



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization – Recovery Navigator Program Contract
DATE: March 25, 2022

Attached is a contract between Whatcom County and North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization (NS BHASO) for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

This contract funds the expansion of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program, per SB 5476. The legislature approved the Recovery Navigator Program (RNP) Uniform Standards, which states, “RNP will, whenever possible, build on and enhance those existing LEAD-aligned approaches, complementing them where necessary to achieve greater alignment with LEAD core principles, before/rather than establishing stand-alone RN Programs. The existing LEAD-aligned investments might include LEAD programs, crisis response programs, resource hubs, homelessness response, and other locally coordinated efforts that intentionally attempt to achieve the goals of recovery navigator standards”.

The intent of the RNP is to provide social services to individuals who intersect with police because of simple drug possession (ESB 5476§13) and/or people who have frequent criminal legal system contact because of unmet behavioral healthcare needs. The RNP will establish a new system of response and care for people who are not served by office-based, appointment-based, time-delimited care. Coordination and communication between law enforcement, prosecutors, program staff, medical providers, and community partners is essential to the success of these programs.

This contract provides funding for 3 additional FTEs (2 Outreach positions and 1 Intensive Case Manager) in the Health Department’s Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program to meet the legislative requirements of SB 5476.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract, in an amount not to exceed \$512,455 for the period of 03/01/2022 through 06/30/2022, is provided by the Recovery Navigator Program Fund passed through the NS BHASO. Any unspent funding as of 6/30/22 will roll over to the next contract period. These funds will be included in the 2022 budget. Council approval is required per RCW 39.34.030(2) for agreements between public agencies.

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Division at 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.

