



# DC CARE Engagement Session

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## DC CARE Expansion Working Group



**CCPSA**  
COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY



# Non-Police Crisis Response

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# What is Non-Police Crisis Response?



Highly trained **crisis responders**, not armed police, dispatched through 911 to answer calls for service.



A response designed for situations that could have a **mental or behavioral health component**.



Program models vary nationwide, typically pairing **two professionals** such as a clinician, EMT, or certified peer specialist.



An approach focused on **de escalation and connection to care**, meeting people in crisis with support and dignity instead of punishment.

# Goals of Non-Police Crisis Response Often Include:

Send experts in physical and mental health crisis to de-escalate emergency situations and provide immediate care



Provide long term solutions by connecting individuals to medical or mental health providers, crisis counseling, or follow-up services with consent



Reduce unnecessary use of police resources



Reduce unnecessary transports to hospitals and/or jail



# Is It Safe??

**YES!!!!!!**

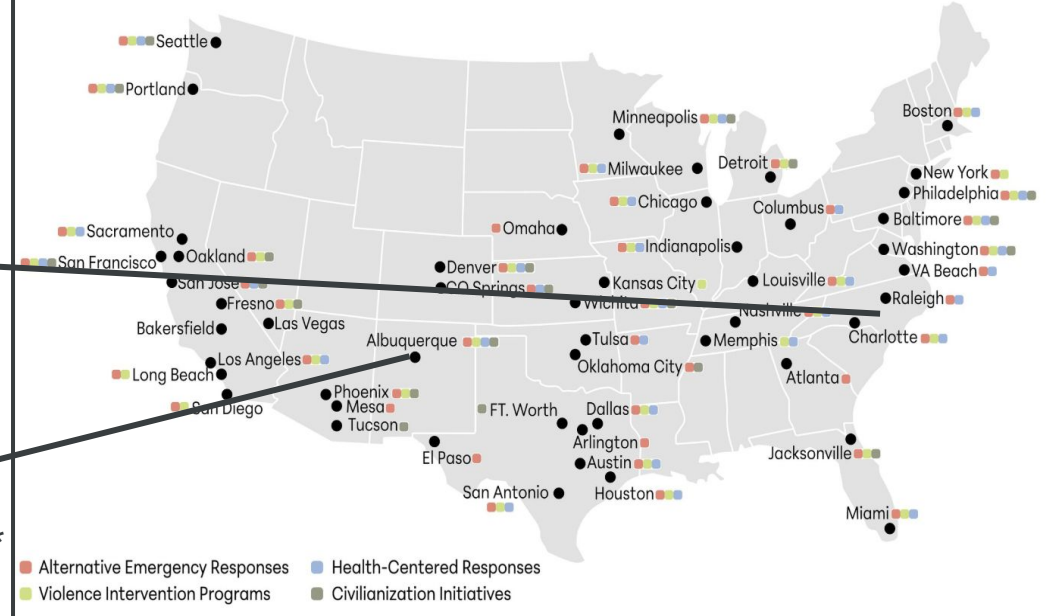
Cities across the country are using non police crisis teams to safely respond to behavioral health crises.

In Durham, North Carolina, members of the Holistic Empathetic Assistance Response Team (HEART) reported **feeling safe on 99% of calls.** \*

Albuquerque's Community Safety (ACS) team answers approximately 3,500 calls a month only requesting **police back up about 1% of the time.**\*\*

## Alternatives to Policing Being Used by 50 Largest U.S. Cities

Sources Local City Budgets & Websites



\* <https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/project/advancing-alternative-emergency-response-in-durham/>

\*\* <https://www.cabq.gov/acs/documents/acs-quarterly-report-q2-2026fy-final.pdf>

# Why It Is Safe

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1. Calls are screened carefully before dispatch.
2. Teams are trained in de escalation and trauma informed care.
3. Police remain available if there is a dangerous weapon or clear threat of violence.
4. Programs track data and continuously refine protocols.

# Potential Benefits to Community

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During a mental health crisis, individuals **deserve** responders who are **specially trained** and equipped with the **right tools** to **stabilize** the situation, provide **effective support**, and **wrap around care**.

