

Governor Phil Murphy

# ICYMI: Governor Murphy, Attorney General Platkin Announce Grant Recipients for Community Crisis Response Teams

07/12/2024

*Organizations in Camden, Essex, Mercer, and Passaic Counties each eligible to receive up to \$2 million*

**TRENTON** – Governor Phil Murphy and Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin announced today that organizations in Camden City, Newark, Paterson, and Trenton have been selected to receive grant funds to support the creation of local Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT) Pilot Programs. Eligible municipalities and community-based organizations participated in a competitive grant process that made up to \$2 million available per municipality. The Center for Family Services in Camden, the Newark Community Street Team, the Reimagining Justice Inc./Paterson Healing Collective's Paterson Compassionate Care Collaborative Project, and Salvation and Social Justice in Trenton were selected to receive funds and establish CCRT pilots in their respective cities.

Governor Murphy signed the Seabrooks-Washington Community-Led Crisis Response Act, P.L.2023, c.259, into law in January 2024. Named for Najee Seabrooks and Andrew Washington, individuals who were killed in separate encounters with law enforcement while experiencing mental health crises, the Act established, among other things, the Community Crisis Response Team Pilot Program. Community Crisis Response Teams help address an identified gap to accessing mental and behavioral health support in vulnerable communities.

The CCRT initiative builds on existing programs that support Attorney General Platkin's comprehensive public health approach to public safety and improve outcomes for communities.

- **ARRIVE Together** – the state's \$10 million law enforcement and mental health response program, which is operational in all of New Jersey's 21 counties and available to over 50% of the State's population.
- **Violence intervention initiatives** – including Community-Based Violence Intervention and Hospital-based Violence Intervention Programs (CBVI and HVIP), and Trauma Recovery Centers, which focus on individuals at highest risk of violence or victimization and are collectively funded at over \$100 million in state and federal dollars since the beginning of the Administration.
- **Diversiónary programming** – including Law Enforcement Lead Diversion (LEAD), Opioid Response Teams, and Operation Helping Hand, which divert individuals from arrest to treatment and provide guidance on recovery services. These programs have received a combined \$28.8 million in funding, to date.

"I am glad to see the Seabrooks-Washington Community-Led Crisis Response Act starting to take shape with the award of these grants to community crisis response organizations in some of the most vulnerable communities across our state. When I signed the Act into law earlier this year, I did so understanding the immense responsibility we have to assist those suffering from mental health crises," **said Governor Murphy**. "We are prioritizing doing everything we can to protect those in crisis at their greatest time of need, rather than punish them. Community Crisis Response Teams are another tool in our growing arsenal of crisis response initiatives to aid those in mental distress."

Although the existing alternative response programs have successfully utilized traditional law enforcement and emergency medical or mental health response systems, some individuals may be reluctant to call for help due to a lack of trust in these systems. CCRTs will help address this gap, allowing those reluctant to seek the help and support they need via existing pathways to receive and accept it from a trusted community messenger.

"Our public health approach to public safety has saved lives. The support from Governor Murphy and the Legislature has allowed our Department to provide additional services to our communities to help our vulnerable populations at the point that they need them most," **said Attorney General Platkin**. "Today, we expand those efforts by announcing new grants to partners that reflect our commitment to supporting trauma-informed services, led by and with community organizations that are trusted by the people they serve. We are proud to get this work underway."

CCRTs will provide in-person interventions, outreach services, de-escalation, stabilization support, resource connection, and personalized follow-up linkages tailored to the unique needs of individuals. By deploying trusted community partners to de-escalate incidents and to connect individuals to needed resources, CCRTs will complement the community-informed work being led by the Department of Law and Public Safety (LPS) as well as expand the continuum of response options made available by LPS, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Health to address barriers to access and deliver the most appropriate help to those who need it via an avenue that works for them.

"Establishing CCRTs will increase the scope and range of alternative responses to public safety and public health crises supported by the Department and the Office of Alternative and Community Responses," **said Tiffany Wilson, Director of the Office of Alternative and Community Responses**, the Office within LPS that is charged with overseeing the CCRT pilot program. "The partnerships announced today will help us in our mission to redefine public safety by serving our most vulnerable communities with the kind of understanding and compassion best gained through listening to the community and partnering with them to find solutions."

Following the requirements of the program's enabling legislation, municipalities or community-based organizations are required to develop and implement CCRTs in Camden, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, and Passaic Counties. As there were no eligible applications received from Hudson and Middlesex Counties, a new Notice of Availability of Funds has been issued for those counties. The total funding ceiling was \$12 million, and the amount awarded to applicants cannot exceed \$2 million per eligible municipality.

Funding decisions were made based on a variety of considerations, including the quality and strength of the applications submitted, the type of initiatives proposed, the scope of the project, and the applicant's demonstrated capacity to achieve the project goals.

The program is supported by a Fiscal Year 2024 State budget allocation.

## **CCRTs Grant Opportunities**

To be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to the pilot program, an applicant must be from an eligible municipality. Eligible municipalities must be a municipality of the first class in Hudson County; a municipality of the second class having a population of more than 55,000 and density of between 10,000 and 11,000 according to the 2020 federal decennial census in Middlesex County; and have an entity that operates as a violence interrupter community street team within its boundaries.

Additionally, applicants are required to demonstrate an established relationship with a State-approved harm reduction center, be a State-approved community violence intervention program, or both.

The NOAF and associated grant documents can be accessed here: [SFY24 COMMUNITY CRISIS RESPONSE TEAMS \(https://www.nj.gov/oag/grants/2024-0712\\_Community-Crisis-Response-Teams-SUPPLEMENTAL\\_NOAF.pdf\)](https://www.nj.gov/oag/grants/2024-0712_Community-Crisis-Response-Teams-SUPPLEMENTAL_NOAF.pdf) - Supplemental Notice of Availability of Funds

The deadline to apply for funding is August 19, 2024.

# Governor Phil Murphy

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