

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR MINIARD CULPEPPER



## CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX

### ORDER FOR A HEARING TO EXAMINE ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY-BASED MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE PILOT

**WHEREAS,** Community members, advocates, mental health workers, and public health organizations have called for the establishment of a free, non-police, non-carceral, community-based mental health crisis response model in the City of Boston; *and*

**WHEREAS,** In 2021, the City of Boston funded a community-led design process, facilitated by The City School and Boston Liberation Health, engaging more than 200 youth and adult community members through surveys and listening sessions conducted in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language to develop a proposed mental health crisis response model for the City of Boston; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The resulting Boston Community-Led Mental Health Response Model recommended a 24-hour, community-based crisis response system rooted in public health principles, staffed by community responders with lived experience, accessible through 911 diversion, 988, and a dedicated crisis line, and designed to reduce unnecessary police involvement in mental health crises; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The proposal identified that communities most impacted by the absence of a community-based crisis response system include Black and Indigenous people and people of color, undocumented residents, disabled residents, unhoused residents, people who use drugs, survivors of violence, young people, and LGBTQ+ community members, and emphasized the importance of culturally competent, non-carceral, and consent-based approaches to care; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Community-based crisis response models operating in cities including Eugene, Oregon; Denver, Colorado; New York City; and Cambridge, Massachusetts have demonstrated that mental health-focused response systems can divert crisis calls away from law enforcement, connect residents to care and services, reduce unnecessary hospitalization and criminalization, and improve trust between communities and emergency response systems; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The Boston Community-Led Mental Health Response Model further recommended that any pilot program include strong community oversight and accountability mechanisms, coordination with emergency dispatch systems,

multilingual accessibility, neighborhood-based outreach, and independent evaluation to inform future expansion efforts; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

***ORDERED:*** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine establishing a community-based mental health crisis response pilot in the City of Boston, including implementation strategies, operational models, dispatch coordination, community oversight structures, public health impacts, and lessons learned from existing programs nationally; and that the Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Emergency Medical Services, and other interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed on: May 13, 2026