

## **Memorandum Providing Additional Information from RCR Staff**

**Date: February 3, 2026**

**To: Bristol S. Ellington, City Manager  
Shoreline City Councilmembers**

**From: Brook Buettner, RCR Executive Director**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the request of Shoreline City Councilmembers, RCR staff is providing additional information regarding the 911 landscape and operating environment for crisis response; service utilization patterns by city over time; and analysis of call for service data.

### **BACKGROUND**

At the Shoreline City Council dinner meeting on Monday January 26, 2026, Shoreline Councilmembers received a presentation from Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency Executive Director Brook Buettner. Director Buettner presented on the RCR Agency history, purpose, services offered, governance and organizational structure, and role in the broader crisis continuum of care.

Council Members asked many thoughtful questions and Director Buettner committed to providing further information after the Dinner Meeting on several key topics.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **1. 911 and Crisis Response**

In March 2025, the RCR staff prepared an issue brief on current and emerging trends in 911 dispatch of alternative responses to support RCR Executive Board discussion.

*Summary:*

Across the country, jurisdictions are re-imagining public safety, including exploring alternatives to police and firefighters for certain types of 911 calls. The five RCR Principal Members are at the forefront of this national trend, having developed a robust behavioral health first response program in North King County.

Currently the RCR region is served by two 911 call centers and one 988 call center. RCR Crisis Responder resources are generally deployed to behavioral health emergency calls through a self-

attach or self-dispatch model, which means that RCR Crisis Responders listen to 911 air and assign themselves to calls that may be appropriate.

Nationally, multiple jurisdictions are engaged in the process of developing decision-making tools to support 911 dispatchers assigning alternative or crisis responders instead of law enforcement. These tools are in the early stages of implementation and there is not yet a strong research base or accepted set of best practices. RCR staff has been actively engaged with the national conversation to monitor trends, collect promising practices, and inform the operational development of the RCR deployment model.

Complete analysis is included here as Attachment A, Issue Brief: Emerging Trends in 911 and Crisis Response.

## **2. Utilization Over Time**

In September 2025, RCR staff conducted longitudinal analysis of utilization by city at the direction of the RCR Executive Board. RCR staff pulled and collated data on Crisis Responder staff time in each Principal city, time spent on encounters with individuals in crisis in each city, number of individuals served over time, and number of encounters over time broken down by city.

RCR Staff analyzed data for trends related to:

- Time spent by jurisdiction by average weekly staff schedule
- Time spent by jurisdiction by encounter time, broken down on a quarterly basis
- Number of individuals served by jurisdiction, broken down on a quarterly basis
- Total number of encounters by jurisdiction, broken down on a quarterly basis

### *Summary of key findings:*

Trends are as expected, with service numbers rising over time as the programs grew and staffing levels increased, with occasional peaks or valleys related to more granular staffing changes. Trend lines in the longitudinal data rise as would be expected to reflect program growth over time and increased staff time with additional personnel, and roughly reflect population proportions across the cities, with occasional peaks or valleys related to staffing changes.

Complete analysis and data are included here as Attachment B, Longitudinal Service Data Analysis Report.

## **3. Community Need Analysis**

In September 2024, RCR staff conducted analysis of 911 calls for service during the 2023 calendar year, at the direction of the RCR Executive Board and to support decision-making around resource deployment, specifically focused on incoming call volume by day and hour to support discussions of potential coverage options for the overnight hours. The analysis included

collecting public safety call for service data from the five RCR cities' first response agencies as well as 911 dispatch entities, covering the entirety of the 2023 calendar year. Call for service types that could potentially be appropriate for an RCR Crisis Responder were analyzed.

*Summary of key findings:*

- There is significant unmet need in the community for RCR Crisis Responder intervention during behavioral health crisis events
- At least 5,000 potential RCR calls were received by RCR first response agencies during all of 2023, of which
  - 860 received a RCR intervention
  - nearly 500 were during the 1:00am-6:00am block when no RCR Crisis Responder was available
- An average of 1.26 potential RCR call is received daily by the by RCR first response agencies during the 1:00am-6:00am block during all of 2023
- Results are likely an undercount, in part because of limitations in data provided by KCSO
- Results were similar to a 2022 analysis, supporting validity

Complete analysis is included here as Attachment C, Community Need Data Analysis.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A – Issue Brief: Emerging Trends in 911 and Crisis Response

Attachment B – Longitudinal Service Data Analysis Report

Attachment C – Community Need Data Analysis



**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** RCR Executive Board

**From:** Brook Buettner, Executive Director  
Heather Lantz-Brazil, Administrative Assistant

**Date:** March 3, 2025

**Subject:** Issue Brief: Emerging Trends in 911 and Crisis Response

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Executive Board receives information, asks questions, and provides guidance or direction as appropriate to RCR staff.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Across the country, jurisdictions are re-imagining public safety, including exploring alternatives to police and firefighters for certain types of 911 calls. The five RCR Principal Members are at the forefront of this national trend, having developed a robust behavioral health first response program in North King County.

Currently the RCR region is served by two 911 call centers and one 988 call center. RCR Crisis Responder resources are generally deployed to behavioral health emergency calls through a self-attach or self-dispatch model, which means that RCR Crisis Responders listen to 911 air and assign themselves to calls that may be appropriate.

Nationally, multiple jurisdictions are engaged in the process of developing decision-making tools to support 911 dispatchers assigning alternative or crisis responders instead of law enforcement. These tools are in the early stages of implementation and there is not yet a strong research base or accepted set of best practices. RCR staff has been actively engaged with the national conversation to monitor trends, collect promising practices, and inform the operational development of the RCR Agency to maximize our ability to meet the goals laid out in the ILA.

**BACKGROUND:**

**1. RCR AND REGIONAL STATUS**

**RCR Agency Goals**

By the time many jurisdictions began looking at alternative response in 2020, the five RCR Principal cities had already been engaged in this work for several years, and in 2023 combined existing programs to create a visionary new Agency to reimagine first response and public safety in North King County. The RCR Agency was formed with Agency Goals (ILA Section 4.) including:

- a. Provide a consolidated and standardized mobile crisis response program operating throughout the jurisdictions served by the Principals.

- b. Significantly reduce police response to behavioral health calls by providing alternative in appropriate instances to police as the primary response to Community Members in Crisis by deploying mental health professionals or similarly certified staff as crisis responders.
- ...
- e. Support and advise public safety dispatch agencies over time as the agencies develop and adopt dispatch protocols for mobile crisis responders utilizing both the 911 and 988 systems.

To provide, among others, the following Agency Services (ILA Section 5.):

- a.i. Respond to in-progress calls routed directly to the Agency by public safety dispatch agencies, or that are initially routed by public safety dispatch agencies to the Public Safety Operations Serving the Principals.

**Current status of 911, 988 and crisis response in the RCR region**

The RCR region is covered by two 911 call / dispatch centers, NORCOM911 and King County Sheriff’s Office Communications. The region is also served by Crisis Connections as the provider of 988 call-taking services.

NORCOM911 “is a consolidated 911 call taking and dispatching communications center founded in 2007 by twenty public safety organizations in the northeast region of King County,” which dispatches for Bothell, Kirkland, and Lake Forest Park Police Departments and Bothell, Northshore and Shoreline Fire Departments.

*NORCOM 911 current practice:* NORCOM’s policy (Procedure #06-102) dictates that NORCOM dispatchers do not dispatch Crisis Responder units “as the only primary (or single unit) responder to any call for services... and that units may self-dispatch to an already dispatched call for service ... [or] create a new call for service. Police units may request a dual or staged response with the team.”

*Other NORCOM911 alternative response work:* In addition to the RCR public safety agencies, several other NORCOM Principal public safety agencies have some form of alternative or crisis response including Bellevue Fire CARES (Community Advocates for Referral and Education Services) which also serves Bellevue Police Department; Shoreline Fire Department Mobile Integrated Health (serving Shoreline Fire, Bothell Fire, and Northshore Fire); Kirkland Fire Department Mobile Integrated Health; and Eastside Fire and Rescue Mobile Integrated Health (serving Mercer Island, Woodinville Fire, Woodinville Police Department).

NORCOM911 is in the early stages of a strategic planning process which will involve the participation of Principals.

King County 911 Communications Center “triages emergency requests for assistance, relay pertinent information to responders via radio, assign emergency response priority... for all King County patrol precincts,” which includes Shoreline and Kenmore as KCSO law enforcement contract cities.

*King County 911 Comms current practice:* RCR staff continues to explore KCSO policies regarding dispatch of Crisis Response resources. Current practice is that Crisis Responders in KCSO cities self-attach to most calls, and are occasionally proactively deployed by individual dispatchers.

