

# Economic Impact Statement

Montgomery County, Maryland

## Bill 43-23

## Crisis Intervention Team – Established

### SUMMARY

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) anticipates that enacting Bill 43-23 would have an insignificant impact on economic conditions in the County in terms of the Council's priority indicators.

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF BILL 43-23

Mental Health America lists lack of alternatives to law enforcement among several widespread problems in mental health and substance use crisis response. They note that shortcomings in crisis response could have serious consequences for someone experiencing a behavioral health crisis, including:<sup>1</sup>

- ending up in confrontations with law enforcement personnel which have tragic outcomes;
- being transported to emergency rooms and being admitted or committed to inpatient psychiatric facilities when these outcomes are unnecessary and may be harmful to the person; and
- being transported to a jail and subjected to ongoing involvement in the criminal justice system when these outcomes are unnecessary, are harmful to the person and do not lead to increased public safety.

Recognizing the limitations of law enforcement, local jurisdictions throughout the country have considered alternative models for mental health crisis response.<sup>2</sup> These include models that do and do not involve police. As described by the Congressional Research Service, the co-responder team model in particular “pair[s] law enforcement officers with trained clinicians who together respond to emergency calls involving individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.”<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of Bill 43-23 is to establish a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) that would implement the co-responder team model for mental health crisis response in the County. The CIT would be jointly staffed and operated by the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

If enacted, Bill 43-23 would require CIT members from MCPD and DHHS to be co-located throughout the County. Other law enforcement agencies could also participate in the CIT subject to written agreements with the County. The CIT would be required to:<sup>4</sup>

- develop a plan for the County to divert individuals experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis or substance use disorder crisis from the criminal justice system and into treatment; and

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<sup>1</sup> Mental Health America, “Position Statement 59.”

<sup>2</sup> Congressional Research Service, “Issues in Law Enforcement Reform.”

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Introduction Staff Report on Bill 43-23.

- respond to “acute mental health, behavioral health, or substance abuse crisis” incidents “where there is a significant risk of danger for the individual in crisis or others as a result of the crisis.”<sup>5</sup> Otherwise, the Bill prescribes the primary response for someone experiencing a crisis should be mobile crisis or emergency medical services clinicians.

Bill 43-23 would also create a 15-member advisory committee on Crisis Intervention that would advise the CIT and County officials on best practices for crisis intervention in the County. The committee would also prepare an annual report on the CIT by January 31 of each year.

Bill 43-23, Crisis Intervention Team – Established, was introduced by the County Council on December 5, 2023.

## INFORMATION SOURCES, METHODOLOGIES, AND ASSUMPTIONS

Per Section 2-81B of the Montgomery County Code, the purpose of this Economic Impact Statement is to assess the impacts of Bill 43-23 on County-based private organizations and residents in terms of the Council’s priority economic indicators and whether the Bill would likely result in a net positive or negative impact on overall economic conditions in the County.<sup>6</sup> There is a lack of high-equality evidence on the economic impacts of pre-arrest diversion programs specifically and mental health interventions in the criminal justice system more generally.<sup>7</sup> For this reason, OLO anticipates that the Bill would have an insignificant impact on private organizations, residents, and overall economic conditions in the County in terms of the indicators prioritized by the Council.

## VARIABLES

Not applicable

## IMPACTS

**WORKFORCE ■ TAXATION POLICY ■ PROPERTY VALUES ■ INCOMES ■ OPERATING COSTS ■ PRIVATE SECTOR CAPITAL INVESTMENT ■ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ■ COMPETITIVENESS**

Not applicable

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

Not applicable

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Montgomery County Code, Sec. 2-81B, Economic Impact Statements.

<sup>7</sup> Bird and Shemilt, “The Crime, Mental Health, and Economic Impacts of Prearrest Diversion of People with Mental Health Problems”; Knapp and Wong, “Economic Evaluations of Mental Health Interventions in Criminal Justice.”

## WORKS CITED

Bird, Karen, and Ian Shemilt. "[The Crime, Mental Health, and Economic Impacts of Prearrest Diversion of People with Mental Health Problems: A Systematic Review](#)." *Criminal Behaviour & Mental Health* 29, no. 3 (June 1, 2019): 142–56.

Congressional Research Service. "[Issues in Law Enforcement Reform: Responding to Mental Health Crises](#)." October 17, 2022.

"[Introduction Staff Report on Bill 43-23, Crisis Intervention Team – Established](#)." Montgomery County Council, December 5, 2023.

Knapp, Martin, and Gloria Wong. "[Economic Evaluations of Mental Health Interventions in Criminal Justice](#)." *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health* 33, no. 2 (2023): 139–48.

Mental Health America. "[Position Statement 59: Responding to Behavioral Health Crises](#)." 2017.

Montgomery County Code. [Sec. 2-81B, Economic Impact Statements](#).

## CAVEATS

Two caveats to the economic analysis performed here should be noted. First, predicting the economic impacts of legislation is a challenging analytical endeavor due to data limitations, the multitude of causes of economic outcomes, economic shocks, uncertainty, and other factors. Second, the analysis performed here is intended to *inform* the legislative process, not determine whether the Council should enact legislation. Thus, any conclusion made in this statement does not represent OLO's endorsement of, or objection to, the Bill under consideration.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Stephen Roblin (OLO) prepared this report.