



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
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### CONSENT CALENDAR

May 12, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington  
 Subject: Budget Referral: Proposal to Add a New Mental Health Services Employee

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Refer a new Mental Health Services employee and a Mobile Crisis Team to the 2015-2016 budget to be the primary point of contact for mental health crises and emergencies and to direct patients to mental health services.

#### BACKGROUND:

Formerly, Berkeley had four Mobile Crisis Teams to respond to mental health emergencies. However, due to budget cuts, that number has been reduced to one single team working a 10.5 hour shift. This is not sufficient to provide adequate responsive services for mental health crises.

Due to the lack of Mobile Crisis Teams, the bulk of mental health crisis management has been left to the Berkeley Police Department (BPD), leaving one out of every five officers in the police force to deal with mental health crises. According to the BPD, 35% of police calls were from people suffering from mental health crises, representing a 43% increase over five years. Responding to these crises is significantly draining police resources.

A 2013 study from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Berkeley Branch recommended that the city prioritizes the policy implementation of “non-Police involvement with Mental Health Services (BPD to have backup role for life-threatening matters), and operations of the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Unit to operate 24 hours, 7 days a week.”

For more information please see:

1. [http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Council\\_7/Level\\_3\\_General/Item%2012.A.2\\_NAACP%20Corrospondance.pdf](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/uploadedFiles/Council_7/Level_3_General/Item%2012.A.2_NAACP%20Corrospondance.pdf)
2. <http://www.berkeleyside.com/2015/04/16/mental-health-calls-are-1-drain-on-berkeley-police-resources/>

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Salary for new employee and compensation for Mobile Crisis Team.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Efficient emergency response systems improve overall public health.

CONTACT PERSON:

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