*Other King County 911 Comms alternative response work:* KCSO is in the process of developing an internal co-response team called TRU, modeled after the RADAR Navigator program and initially focused on unincorporated areas of King County.

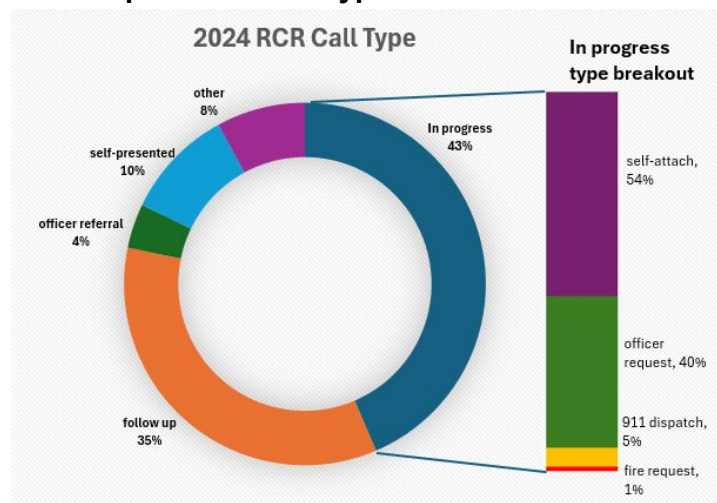
Crisis Connections 988 Hotline is staffed by “trained staff [who] respond to 988 calls in King County, 24/7. They help people who are experiencing mental-health related distress.”

*Crisis Connections current practice:* Crisis Connections 988 strives to handle lower-acuity calls over the phone. When a call is considered high acuity or needs an in-person response, Crisis Connections currently transfers the caller to their local 911 call center.

*Other Crisis Connections alternative response work:* Crisis Connections is part of a state-wide effort to deploy secondary response mental health crisis teams to people in crisis. King County recently awarded a contract to Sound to provide mobile outreach services in the RCR geographic region. The Sound teams are not yet staffed up or fully deployed.

At the [July 6, 2023 RCR Executive Board Meeting](#)<sup>1</sup>, Board members received a briefing on the state-level work to develop the 988 call center infrastructure, develop a network of mobile crisis providers. The *988 and the CRIS* Briefing Paper is included here as Attachment 1. Interoperability between 911 and 988 continues to be a challenge across Washington state.

### RCR dispatch and call type trends



During 2024, 44% of RCR calls were in-progress 911 calls, as opposed to follow up or after-the-fact referrals. Of those, slightly over half were self-attach, which means the Crisis Responder heard the call on the radio and attached themselves as a resource. In 40% of the in-progress calls, the Crisis Responder was requested to scene by an officer, in 1% by a firefighter. On 5% of the in-progress calls the Crisis Responder was directly dispatched by the 911 dispatcher.

Calls which were directly dispatched by the 911 dispatcher make up just over 2% of all RCR calls during 2024, with roughly even distribution across cities and 911 call centers. It is our hope that this number will grow over time with increased dispatcher comfort, a growing national body of evidence, and potential changes to 911 call center policies to allow for direct dispatch of RCR Crisis Responders.

There is no available data about the number of calls that may have initially been routed through 988.

### Current RCR strategy

*Collaboration with local partners.* RCR staff works closely with partners at NORCOM911, King County Sheriff’s Office and Crisis Connections 988, both informally and more formally as part of the RCR Operations Board. The Executive Director of NORCOM911, the CEO of Crisis Connections, and command staff from KCSO are all members of the RCR Operations Board, which has identified the following relevant Strategic Worklines for our community during 2025:

1. 911/988 Interoperability
2. Deployment of RCR Resources, especially across jurisdictions

<sup>1</sup> “RCR Executive Board Meeting Packet 2023-07-06.” *Regional Crisis Response Agency*, June 27, 2023, <https://www.kirklandwa.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/city-managers-office/pdfs/agendas/rcr-executive-board-meeting-packet-2023-07-06-final.pdf>

The full Operations Board 2024-2025 Workplan is included here as Attachment 2.

*Monitoring national trends.* RCR staff is actively engaged with the national conversation about the emerging science of call triage for direct deploy of civilian responders, with the goal of developing and maximizing the RCR Agency’s ability to “respond to in-progress calls routed directly to the Agency by public safety dispatch agencies, or that are initially routed by public safety dispatch agencies to the Public Safety Operations Serving the Principals” (ILA 5. a.i.).

The RCR Executive Director participates in the Harvard Kennedy School Alternative 911 Emergency Response Community of Practice (a learning community of jurisdictions engaged in the early work of creating and testing triage tools), the Alternative Mobile Response Association (a national professional association which promotes information sharing between programs engaged in alternative response to public safety calls), and several national learning communities hosted by the Council for State Governments; and has relationships with several research institutions who follow the emerging outcomes of any research in this field.

## 2. NATIONAL TRENDS AND EMERGING RESEARCH

### 911 alternative response nationwide

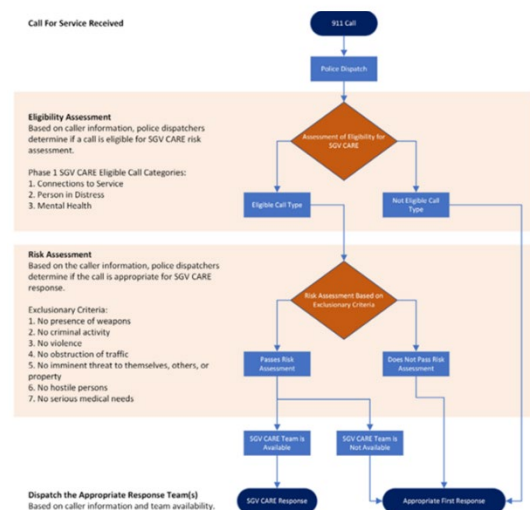
Since 2020, jurisdictions across the country have begun to create alternative responses to public safety calls, in addition to traditional police and firefighter response. There are many iterations on the general theme of deploying alternatives to police and fire which range in coverage, staff type, and the types of calls they can manage. Most alternative and crisis response teams serve as a secondary response rather than an effective in-progress, 911-based first response, though some jurisdictions have begun deploying a behavioral health response to in-progress calls via the 911 system.

### Early approaches

Several communities across the country have developed or begun to test 911 call center-based triage tools to identify calls that might be appropriate for civilian responders independently without another first responder. Some notable jurisdictions which are currently working to deploy alternative response through 911 include:

- [Albuquerque, New Mexico](#)<sup>2</sup>. Albuquerque Community Safety Department was created by city ordinance as a third public safety agency. Tiered response via the 911 call center. Considered a national leader in creating a third branch of the public safety system.
- [Denver, Colorado](#)<sup>3</sup>. STAR has tiered response teams dispatched through Denver 911 call center. Hours currently limited. Considered a national leader in deploying civilian resources.

Sample 911 Call Triage Chart from Austin, TX  
Courtesy of The Law Enforcement Action Partnership



<sup>2</sup> “Launching Alternative 911 Emergency Response...” *Harvard Kennedy School*, <https://govlab.hks.harvard.edu/alternative-emergency-response-san-gabriel-valley>

<sup>3</sup> “Support Team Assisted Response (STAR)”, *WellPower*, <https://www.wellpower.org/star-program/>

- [Seattle, Washington](#)<sup>4</sup>. CARE Team created to deploy out of 911 to certain call types. City of Seattle has proposed legislation at the Washington State House of Representatives to address challenges to operations including the public nature of information created by the CARE Team and bargaining challenges the CARE Team has encountered with the Seattle Police union.

While these and many other jurisdictions across the country are engaged in deploying civilian response through the 911 system (including stakeholder engagement, identifying appropriate call types, adding questions to dispatcher scripts, training, implementation, analysis and quality improvement), none of them has had alternative dispatch protocols in effect long enough for robust evaluation to have been completed.

### **National institutions supporting early research**

With the national call for alternative responses to 911 calls, multiple research efforts, think tanks and communities of practice have emerged to develop and spread best practices. The evidence base for 911 triage to deploy civilian crisis responders is very much in the early stages, with the support of several large academic institutions including the Harvard Kennedy School, New York University, and the University of Chicago. A list of resources and key documents and references is included here as Attachment 3, “911 Call Triage For Crisis Response Reading List.”

