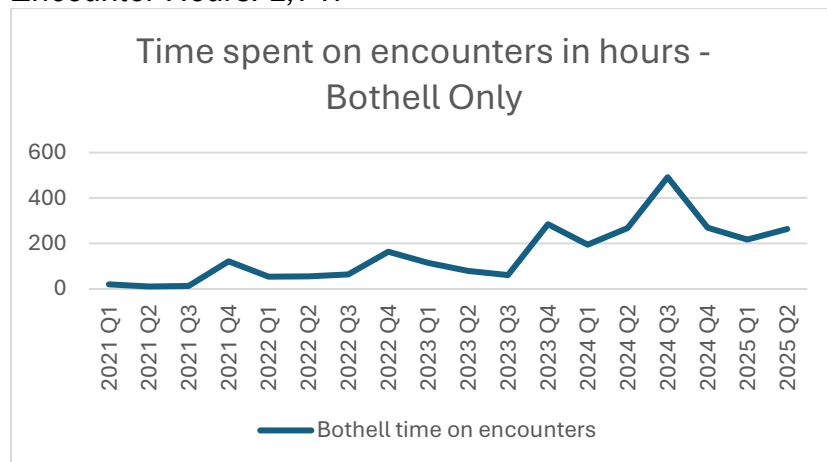
Section 3: City Summaries

For convenience, all above data points are broken down and collated by city below.

Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Bothell

Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 130

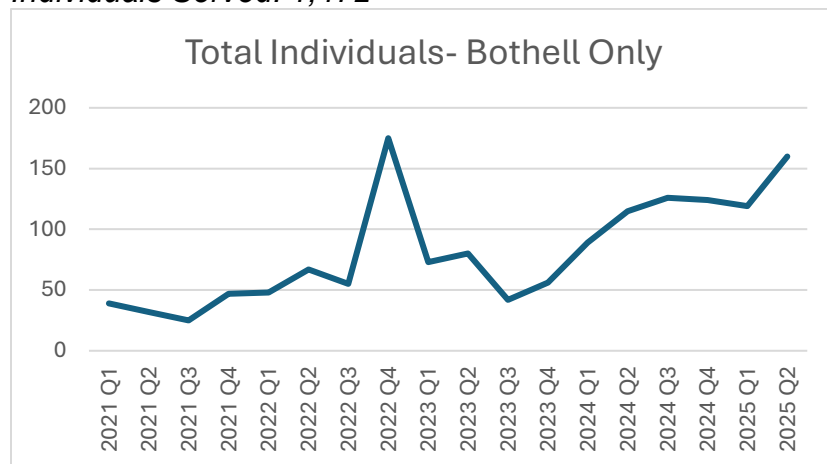
Encounter Hours: 2,747



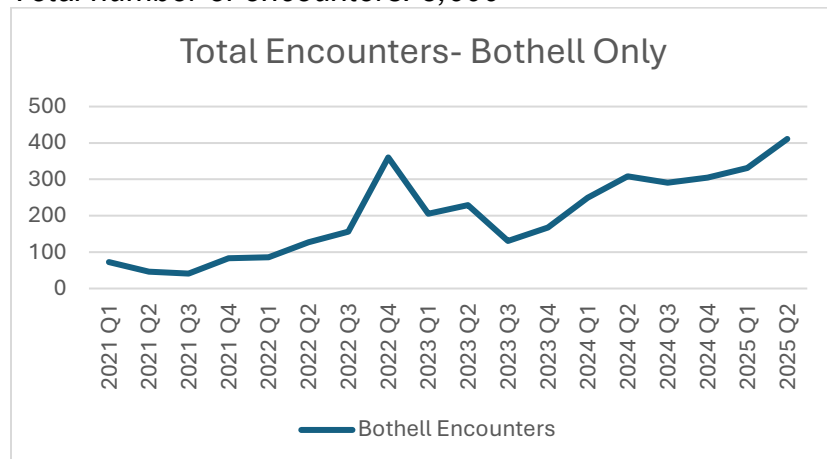
Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 12

Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 53

Individuals Served: 1,472



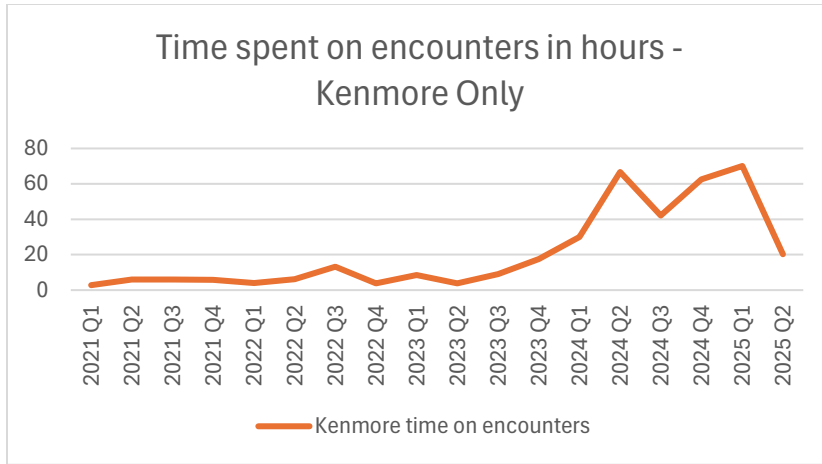
Total number of encounters: 3,600



Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Kenmore

Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 20

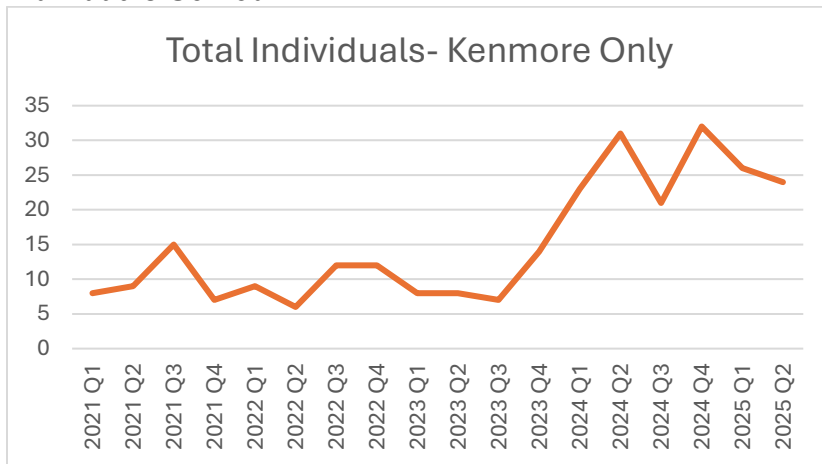
Encounter Hours: 379



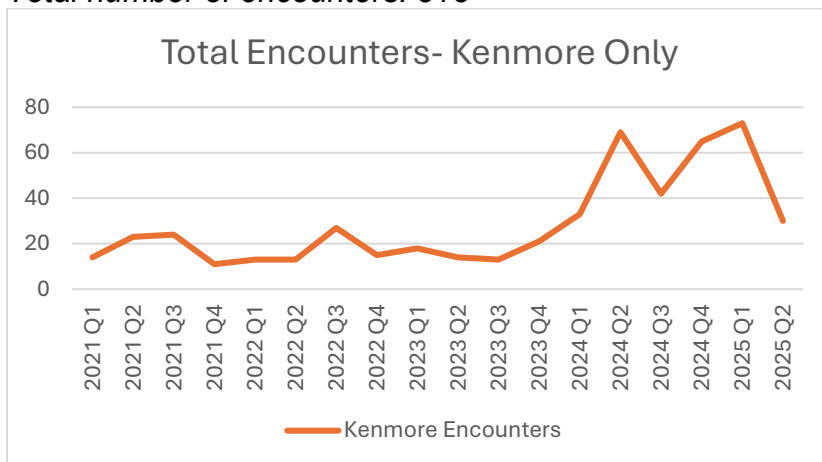
Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 2

Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 7

Individuals Served: 272



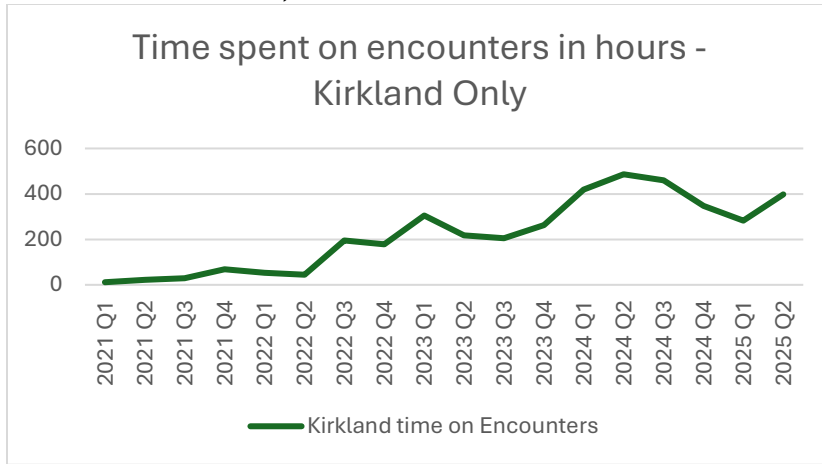
Total number of encounters: 518



Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Kirkland

Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 160

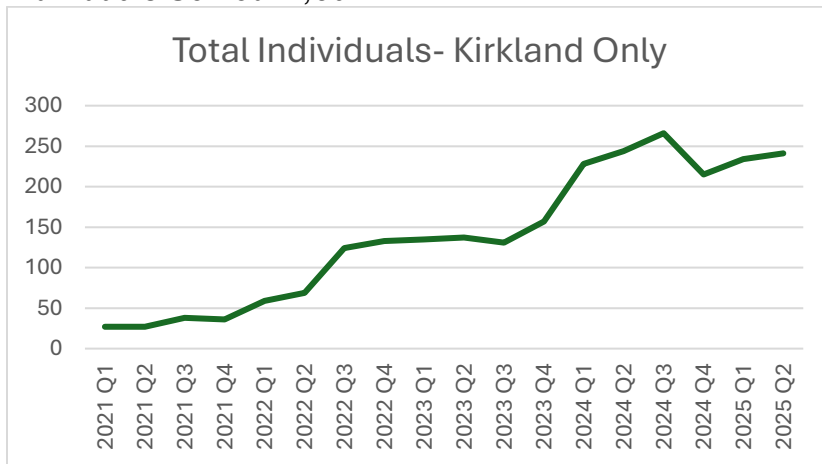
Encounter Hours: 3,986



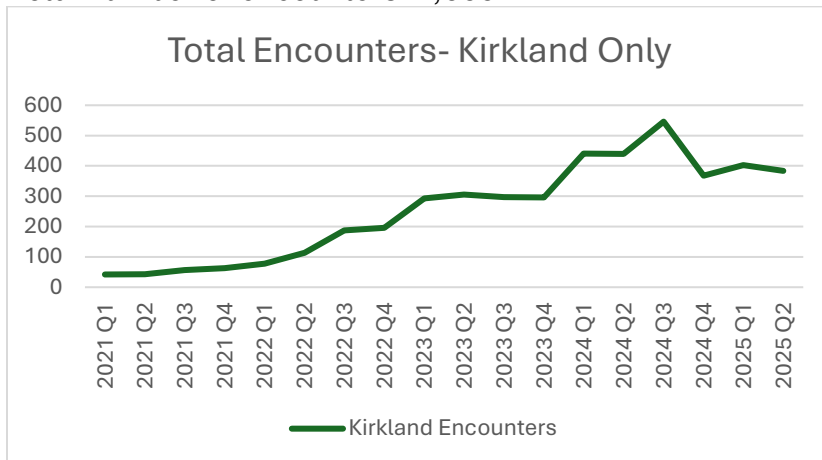
Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 17

Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 77

Individuals Served: 2,501



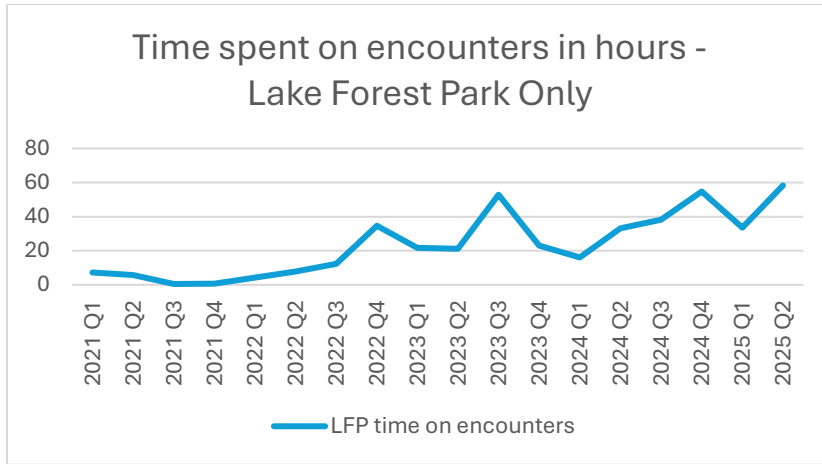
Total number of encounters: 4,533



Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Lake Forest Park

Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 30

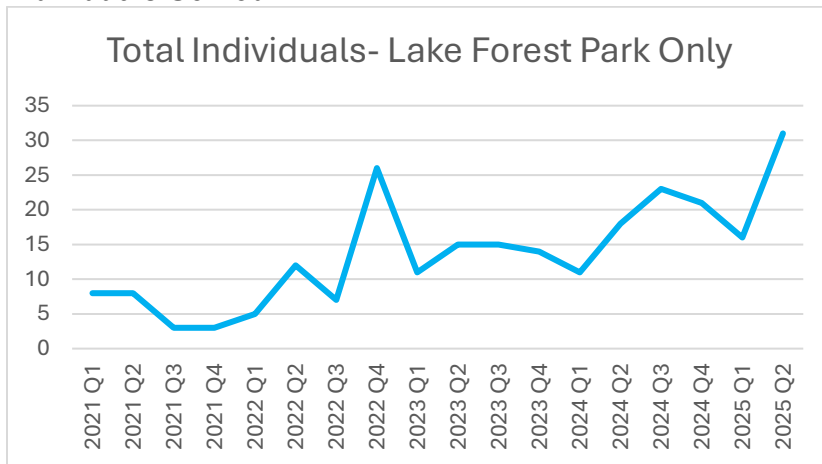
Encounter Hours: 426



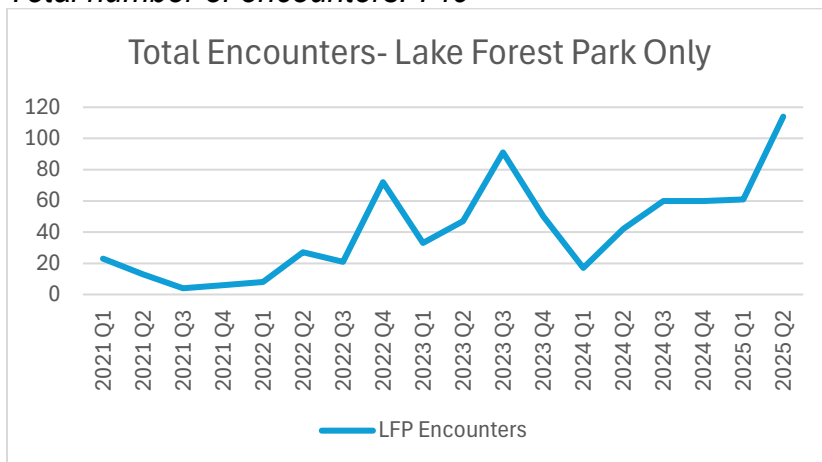
Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 2

Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 8

Individuals Served: 247



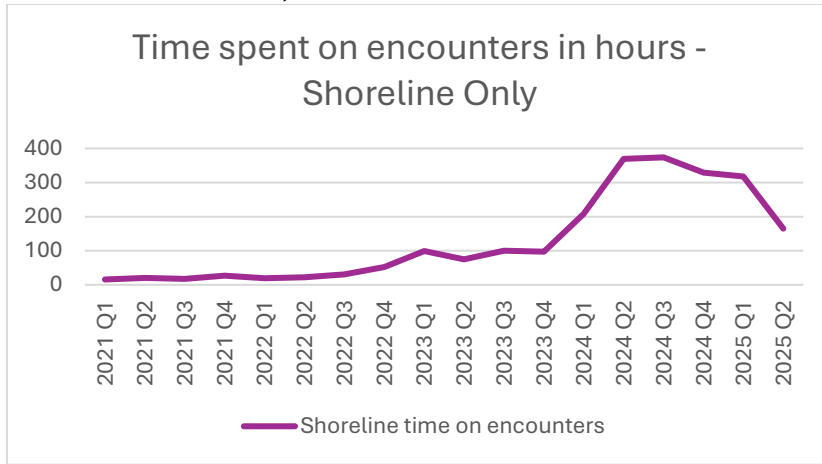
Total number of encounters: 749



Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Shoreline

Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 100

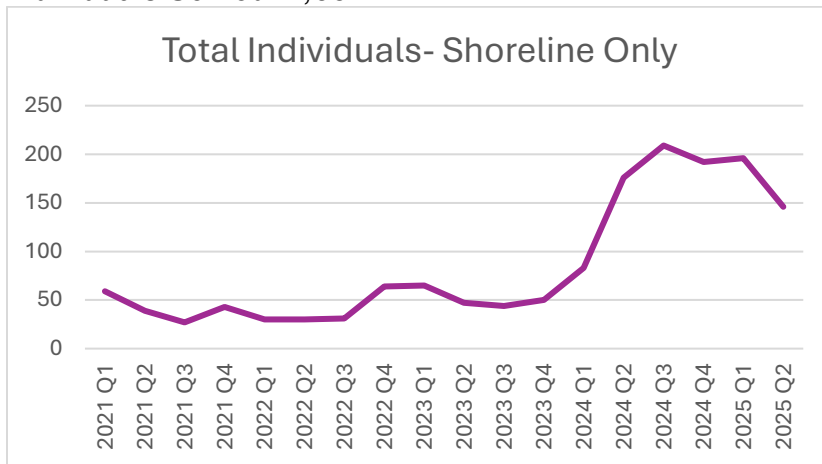
Encounter Hours: 2,340



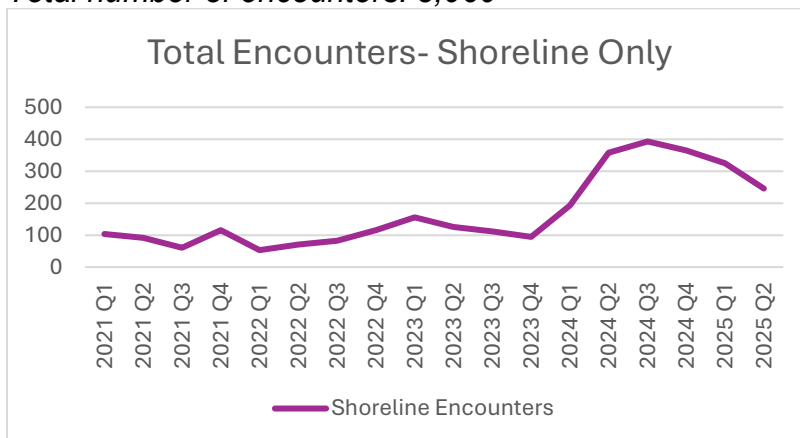
Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 10

Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 45

Individuals Served: 1,531



Total number of encounters: 3,060





MEMORANDUM

To: RCR Executive Board
From: Brook Buettner, Executive Director
Date: August 27, 2025
Subject: Executive Director Report

RECOMMENDATION:

That the RCR Executive Board receive information from the Executive Director on several identified key areas, ask questions and provide feedback and direction.

FORMAT NOTE: New and emerging information is in grey boxes, with context/ historical information from previous memos below.

DISCUSSION:

Governance Bodies

Executive Board

In the absence of its own organizational fiscal policies, RCR has adopted all City of Kirkland Fiscal Policies. RCR and Fiscal Agent Staff are beginning work on creating additional fiscal policies that more directly address the unique operational needs of the RCR Agency and support its mission, vision and values. At today's meeting, the Executive Board will be asked for feedback on a draft Food and Beverage Purchase Policy, under a separate agenda item.

