



Memorandum

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Charlene Ramont, Interim Director
RE: City of Bellingham – Alternative Response Team (ART) Program Interlocal Agreement
DATE: JUNE 10, 2025

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

- **Background and Purpose**

This 18-month agreement commits funding from the City of Bellingham for administration of the ART Program. The ART Program provides critical services to community members in crisis or who are at risk of being in crisis. ART is deployed by staff based at WhatComm 911, 10 hours/day, 5 days/week (currently Monday-Friday). ART responds to low-risk, low-acuity, and non-criminal calls and aims to reduce the burden on Bellingham law enforcement by diverting lower-risk calls to a behavioral health team.

- **Funding Amount and Source**

The City of Bellingham will provide \$375,000 in funding to the County over this 18-month period. These funds are included in the 2025 budget. Council authorization is required per RCW 39.34.030(2) for agreements between public agencies.

- **Differences between Contracts**

This is a new agreement; however, funding for these services has been provided through previous agreements since 2022. This agreement includes no significant revisions from the agreement ending on 06/30/2025 (WC Contract #202204045).

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Manager at 360-778-6163 (MChiste@co.whatcom.wa.us) if you have any questions.

Encl.