### **Challenges of direct dispatch of civilian responders for future exploration**

1. *Responder safety*. The first and primary concern raised in discussions about deploying civilian alternative or crisis responders to 911 calls is responder safety. Veteran first responders will often talk about how calls can quickly change from what was expected and that civilian staff may not have the necessary training or tools to keep themselves physically safe if a situation evolves and becomes dangerous. There is early and emerging evidence that this work can be done safely, as communities like Denver and Albuquerque have now been doing this work for several years without incidents. [Law Enforcement Action Partnership reports](#)<sup>5</sup> that based on existing programs, less than 1% of alternative response calls may require emergency police assistance. This analysis is based on programs that are deploying responders to relatively low-acuity calls and call types and with robust rule-out criteria for the civilian-only response.
2. *Liability*: Much of the conversation around development of triage tools and decision-making tools to support the deployment of crisis responders centers around call center liability for making the decision to send or not send a particular resource. While there is little case law as yet, the Law Enforcement Action Partnership has done extensive tort law and statute review and concluded in its [Community Responder Liability Report](#)<sup>6</sup> “that by sending community responders to low-risk calls in place of police, cities reduce their overall liability risk.”
3. *Operational complexity for multi-jurisdictional deployment*: While there are models for resource sharing across radio air and jurisdictions such as SWAT Teams, Chaplains and K9 Units, there is no existing protocol or practice for deploying RCR Crisis Responders across jurisdictions served by different 911 call centers. Developing these protocols and practices represents a large portion of the workplan of RCR staff for the coming 1-2 years.

<sup>4</sup> “9-1-1 Communications Center”, *City of Seattle*, <https://www.seattle.gov/care/9-1-1-communications-center>

<sup>5</sup> “November 2021 Amherst Community Responder Report, *Amherst*, <https://lawenforcementactionpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LEAP-Amherst-Community-Responder-Report-Final-1.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> “Community Responder Liability”, *Law Enforcement Action*, <https://lawenforcementactionpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/LEAP-Community-Responder-Liability-Report.pdf>

4. *Expense of a true first response:* Staffing must be extremely robust in comparison with other human services interventions, in order to make an intervention available at any time as a first response, or nearly get there. Larger behavioral health system reimbursement methodologies are misaligned with and often underfund the need for a “firehouse” system that has crisis response resources available 24/7, often resulting in lack of resources during slower hours and struggle meet the need during higher utilization periods.
5. *Span of control:* The expertise and decision-making around which resource to deploy to a 911 call sits within the 911 call and dispatch center entity, rather than with the Crisis Response entity.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

With the Board’s guidance or direction, RCR staff will continue to monitor this emerging area of practice to capitalize on national trends, outcome data and lessons learned in other jurisdictions. RCR staff will also continue to closely partner with 911 and 988 partners in the region to improve the continuum of care for the people of the RCR region, and work to deepen working relationships with these critical partners. With the addition of a Supervisor position, RCR staff will have increased capacity to implement cross-jurisdictional deployment.

Board members representing jurisdictions that are Principals of NORCOM911 may consider bringing the question of alternative resource deployment to the upcoming NORCOM911 Strategic Planning process.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1 – 988 and the CRIS Briefing Memo
- Attachment 2 – RCR Operations Board 2024-2025 Workplan
- Attachment 3 – 911 Call Triage For Crisis Response Reading List

# **Regional Crisis Response Agency Longitudinal Service Data Analysis**

Prepared for the RCR Executive Board Meeting September 4, 2025

## **Summary**

Based on a request for further analysis from the Executive Board, RCR staff pulled and collated data on Crisis Responder staff time in each city, time spent on encounters with individuals in crisis in each city, number of individuals served over time, and number of encounters over time broken down by city.

Staff pulled all available data, which has been recorded in the current database since the beginning of 2021, and through the second quarter of this year. Trends are as expected, with service numbers rising over time as the programs grew and staffing levels increased, with occasional peaks or valleys related to more granular staffing changes.

## **Scope**

Crisis Responder scheduled time in each city is based on an average, fully-staffed week with our current team.

Other data pulled from the following date range: January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025

All available aggregate program data was included in the analysis, including data from RCR predecessor programs the RADAR Navigator Program and the Kirkland Community Responder Program, as those programs were using the same database to collect data, the "Navigator" Database.

The "Navigator" Database is a simple, bespoke data collection tool created by NORCOM under contract with the RADAR Navigator Program. The database collects basic demographic data as required by program funders as well as basic encounter data which allows staff to provide continuity to community members receiving services. It was launched for use January 1, 2021. Prior to the launch of the database tool, data was being collected in various spreadsheets kept by individual contracted RADAR Navigators.

## **Section 1: Time in City**

### **1.a. Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule**

Although Crisis Responders deploy across jurisdictions, they are generally stationed for part or all of any shift at a specific city. Primary office spaces in larger cities with more physical space and larger call volumes. Crisis Responders are stationed in Bothell

Police Department (also monitoring Lake Forest Park), Kirkland Police Department, and Shoreline Police Department (also monitoring Kenmore).

RCR staff has also been very intentional about physically stationing Crisis Responder staff at Lake Forest Park and Kenmore Police Departments so that they will become more known to officers and deputies and will increase RCR familiarity with the territory, even with lower call volume over time. Currently, the five cities have the following total Crisis Responder hours each week:

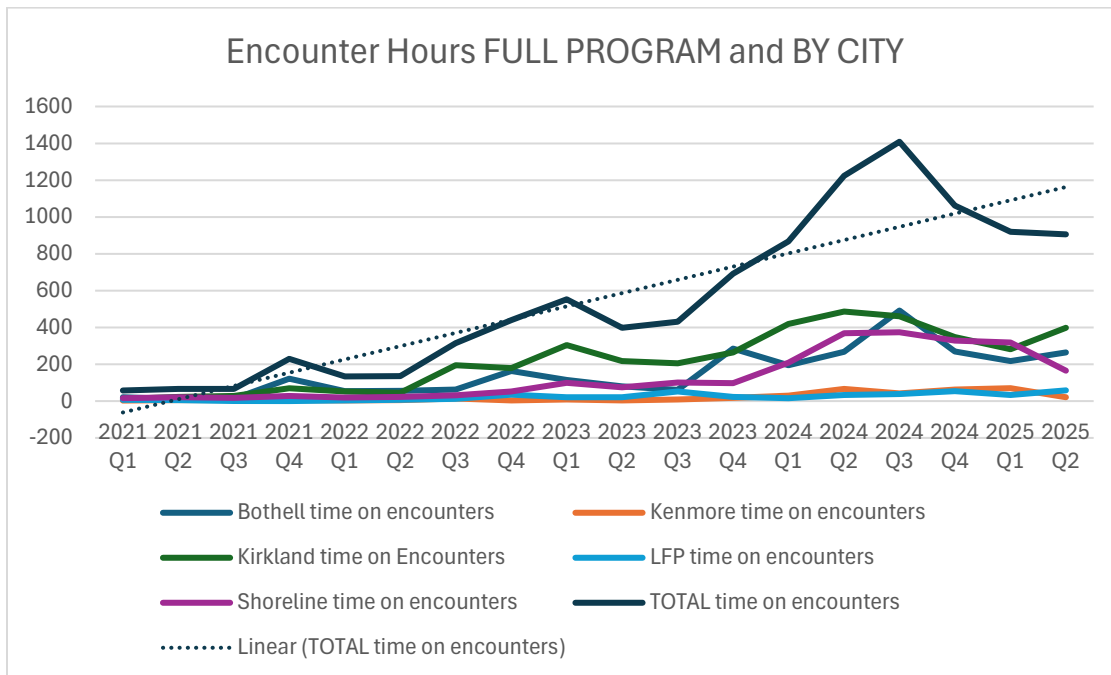
*Average scheduled weekly Crisis Responder staff hours by City as of August 2025*

