



Dayton to add crisis response team for emergency mental health calls

-State grant to Dayton Mediation Center will establish new service-

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The City of Dayton will receive a \$1.4 million grant from Ohio Criminal Justice Services, a division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, to create a new crisis response program.

The Crisis Response Unit will be a team of six specialists, including licensed professionals trained in mental-health crisis response. The unit will respond to selected 911 or direct calls for service and is expected to begin operating in late 2023.

These calls have historically been handled by police but are better suited for trained mental health professionals. Operation of the Crisis Response Unit will allow police to respond to more appropriate calls for service while being more prepared for their next call.

From March 2021 to September 2022, mental health-related 911 calls in Dayton increased 73%.

In June of 2022, the City of Dayton launched a first-of-its-kind Mediation Response Unit that has responded to nearly 2,000 911 or direct calls for service using mediation-based de-escalation response to neighbor disputes and other low-level conflict related issues.

The Crisis Response Unit will function similarly to the Mediation Response Unit, but with clinicians responding specifically to mental health-related 911 or direct calls. The clinicians will provide de-escalation and connections to supportive services when needed to divert individuals from the criminal justice system when possible.

These programs would not be possible without collaboration and support from the Dayton Police Department and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office-Regional Dispatch.

The Ohio Criminal Justice Services grants are one component of \$20 million in resources awarded by Governor Mike DeWine for community-based violence reduction programs.

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The Dayton Mediation Center was established by the City of Dayton in 1987 in an effort

to ease the impact of community conflicts on public resources. The Center has become a trusted resource as one of the oldest and most robust conflict intervention resources in the country for those wishing to engage conflict constructively. The Dayton Mediation Center intervenes in more than 3,000 conflict situations annually. The Center's services have been utilized by residents, neighborhood organizations, businesses, employers and employees, schools, law enforcement agencies and court systems. Learn more at www.daytonmediationcenter.org.

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