



Update on Grant Funding Sought by the City of Billings May 2024

Connect and Protect: Law Enforcement Behavioral Health Response Program



The City of Billings has partnered with Riverstone Health in an application to the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. The application requests \$550,000 to support a project that would help reduce court non-compliance and revocations of release findings for individuals with mental health disorders and co-occurring substance use issues. The project would establish a "comprehensive, collaborative, and data-driven framework" managed by the City in collaboration with mental health and substance abuse service providers.

More About This Project

Efforts continue on multiple fronts to reduce crime and make the City of Billings a safer place to live, work, and play.

- Our criminal justice system is currently overwhelmed with offenders, cases, and inmates. Many of those who are in the system experience mental health disorders or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.
- The courts attempt to divert offenders toward mental health and substance use treatment when appropriate - beginning with requirements that offenders seek evaluations, obtain treatment, and check back in with courts on their progress.
- Communication systems between state, county, district, and municipal courts, and communication systems between courts and mental health/substance use providers are lacking, resulting in communication gaps that result in a large number of offenders having their release revoked due to non-compliance with conditions of release.
- Funding from the Connect and Protect grant would help the system establish a data-sharing system and communication management between courts and between courts and providers. The system will save time and help ensure that these offenders get the help they need so that they can successfully serve their sentences and re-enter the community as contributing citizens.
- Funding would help streamline and supplement efforts to stabilize offenders while incarcerated and in the community by providing mental health and re-entry support through local providers.

More About This Funding Source

- The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance Connect and Protect grant program "supports law enforcement-behavioral health cross-system collaboration to improve public health and public safety by improving responses to and outcomes for individuals with mental health disorders (MHDs) or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders (MHSUDs).
- The grant solicitation can be found at the BJA [website](#).
- BJA expects to announce award decisions no later than September 30, 2024.

To learn more about this grant-funded project, contact:

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