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
130	20	160	30	100

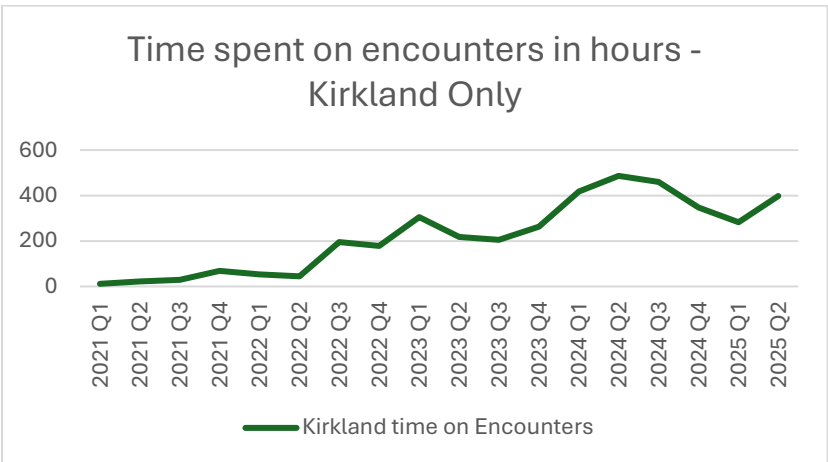
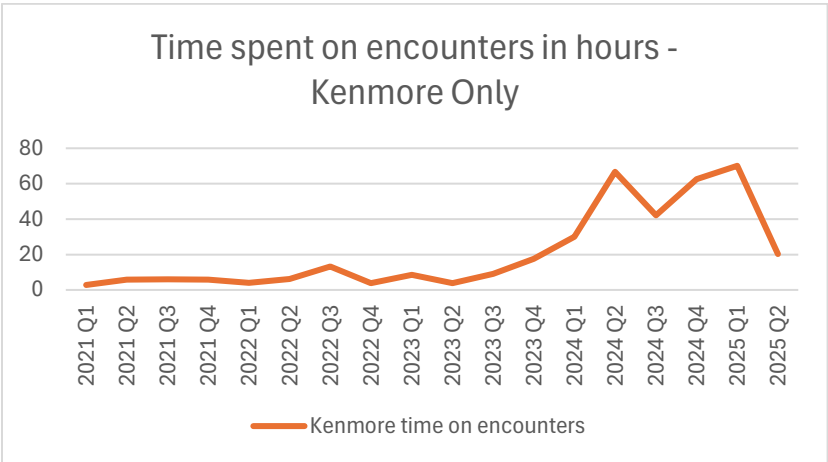
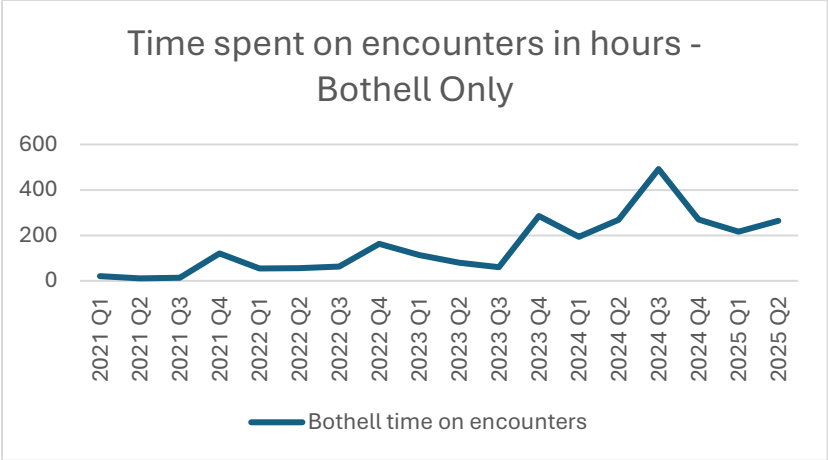
### 1.b. Encounter Hours

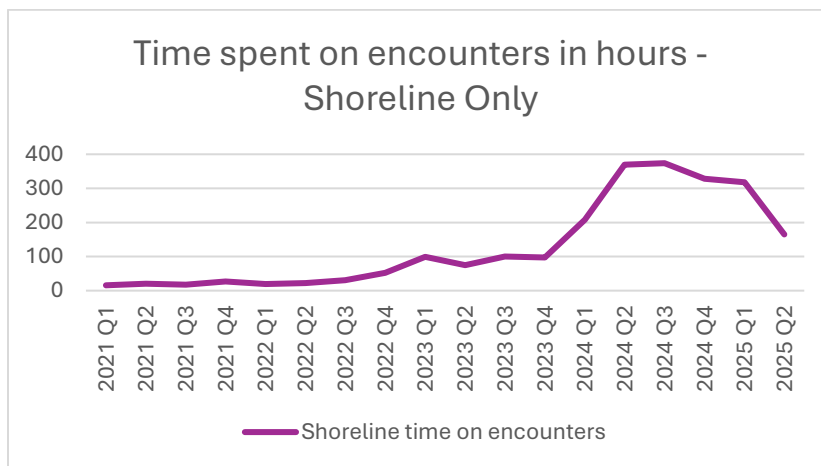
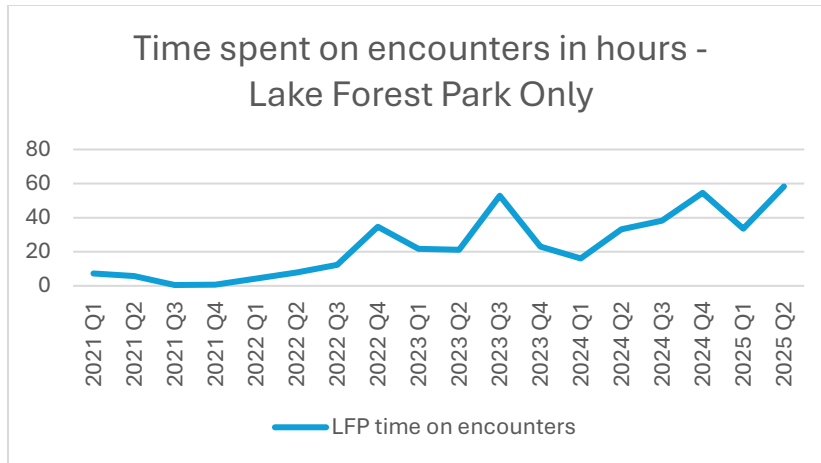
The Encounter Hours data point is the recorded Crisis Responder time, in hours, spent on an encounter with a community member. Encounters may range from multi-hour responses to in-progress 911 calls, to check in phone calls to make sure an individual connected with a service provider. Encounter time totals will naturally rise and fall with staffing levels.

#### 1.b.i. Full Program Overview



#### 1.b.ii. Total Encounter Hours by City (full reporting period)





**1.b.iii. Total Encounter Hours by City**

The chart below represents total hours spent by staff working with community members during the whole of the reporting period (January 1, 2021-June 30, 2025)

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
2,747	379	3,986	426	2,340

**1.b.iv. Average Weekly Encounter Hours by City**

The chart below represents average weekly hours spent by staff working with Community Members during the whole of the reporting period (January 1, 2021-June 30, 2025)

Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
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12	2	17	2	10
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The chart below represents average weekly hours spent by staff working with community members only during the one-year period of July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025. The average weekly numbers break down higher in recent years because of higher staffing levels.

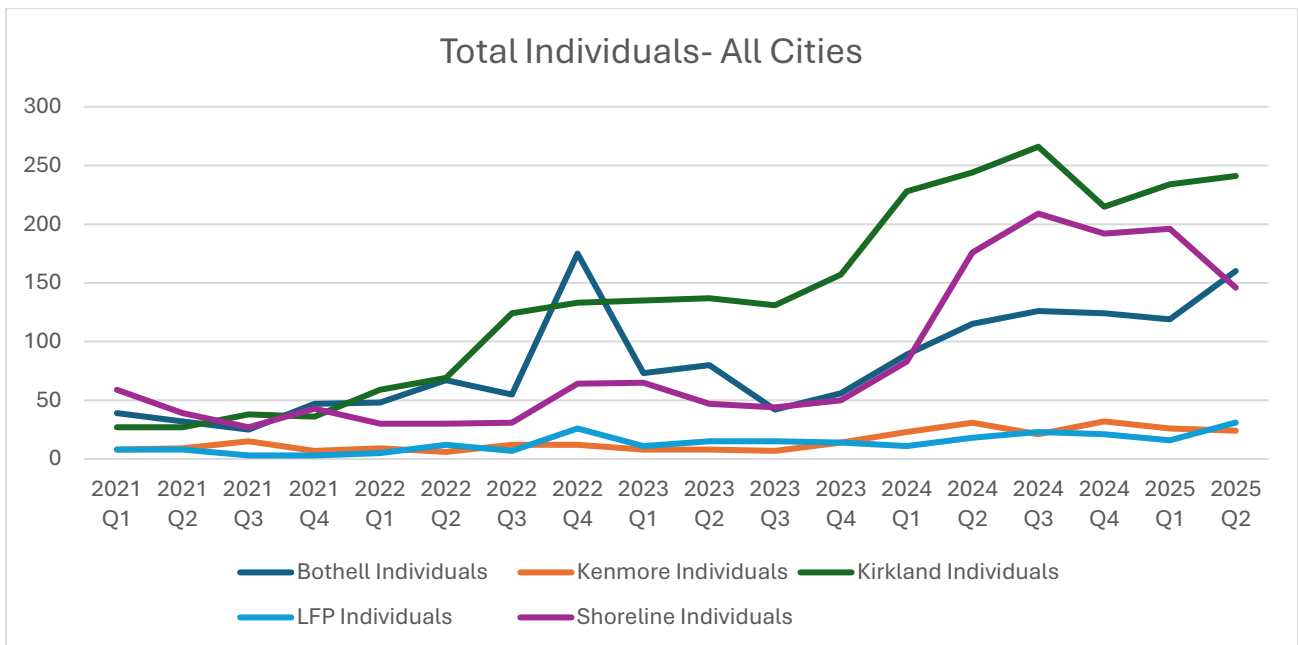
Bothell	Kenmore	Kirkland	Lake Forest Park	Shoreline
53	7	77	8	45