# Potential Benefits to Police

Police officers often **lack specialized training** for mental health emergencies, leading to less effective outcomes in these situations.



To maximize **police efficiency**, we should assess calls and **divert appropriate ones** to better-equipped agencies, allowing officers to **focus on serious crimes** and **building community trust**.

# Reduction in Use of Force

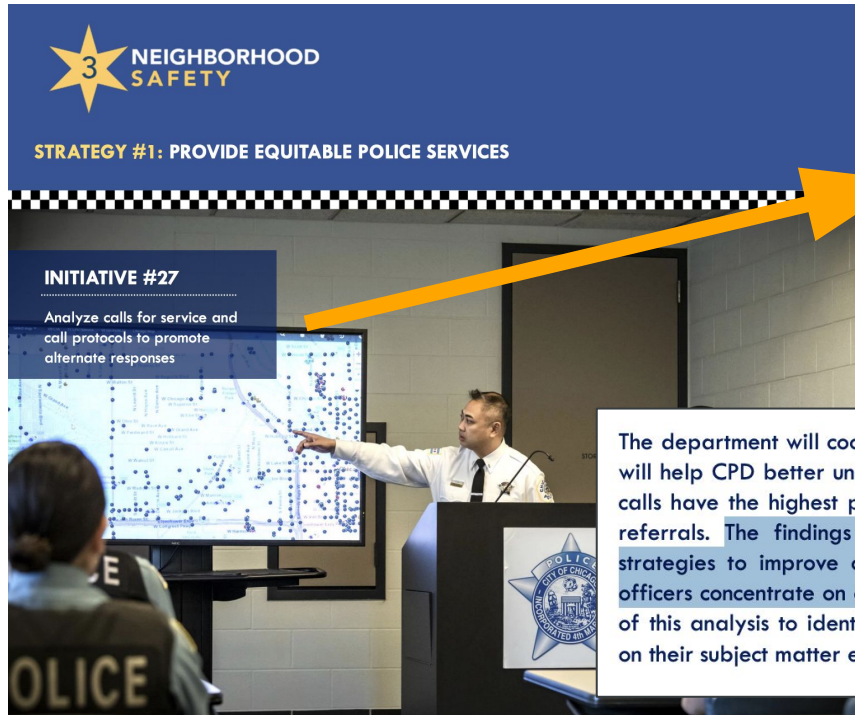
“During that first year we saw **53% reduction in use of force**. Why? Because we sent a better response to help people in crisis—and we better understood that it doesn’t always take a badge, it doesn’t always take a gun and that **people can get help in a variety of ways**.” - **Albuquerque Police Chief Medina**

Chief Medina credits Albuquerque Community Safety (ACS) for being a **big part of the reason Albuquerque is no longer under a consent decree**.



[Listen to the full speech here](#)

# CPD: Strategy for Organizational Excellence



The department will coordinate with city agencies and research partners to analyze calls for service. This analysis will help CPD better understand the volume across call types and the final disposition of calls, ascertaining which calls have the highest percentage of dispositions where individuals are referred to other city services or similar referrals. The findings from these analyses will be used to make recommendations for alternate response strategies to improve outcomes for those who would benefit from non-police services, as well as help patrol officers concentrate on crime prevention and enforcement. The department will also explore peer practices in light of this analysis to identify recommendations for incorporating retired members into non-sworn roles to capitalize on their subject matter expertise and build capacity throughout department operations.

# Chicago CARE Team

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# Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE)

## What is CARE ?

- CARE seeks to **connect individuals in the community experiencing a nonviolent mental health crisis with behavioral health teams** equipped to address their unmet health and social needs.
- Teams consist of one **Mental Health Crisis Clinician** and one **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)**
- Teams **dispatched through 911** to call types including **Mental Health Disturbance, Wellbeing Check, Suspicious Person, Criminal Trespassing, and Threatening Suicide**
- Offer **on scene de-escalation, mental health assessment, referrals** to community services, and **transport to community-based destinations** as appropriate.
- Conducts **follow-up at 1, 7, and 30 days** with all individuals that they encounter.



