



Behavioral Health and Crisis Services

RECOMMENDED FY26 BUDGET

\$66,495,344

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

281.90

 JAMES BRIDGERS PH.D., MBA, DIRECTOR

FUNCTION

The mission of Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS) is to promote the behavioral health and well-being of Montgomery County residents. BHCS works to promote mental wellness, prevent substance abuse and suicide, and to ensure access to a comprehensive treatment and recovery system of effective services and support for children, youth and families, adults, and seniors in crisis or with behavioral health needs. BHCS is committed to ensuring culturally and linguistically competent care and the use of evidence-based or best practices along a continuum of care. BHCS works with the State's Behavioral Health Administration, Health and Human Services service areas, County agencies, and the community to provide strength-based and integrated services to persons in need.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Monica Martin of the HHS - Behavioral Health and Crisis Services at 240-777-1488 or Grace Pedersen of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-773-1088 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

24-Hours Crisis Center

This program provides telephone, walk-in, mobile crisis outreach, single adult shelter system screening and referrals, and crisis residential services to persons experiencing situational, emotional, or mental health crises. The Crisis Center provides all services, twenty-four hours/day seven days/week. Much of the work of the Crisis Center focuses on providing the least restrictive community-based service appropriate to the client's situation. The Crisis Center coordinates the mental health response during disasters and community critical incidents, and serves as the afterhours contact for Public Health, STEER (Stop, Triage, Engage, Educate, Rehabilitate), APS (Adult Protective Services), APP (Abused Person Program), and CWS (Child Welfare Services).

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of walk-in contacts ¹	5,180	4,602	5,000	5,000	5,000
Number of students identified by schools to be at risk who were referred to the Crisis Center ²	1,630	1,206	1,300	1,300	1,300

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Percent of students identified by schools to be at risk that are stabilized utilizing community resources without hospital intervention ³	89%	88%	89%	90%	90%

¹ The Crisis Center has steadily expanded mobile crisis outreach services which may have contributed to the decrease in walk-in contacts. The County may also still be stabilizing after the COVID/post-COVID surge.

² MCPS has steadily increased the number of licensed mental health professionals within the school system and has provided additional trainings on risk assessment screenings for in-school staff. This appears to have resulted in fewer external referrals to the Crisis Center, with the referrals generally reflecting higher acuity.

³ Despite having overall fewer school referrals from MCPS in FY24, the percentage of students diverted into a community resource has continued to remain high, which reflects the Crisis Center staff's skilled use of community alternatives.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	12,776,659	75.40
Technical Adj: Annualization of Takoma Park Therapists in the Crisis Center, Fully Offset by Revenue from the City of Takoma Park	249,194	2.00
Replace: Annualize Reduction of Federal Grant for Mobile Crisis Outreach Teams, with Full-Year Funding and FTE Billed to the General Fund	(206,414)	(12.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	901,017	13.00
FY26 Recommended	13,720,456	78.40

Access To Behavioral Health Services

Access to Behavioral Health Services connects uninsured and low-income consumers with mental health and/or substance abuse problems to the appropriate community services by providing information and referral, and behavioral health screenings and assessments. To provide effective engagement in needed services, program staff also provide short-term case management and psychiatric services to vulnerable clients, such as those recently discharged from a psychiatric hospital or jail until they can be linked to a community outpatient mental health program. More intensive social work services are provided to individuals with serious mental illness to ensure effective engagement in needed services and sufficient community supports to reduce negative outcomes and foster the wellness and recovery of the consumer. The Urine Monitoring Program serves clients referred by the courts, social service agencies, or behavioral health providers, and others required to submit to breathalyzer and urine surveillance or who require or request such screening and testing to support recovery from substance abuse.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Total number of unduplicated clients served ¹	3,171	3,882	3,800	3,800	3,800
Percent of clients referred keeping first appointment with community provider ²	74%	64%	68%	72%	75%
Percent of customers satisfied with Access staff services ³	100%	92%	95%	95%	95%

¹ The program continues to see an increase in unduplicated client count through expansion to homeless shelters and parole and probation. These programs are front line serving centers for the targeted client population.

² In FY24, program community aides found it more challenging to engage with clients as effectively as therapists had in the past, which may have contributed to decreased performance on this outcome measure.