## **Section 2: Service Level Data**

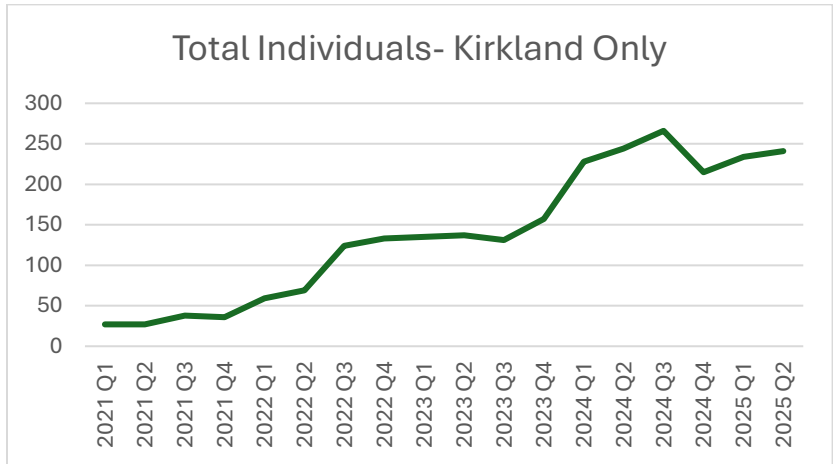
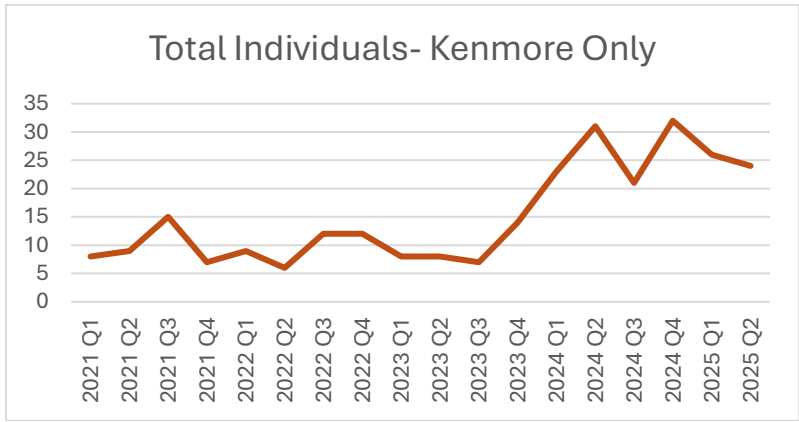
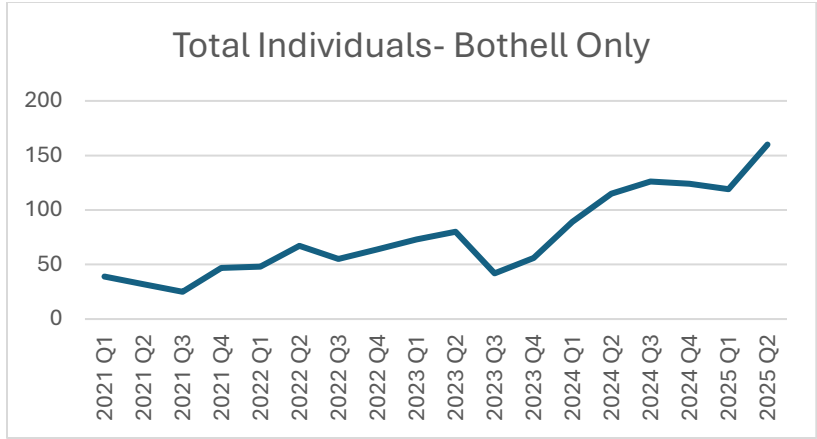
### **2.a. Individuals Served**

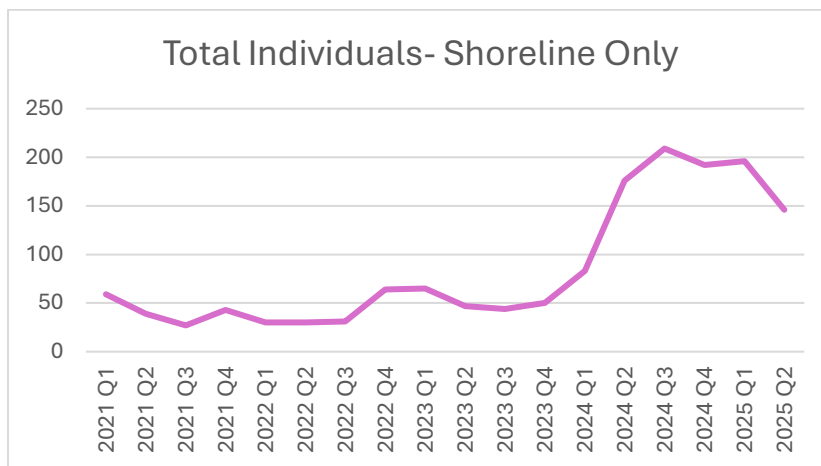
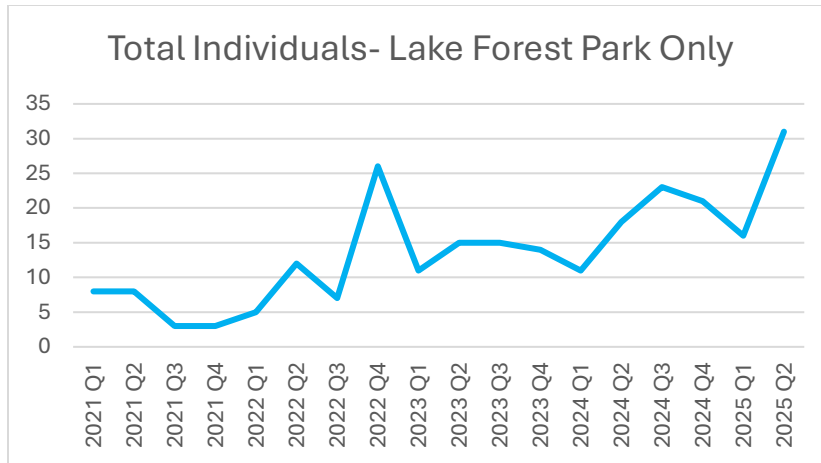
The number of individuals served represents total community members who received services during the reporting period.