# CARE Impact - In Stories

“ The CARE team was requested by the Police Department to assist with a young adult who had written a troubling letter expressing anger and a vague threat towards loved ones. The CARE team met with the family and individual in crisis, and in a tense but compassionate conversation, they learned the young adult had been overwhelmed by pressure and isolation since graduating high school. CARE first responders de-escalated the situation, connecting them with a local youth-focused community program known for its mentorship and emotional support. By the end of the visit, the family anxiety had eased, and the young adult agreed to explore the program, offering a glimmer of hope for healing. As they left, the CARE team couldn't help but feel they'd arrived at a pivotal moment.

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# When Behavioral and Mental Health Calls Are Happening in Chicago

Heatmap of Behavioral & Mental Health Calls in Chicago

	12am	1am	2am	3am	4am	5am	6am	7am	8am	9am	10am	11am	12pm	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm	5pm	6pm	7pm	8pm	9pm	10pm	11pm
Sun	3645	3469	3062	2680	2247	1797	1523	1546	1816	2199	2537	2615	2758	2966	3280	3240	3391	3377	3587	3644	3786	3771	3845	3457
Mon	2989	2481	2212	1723	1521	1346	1345	1733	2310	2549	3062	3367	3341	3567	3793	3870	3932	3855	3910	3860	3612	3670	3538	3230
Tue	2687	2239	1859	1582	1397	1333	1418	1790	2341	2772	3048	3305	3331	3560	3723	3802	3917	3957	3721	3666	3636	3737	3613	3254
Wed	2727	2337	1964	1600	1404	1256	1472	1754	2312	2802	3032	3416	3393	3535	3786	3857	3916	3972	3782	3855	3717	3764	3602	3251
Thu	2728	2312	2037	1624	1423	1345	1332	1726	2200	2717	3090	3339	3381	3536	3748	3823	3925	3880	3687	3769	3733	3680	3714	3278
Fri	2880	2566	2212	1828	1565	1394	1450	1734	2352	2749	3024	3316	3496	3468	3718	3886	3930	3907	3858	3738	3838	3833	3993	3746
Sat	3425	3188	2851	2415	2030	1724	1454	1570	1887	2481	2655	2969	3172	3253	3393	3422	3558	3561	3552	3725	3733	3961	3980	3789

Figure 21. Heatmap of behavioral and mental health calls in Chicago (2019 - 2022) (data source: OEMC)

CARE operates inside the red square (but not on the weekends)

# Expansion

The city recognizes that CARE's current [coverage is not enough](#). Too many Chicagoans are still without access to this response.

In the near term, Chicago plans to [deploy the existing CARE vans](#) citywide—rather than limiting them to specific districts—to [expand access across the city](#).

**But expansion cannot stop there. To truly meet the need, we must:**

- [Add more vans](#) to ensure timely response and increased call capacity
- [Expand operating hours to 24/7](#) so residents can access CARE at any time

# Next Steps

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# Treatment Not Trauma (TNT)

*Want to help be a part of the  
change???*

**Join the TREATMENT NOT TRAUMA Advocacy  
Work**



TNT **originated and won the fight** for non-police crisis response.

They are **organizing neighbors** to advocate for the expansion of CARE and the public mental health centers aiming not only to respond to crises, but to reduce them by ensuring people receive the support they need.

# TNT Campaign Demands

**Reopen the 12 Closed  
Public Mental Health  
Centers**

**Establish City-Wide  
“Living Rooms”**



**24/7 City-Wide Non-Police  
Response**

**Formalize the Community  
Care Worker Corps**

# Your Advocacy Is Needed



[Sign on to the  
Community Support  
Letter](https://bit.ly/tntpetitions)

[bit.ly/tntpetitions](https://bit.ly/tntpetitions)

## Upcoming TNT 101 Meeting

April 9th

Sign up : [bit.ly/tnt101april](https://bit.ly/tnt101april)

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Join Signal Channel for  
Updates



# Questions??

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# Thank You!

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