³ The survey was distributed to 165 clients and 152 completed the survey. While satisfaction rate is high among these clients, response rate is impacted by lack of reliable smart phones and complex needs of the most vulnerable and low-income clients served.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	4,123,510	30.00
Enhance: Domestic Violence Shelter Contract Due to Increased Utilization	425,000	0.00

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
Replace: Comply with State Requirement that Necessitates County Staff Assume Abuse Intervention Services	107,500	5.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(251,787)	(5.00)
FY26 Recommended	4,404,223	30.00

☀ Admin - Behavioral Health & Crisis Services

This program leads, oversees, and guides the administration of Behavioral Health and Crisis Services (BHCS). It coordinates the implementation of the strategic alignment plan, and the development of the County behavioral health continuum.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	2,447,137	9.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(8,131)	0.00
FY26 Recommended	2,439,006	9.00

☀ Adult Behavioral Health Services

Adult Behavioral Health Services is an Outpatient Mental Health Center (OMHC) that serves primarily individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Services are site-based and include psychiatric evaluation and medication management; individual, group and family therapy; as well as office-based management services. Collaboration with family members, collateral treatment providers, and formal and informal community supports are integral parts of the treatment process and are highly encouraged. The program accepts public benefits such as Medicare and Medical Assistance but also utilizes the annual Maryland Department of Health-Behavioral Health Administration sliding fee scale. Most of the clinical staff is bilingual in English and either Spanish, Vietnamese, or French, and clients speaking other languages are assisted using the Language Line, a telephone interpretation service.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of clients served ¹	253	261	280	300	300
Percent of clients showing improvement in functioning and decreased symptoms - BASIS 24 Scale ²	49%	58%	60%	60%	60%

¹ A personnel shortage continues to limit the number of clients served. The program plans to leverage existing resources to be able to serve medication-only cases.

² The population served is expected to have changes in their symptoms based on their diagnosis, and even though they are in recovery they may relapse at times and their answers may vary accordingly.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	1,816,594	12.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	92,753	0.50
FY26 Recommended	1,909,347	12.50

☀ Adult Forensic Services

Adult Forensic Services is comprised of four programs: 1) Clinical Assessment and Transition Services (CATS) provides

assessment and post-booking diversion services to newly booked inmates with behavioral health issues, and discharge planning for those being released to the community. The Forensic Liaison supports the Competency Docket with reentry recommendations for those returning from State Hospitals; 2) Jail Addiction Services (JAS) is an ASAM II.5 level jail-based residential addiction treatment program for inmates with Substance Use Disorders at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility; 3) The Justice Clinical Assessment and Planning (JCAP) Team provides clinical assessment, care planning, and care-coordination to the clients of Mental Health Court; and 4) Stop, Triage, Engage, Educate, Rehabilitate (STEER) is a team of peer specialists who respond 24/7/365 to opioid overdoses, and provider referrals for high-risk Substance Use Disorder clients.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Total number of unduplicated clients served ¹	1,603	2,556	2,500	2,500	2,500
Percent of Mental Health Court clients who completed program ²	78%	83%	80%	80%	80%
Percent of Jail Addiction Services clients that were not reincarcerated within a year of program completion	70%	71%	75%	75%	75%
Percent of STEER participants who attend first treatment appointment ³	68%	57%	61%	61%	61%
Percent of customers satisfied with Adult Forensic services ⁴	80%	66%	75%	75%	75%

¹ The significant increase in client count is mainly driven by a 20%+ increase in adult arrests during the fiscal year.

² The program increased capacity in FY24 with a higher number of staff than the prior year, which contributed to more positive client outcomes.

³ The STEER Program referred 256 clients for treatment; 147 engaged in treatment after the referral. The decline in satisfaction may be the result of an 20% rise in referrals while the program experienced a shortage of peer support specialists.

⁴ Results based on 183 survey responses (out of 183 surveys distributed.) The lower satisfaction ratings are driven by responses from participants in Jail Addiction Services (JAS). These clients were particularly affected by the overall increase in jail population and the program experience some staffing shortages that likely affected client satisfaction as well.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	5,419,450	29.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(1,333,332)	(1.00)
FY26 Recommended	4,086,118	28.00

Local Behavioral Health Authority

As the State-mandated Local Behavioral Health Authority (LBHA), this program is responsible for system planning, management, and oversight of the Montgomery County behavioral health system across the lifespan (behavioral health, mental health, and substance use disorders). The LBHA manages State and Federal grants as well as County-funded programs and ensures quality of care, quality improvement, and access to behavioral health fee-for-service programs. The LBHA has the responsibility of system planning, which involves assessing and determining gaps in behavioral health treatment and rehabilitation, and working closely with community service providers and partners, forensic services, and public safety. The LBHA ensures the ongoing development of a resiliency and recovery-oriented continuum of services that provide for consumer choice and empowerment. This program manages all BHCS service area contracts.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	16,074,751	24.15
Eliminate: One-Time FY25 9-8-8 Grants	(357,219)	0.00
Eliminate: ARPA Substance Use Services Grant	(555,400)	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	2,443,934	0.85
FY26 Recommended	17,606,066	25.00