Operations Board

The RCR Operations Board will meet in person on September 10, 2025. The Agenda will focus on developing the lower acuity, step-down portions of the continuum of care including the Center for Human Services and the DOJ grant supporting intake capacity, and the Recovery Navigator Program. The Recovery Navigator Program has been successfully layered into the crisis system in Shoreline and RCR staff are working to increase utilization in the other RCR cities.

Community Advisory Group

The RCR Community Advisory Group convened in person on August 19, 2025, in Kenmore to launch a season of recruitment. Community Advisory Group members helped craft a recruitment strategy focused on four primary areas:

1. Community hubs
2. Behavioral health provider partners
3. Faith-based community partners
4. Higher education, specifically the counseling departments

Operations

Team

Crisis Responder Sherry Sternhagen has been promoted to serve as the Bothell/ Lake Forest Park-based Crisis Responder Lead, completing the Lead/ Supervisor Team.

This month, one of our Crisis Responders who has been stationed in Kirkland will leave the RCR team and move to California where her husband has found employment as a firefighter.

These two changes created two permanent FTE openings, which RCR staff is recruiting both internally and externally.

In addition, RCR leadership is noticing signs of chronic burnout among members of our team, likely attributable to multiple factors including the nature of the work, larger societal changes, increases in behavioral health need, and the fact that the majority of the team has now been working in this field for over two years. RCR leadership is actively engaged in strategies to help support Crisis Responders in the difficult work that they do including the increase of direct Supervisor support with the additional Supervisor position, intentionally fostering connection between team members and with similar responders across the state, and introducing protective nervous system care practices. These strategies are based on the findings of the Organizational Trauma consultant the agency engaged previously as well as on evidence-based practices for chronic trauma exposure.

Crisis Facility Update

RCR staff continues to work with ConnectionsHealth Crisis Facility staff to improve workflows and RCR Supervisor staff now have a standing meeting with ConnectionsHealth clinical leadership to monitor any issues as they arise. RCR staff is also working on bringing ConnectionsHealth leadership to a RCR Police Chief meeting to provide an update and answer any questions.

Budget

RCR Agency Fiscal Agent staff expect to have a mid-biennial budget adjustment ready for the Board's review at the November meeting and adoption at the December meeting. There are no changes to anticipated expenditures but an anticipated additional revenue of \$948,965.40 in WASPC grant funds once that contract is finalized and executed.

Grants

Washington Health Care Authority/ Department of Justice (DOJ) Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP)

The Washington Health Care Authority (HCA) applied for and was awarded a DOJ-COSSUP grant to fund RCR's work to support staff time as we improve our response to the opioid crisis and people experiencing overdose. RCR staff is watching this closely as several DOJ-COSSUP grants across the country have been suspended by Executive Order, although none in Washington state as yet. A deliverables-based contract for the initial year totaling \$124,250 was signed and finalized on May 22, 2025. The HCA has assured RCR and fiscal agent staff that the initial \$100,000 for the planning year is guaranteed with the signing of this contract between HCA and RCR. This funding is not considered in the approved 2025-2027 Approved Biennial Budget.

MIDD

King County staff have informed RCR and fiscal agent staff that 2025 will be a contract extension year as King County works on the MIDD Renewal Plan for 2026. King County has reported an annual award of \$555k, a \$52k reduction from 2024. RCR staff continue to work with King County staff on MIDD renewal and ensuring ongoing support.

WASPC

Kirkland Police Department was notified on May 30, 2025, of a Mental Health Field Response Team Grant Award of \$948,965.40 for the grant period of July 1, 2025-June 30, 2027. This was less than requested to cover 3.0 FTE Crisis Responders for the grant period. RCR staff supported KPD to submit a revised budget that included 2.5 FTE Crisis Responders, plus some training costs.

A finalized contract has been received by Kirkland Police Department staff and is being routed for signature. Once finalized, a subcontract between Kirkland PD and RCR will be executed. Work under this grant is ongoing by two temporary FTE Crisis Responders.

Fiscal Agent staff are analyzing this grant for any braided federal funds that may bring additional requirements.

Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance Connect and Protect Grant funding, previously awarded to the City of Shoreline/ RADAR Navigator Program, is now in the planning year. RCR staff is working with the Center for Human Services on the required Planning and Implementation Guide. This funding will allow RCR to subcontract with the Center for Human Services to offer Crisis Responders a dedicated front door to intake for outpatient services. This will be important because often outpatient services are not available for days or weeks. Previously, Technical Assistance staff contracted with the DOJ to provide support for grantees and programs implementing Connect and Protect Grants had expressed confidence that this grant line within the DOJ was an Executive priority. With support from Kirkland City Attorney's Office staff, a contract was created for the planning year partnership with the Center for Human Services. This deliverables-based contract is being carried out, enabling RCR staff to draw down the initial \$100,000 of the grant funds.

Monitoring Fiscal Risk

RCR and Fiscal Agent staff continue to closely monitor the changing federal, state and local funding environments. City of Kirkland Fiscal Staff have undertaken a practice of carefully analyzing any potential funding with federal tie-backs for requirements and implications.

As reported previously to the Executive Board as part of a briefing on the Fiscal Risk Assessment Process, federal funding represents \$129,000 over the biennium in the approved budget. This funding is part of the DOJ Connect and Protect grant which covers part of the cost of the Executive Director, to pay for time spent planning and implementing a contract with the Center for Human Services to provide immediate intake services for individuals encountered by RCR Crisis Responders.

The HCA grant discussed above is also funded through federal funding, although it is not anticipated in the approved 2025-2026 RCR Agency Budget. Thus far, \$82,832 of the anticipated \$124,250 has been paid to the RCR Agency, with the remaining \$41,418 expected by October. RCR has a discussion planned with HCA staff on the next two years of the contract.

Elected Officials and other stakeholders participating in RCR Ride-Alongs

Upcoming or pending:

King County DCHS Crisis Services Manager Susan Schoeld
Washington State Representative Nicole Macri
Bothell Deputy Mayor Rami Al-Kabra

Landscape Analysis

RCR staff has been engaged in a collaborative process of resource mapping with partner programs in the region including several programs that are relatively new to the area. These three programs represent critical lower-acuity step-down options for individuals who RCR interacts with during moments of acute behavioral health emergency. New resources in the region include:

Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Teams (“Meercat”). Formerly known as the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) and operated by DESC and covering the entire county. Due to a recent re-procurement, [Sound](#)¹ took over operations for all areas outside the City of Seattle and is standing up a team. MRRCT is a behavioral health crisis response deployed by 988 to lower-acuity calls and often supports RCR incidents. RCR staff has been in active conversation with Sound MRRCT staff to build excellent cooperative relationships as that team develops. Sound staff have attended two RCR team meetings and brought one of their vans for a “tour.” They have offered to provide transportation to shelter or crisis facility, intake to services with sound, and other basic needs for people in crisis who have called 911. This program is funded by MIDD Behavioral Health Levy, Crisis Care Center Levy, and state-level 988 telecom tax dollars.

*Recovery Navigator Program (RNP)*². This program is staffed by peers and provides navigation to care for individuals with behavioral health conditions. The Program was initially championed by Representative Lauren Davis and funded to support Blake decision-related drug charge deferrals. In King County, RNP is operated by Peer Washington. RCR teams have worked very successfully with RNP peers with great outcomes, especially within the City of Shoreline. King County RNP faces potential funding cuts in the coming months due to state budget cuts. RCR is in ongoing conversations with RNP staff to improve utilization across other RCR cities, given the success seen in Shoreline.

*The More We Love*³. An organization that provides volunteer “constant” companions to individuals living homeless or experiencing trafficking, as well as some limited shelter and recovery beds. The More We Love has begun interacting with sex workers in the Shoreline area and RCR is building connections with this emerging resource. The organization has also recently received funding for an expansion of the shelter and recovery beds.

BOARD ACTION RECOMMENDED:

No formal action is recommended at this time.

¹ “King County’s Mobile Rapid Response Crisis Team MRRCT”, *King County*, March 4, 2025, <https://www.sound.health/news/king-countys-mobile-rapid-response-crisis-team-mrrct>

² “Recovery Navigator Program”, *Peer Washington*, 2023, <https://www.recoverynavigatorprogram.org/>

³ “The More We Love”, *The More We Love*, 2023, <https://www.themorewelove.org/>