



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: City of Bellingham – Mental Health Support Interlocal Agreement
DATE: August 31, 2023

Attached is an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and City of Bellingham for your review and signature.

- **Background and Purpose**

Whatcom County is partnering with the City of Bellingham to fund an agency to provide behavioral health services at the Bellingham Public Library. Whatcom County Health and Community Services supports the development of healthy youth, families, schools, and communities by reducing risks associated with substance use, mental health conditions and other behavioral disorders. The County also supports the treatment and stabilization of behavioral health conditions negatively impacting the functioning of individuals and their families.

Over 1,000 individuals come into the Bellingham Central Library each day. In June of 2023, the census was over 32,000 individuals. This contract dedicates partial funding from the City of Bellingham for the mental health support staff position embedded at the Bellingham Central Library, seven days per week. Strategies will promote healthy children, families and communities by offering a personal connection, appropriate resource referrals, community connection, and direct services.

- **Funding**

The City of Bellingham and Whatcom County will contribute up to \$75,000 and \$110,000 each year, respectively, through 2028, towards mental health services at the Bellingham Central Library. These funds will be included in the 2024 budget and annual budgets thereafter. Council authorization is required per RCW 39.34.030(2) for agreements between public agencies.

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Manager 360-778-6131 (MChriste@co.whatcom.wa.us) or Kathleen Roy, Assistant Director at 360-778-6007 (KRoy@co.whatcom.wa.us), if you have any questions or concerns regarding this request.