☀️ Outpatient Behavioral Health Services - Child

Adolescent Outpatient Behavioral Health Services - Child offers comprehensive substance use prevention, substance use and mental health screenings, mental health treatment, and care coordination services for Montgomery County youth and their families, particularly for the most vulnerable. Services are individualized, child-focused, family-driven, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and accessible via office, school, and community-based settings. The program strives to serve the behavioral health needs of youth and families along a continuum of care from prevention to treatment.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of unduplicated clients served ¹	462	567	600	600	600
Percent of clients who show reduction in severity of mental health symptoms ²	67%	65%	70%	70%	70%

¹ The number of clients increased in FY24 despite staff vacancies. The unduplicated count excludes group therapy services, which served additional youth in schools and clinics, because group participants are not billed and not all are admitted into the program.

² A high number of clients had severe presentations that may have impacted the lower rates of symptom reduction.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	7,893,839	29.25
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	1,134,663	1.00
FY26 Recommended	9,028,502	30.25

☀️ Specialty Behavioral Health Services

Specialty Behavioral Health Services is comprised of the Adult Drug Court Treatment Program, the Medication Assisted Treatment Program (MAT), and the Urine Monitoring Program. The Drug Court program delivers outpatient and intensive outpatient levels of care, in addition to psychiatric interventions and medication assisted treatment. The MAT program works with opioid and alcohol use disorders and delivers methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone therapies. The Urine Monitoring Program is an onsite Urinalysis Collection Program which monitors for substance use within these programs, the Mental Health Court program, Child Welfare, and Probation and Parole.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of Specialty Behavioral Health Services clients served ¹	178	264	275	300	300

¹ Programs included: Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient Program, Medication Assisted treatment Program, Jail Medication Assisted Treatment Program, Urine Monitoring Program, DUI Court, and Adult Drug Court. The increase in clients is due in part to the successful expansion of the Medication Assisted Treatment program in jails. The number of clients also increased within DUI Court and outpatient clinics. The program expects continued growth.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	3,809,940	25.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	1,262,274	8.00
FY26 Recommended	5,072,214	33.00

☀️ Trauma Services

Trauma Services (TS) includes the Abused Persons Program (APP) for partner violence and the Victim Assistance and Sexual Assault Program (VASAP) for sexual assaults and general/violent crimes, including services to surviving family members of

homicide and other tragic/traumatic deaths. Trauma Services provides comprehensive, individualized, and culturally appropriate clinical and victim assistance services to domestic violence victims and offenders, sexual assault victims, and victims of general crime of all ages. Programming for domestic violence, sexual violence, and human trafficking victims also includes information and referral, lethality assessments, crisis intervention, safety planning, outreach to hospitals/police stations for victims of sexual assault, and placement in emergency shelters.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of new Partner Abuse victims served ¹	1,639	1,450	1,595	1,755	1,931
Number of Partner Abuse victim clients waiting for counseling service (monthly average) ²	17	43	30	25	20
Percent of clients receiving therapy that demonstrate improvement on a domestic violence rating scale ³	98%	98%	99%	100%	100%

¹ A personnel shortage contributed to the decrease in the number of clients served. Additionally, there was an increase in the severity and complexity of cases. Projections are based on a 10% increase from FY24.

² In FY24, the program encountered limited staffing issues which resulted in a significant increase to the waitlist.

³ The program continues to see improved symptom reduction in FY24 due to operating more domestic violence groups and offering services in person and online to meet the clients' needs.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	6,949,151	27.75
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	959,681	6.00
FY26 Recommended	7,908,832	33.75

Treatment Services

This program provides overall management of the County-operated publicly funded Behavioral Health Continuum of Care and provides administrative support for the managerial duties of the Treatment Services Administrator.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	279,691	2.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	40,889	0.00
FY26 Recommended	320,580	2.00

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 REC Expenditures	FY26 REC FTEs
24-Hours Crisis Center	12,776,659	75.40	13,720,456	78.40
Access To Behavioral Health Services	4,123,510	30.00	4,404,223	30.00
Admin - Behavioral Health & Crisis Services	2,447,137	9.00	2,439,006	9.00
Adult Behavioral Health Services	1,816,594	12.00	1,909,347	12.50
Adult Forensic Services	5,419,450	29.00	4,086,118	28.00
Local Behavioral Health Authority	16,074,751	24.15	17,606,066	25.00
Outpatient Behavioral Health Services - Child	7,893,839	29.25	9,028,502	30.25
Specialty Behavioral Health Services	3,809,940	25.00	5,072,214	33.00
Trauma Services	6,949,151	27.75	7,908,832	33.75

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 REC Expenditures	FY26 REC FTEs
Treatment Services	279,691	2.00	320,580	2.00
Total	61,590,722	263.55	66,495,344	281.90

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