

# Crisis Mental Health Services



[HF 4883](#) Clardy; [SF 4649](#) Maye Quade

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Communities across Minnesota face urgent and unprecedented mental health challenges. Dakota County has responded by developing a continuum of effective services based on national best practices, but these cannot be sustained without state support.

For more than 30 years, Dakota County has provided phone and mobile mental health crisis response, intervention and stabilization services. In response to growing community need, changing service expectations and law changes, Dakota County expanded its crisis services to respond to direct transfer calls from Dakota 911 and provide more frequent and timely mobile crisis response. The county also embedded social workers in 10 of 12 Dakota County public safety agencies for crisis follow-up and stabilization and started construction of a new Crisis and Recovery Center.

The county's service expansion has mostly been funded with one-time aid, including American Rescue Plan funds. To ensure these proven crisis services can continue in Dakota County and statewide, the Legislature should create a long-term, sustainable funding structure. In the short term, the state should support Dakota County's existing service expansion through a direct allocation.

Dakota County is a leader in crisis response. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) acknowledged it in the 2023 Crisis Response Final Report:

"...Dakota County is an exemplary example. Dakota County leaders are working in close

partnership with public service systems including police, EMS, fire, and 911 as well as with mental health providers; healthcare systems; community partners; justice system partners; and people with diverse lived experiences. This approach focuses on bringing everyone together to tackle the issue — because mental health and addiction impact everyone."

The following recommendations would sustainably support effective crisis response services provided by Dakota County and other Minnesota counties:

- Increase funding to the DHS base budget for crisis services grants distributed to counties.
- Direct DHS to create and implement, with input from counties, an equitable and transparent formula for distribution of state crisis grant dollars. Under the current distribution method, Dakota County receives approximately 2.9 percent of total state funds allocated for crisis services, though the county accounts for 8 percent of the state population.
- Provide a one-time appropriation of \$3.4 million to Dakota County to fund its crisis services while long-term sustainable funding is implemented.

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