#### **2.a.i. Full Program Overview**



#### **2.a.ii. City Breakdown**

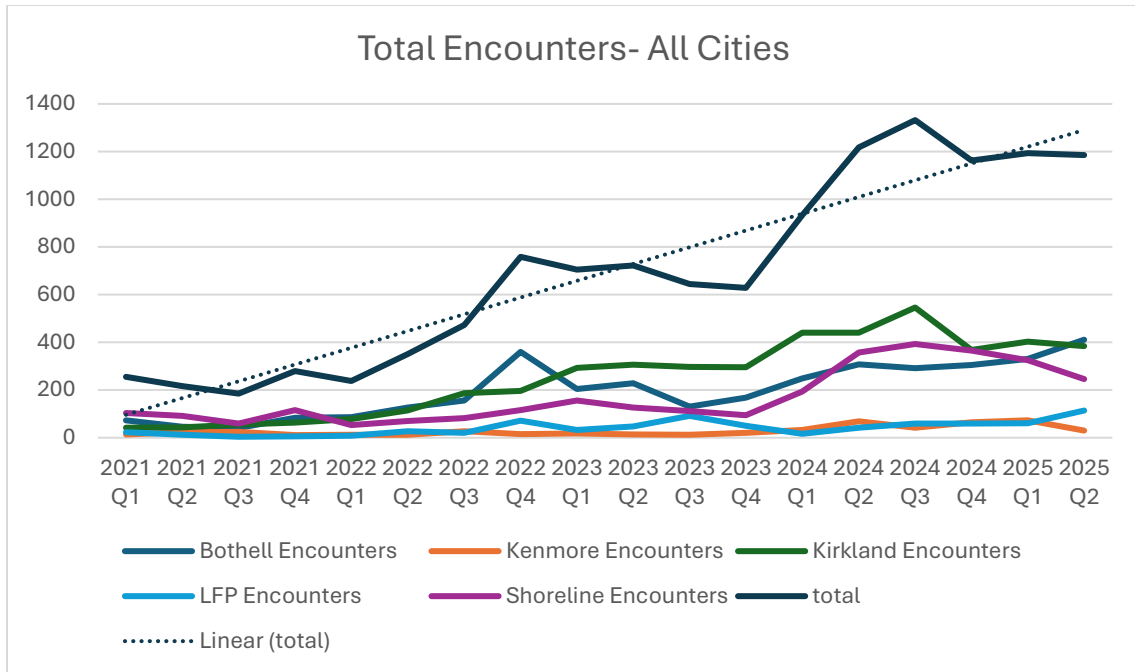




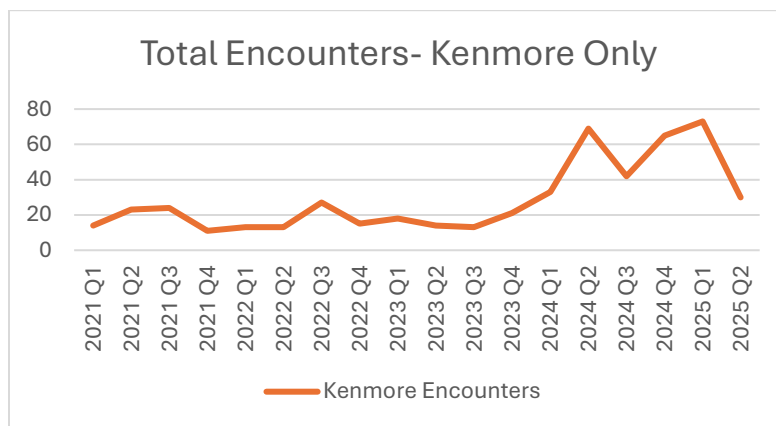
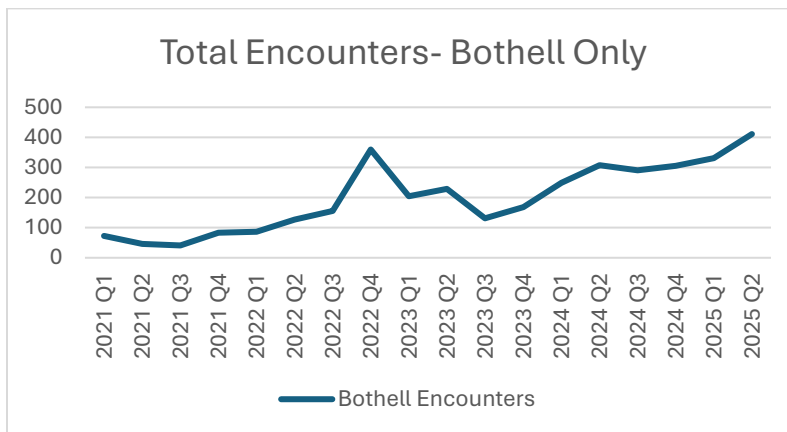
**2.b. Total number of encounters**

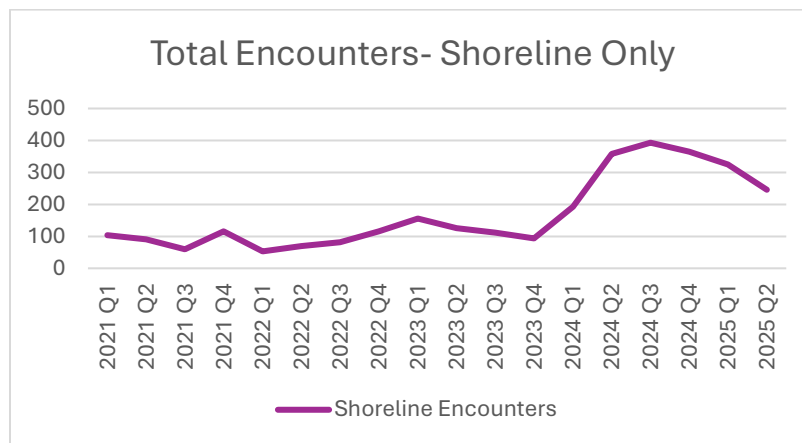
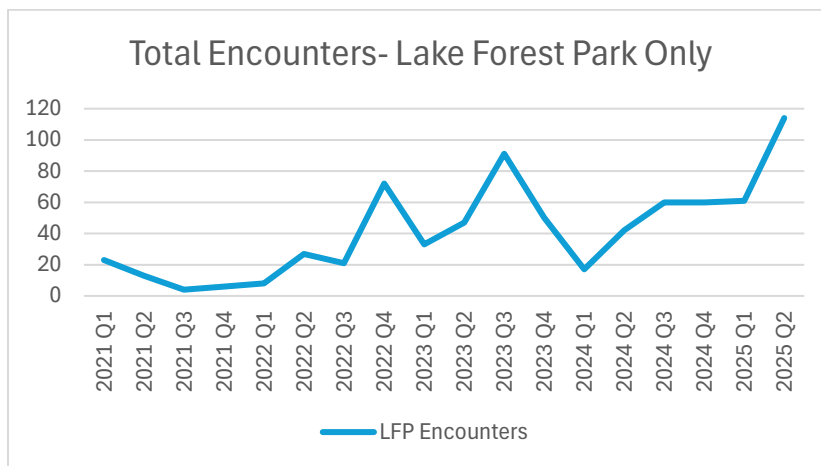
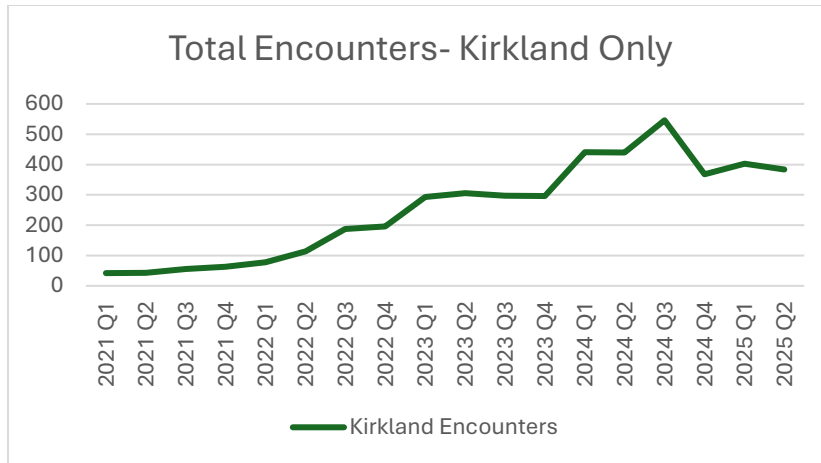
The number of times any individual receives services. One individual may have multiple encounters. Encounters may range from multi-hour responses to in-progress 911 calls, to check in phone calls to make sure an individual connected with a service provider.

**2.b.i. Full Program Overview**



## 2.b.ii. City Breakdown





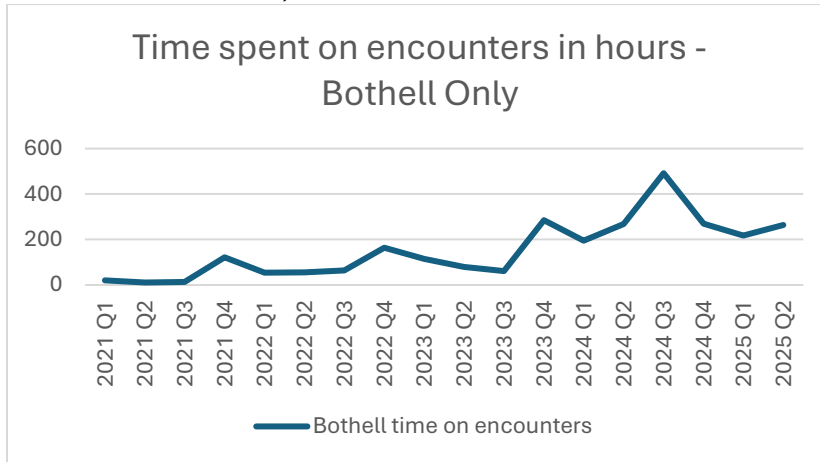
**Section 3: City Summaries**

For convenience, all above data points are broken down and collated by city below.

## Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Bothell

*Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 130*

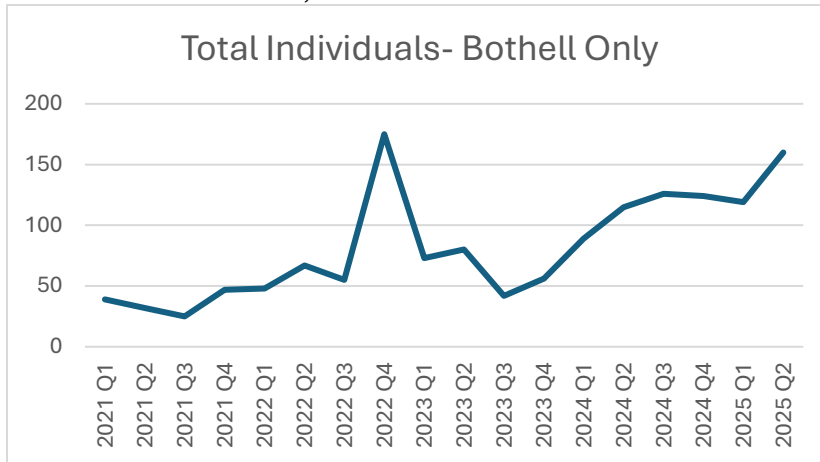
*Encounter Hours: 2,747*



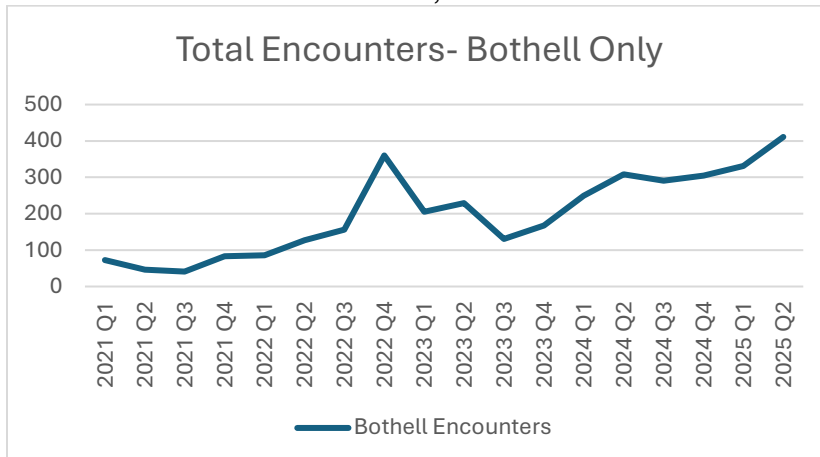
*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 12*

*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 53*

*Individuals Served: 1,472*



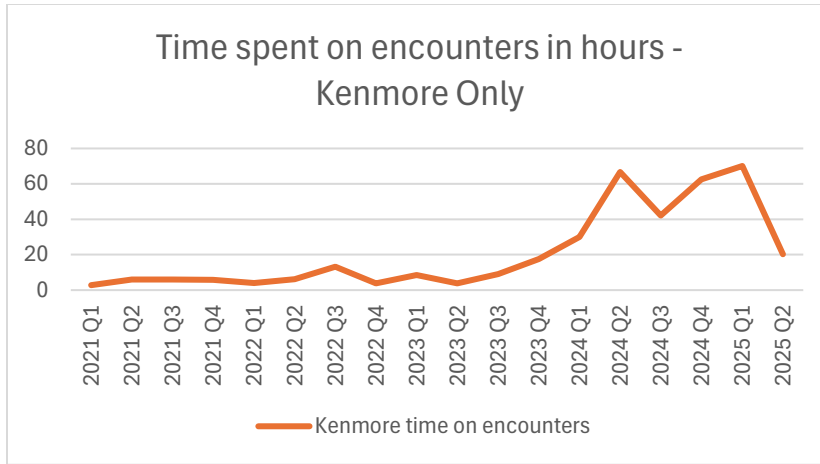
*Total number of encounters: 3,600*



## Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Kenmore

*Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 20*

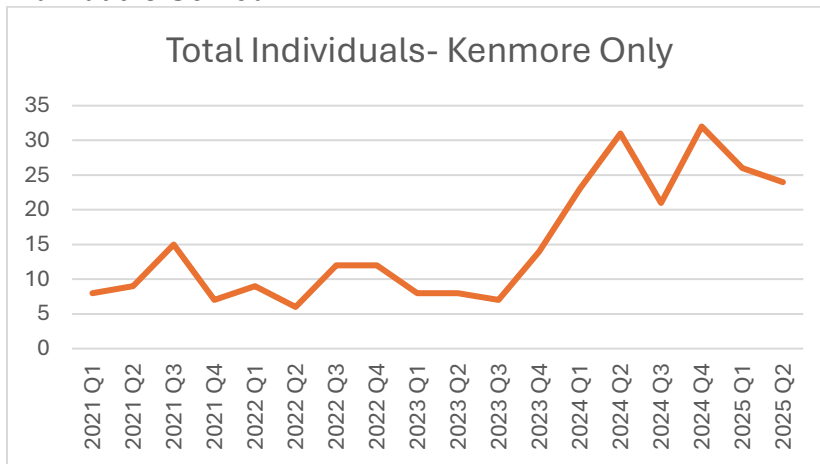
*Encounter Hours: 379*



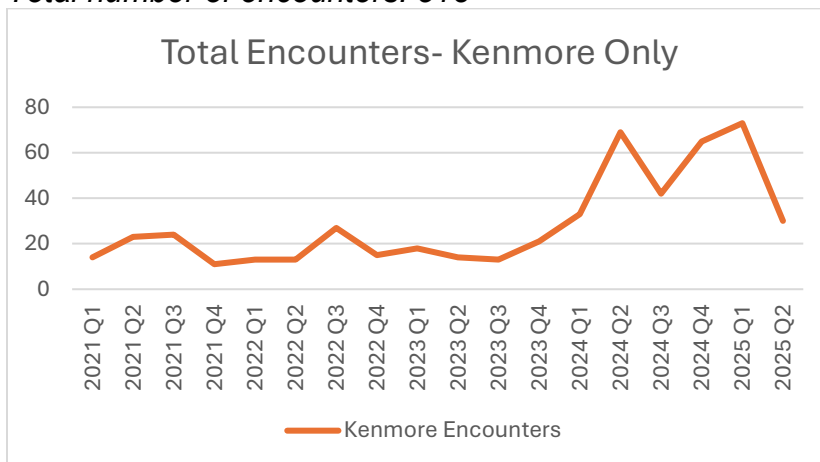
*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 2*

*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 7*

*Individuals Served: 272*



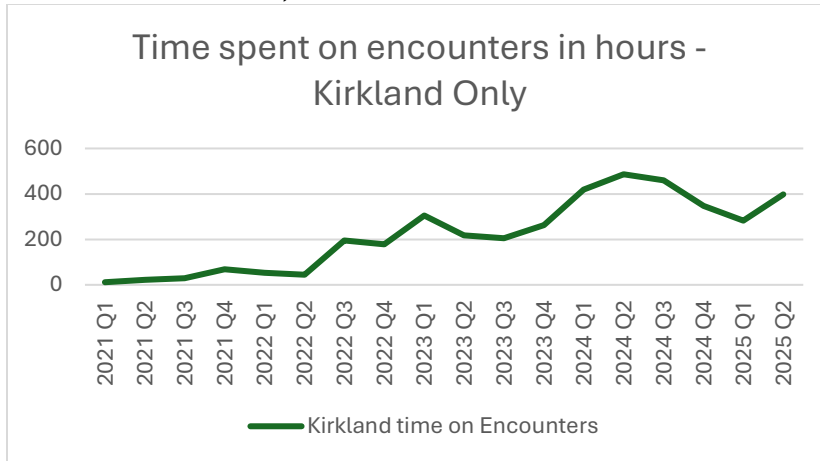
*Total number of encounters: 518*



## Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Kirkland

*Average Weekly Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 160*

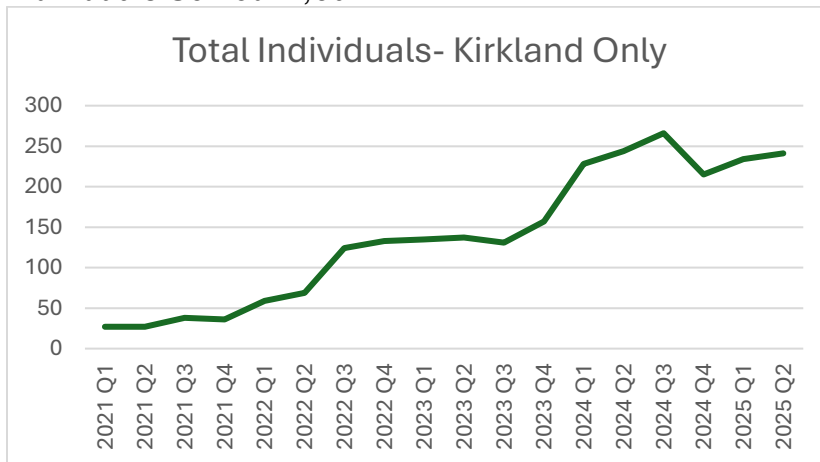
*Encounter Hours: 3,986*



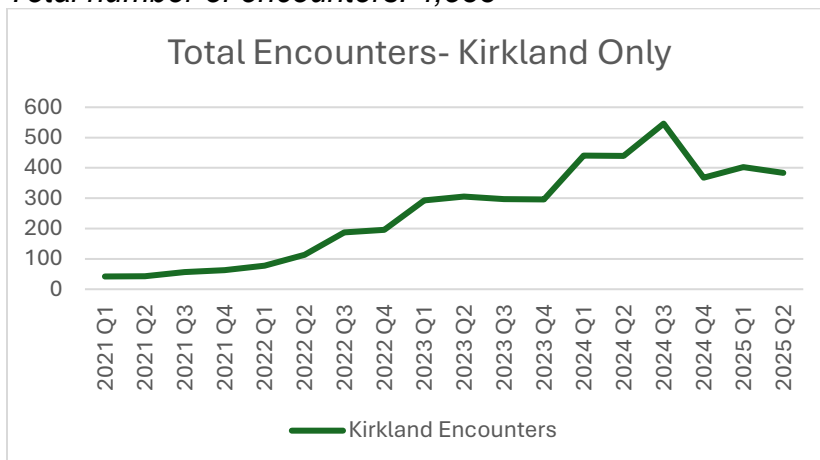
*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 17*

*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 77*

*Individuals Served: 2,501*



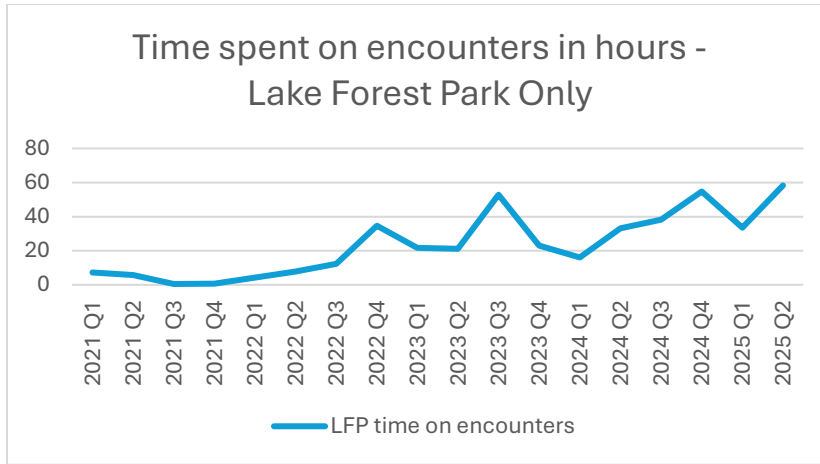
*Total number of encounters: 4,533*



# Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Lake Forest Park

*Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 30*

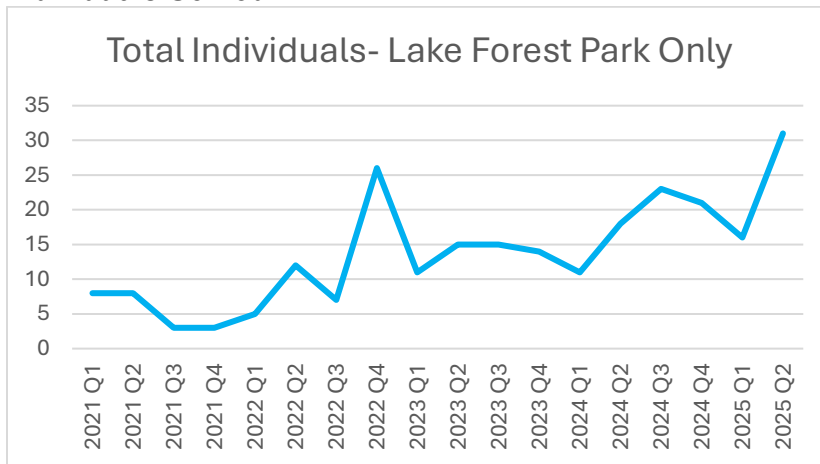
*Encounter Hours: 426*



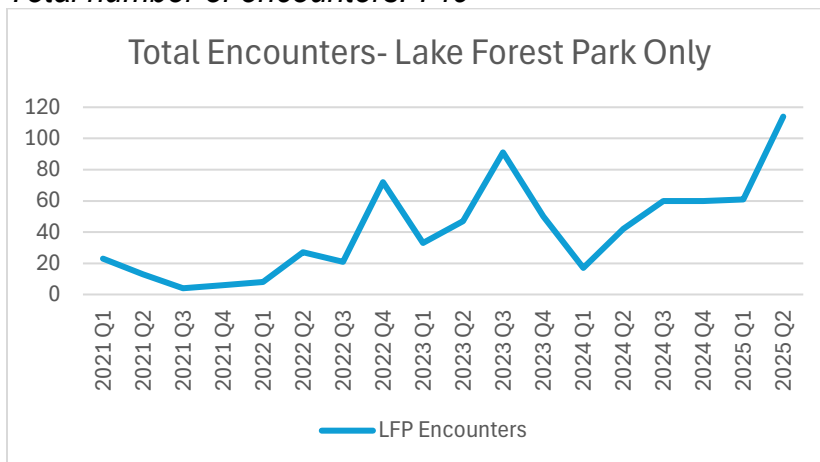
*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 2*

*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 8*

*Individuals Served: 247*



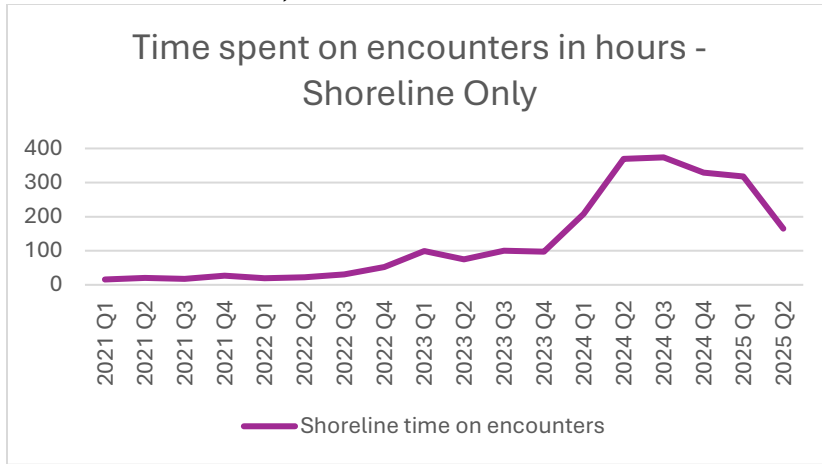
*Total number of encounters: 749*



## Longitudinal Service Data City Summary: Shoreline

*Average Crisis Responder Time by Staffing Schedule: 100*

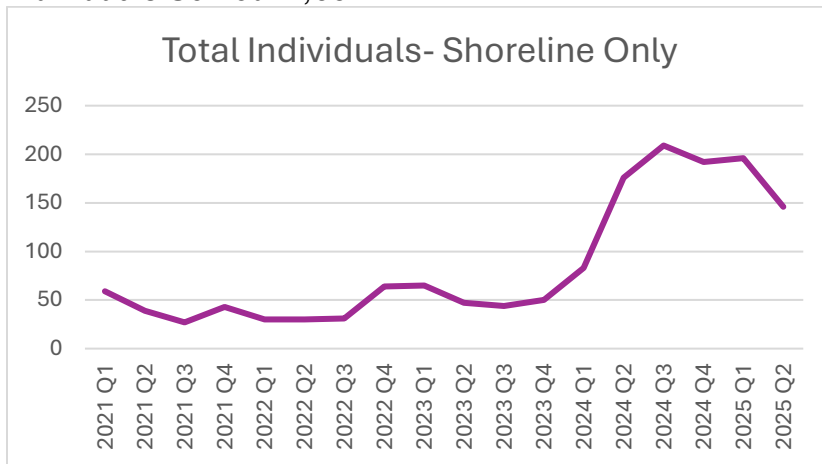
*Encounter Hours: 2,340*



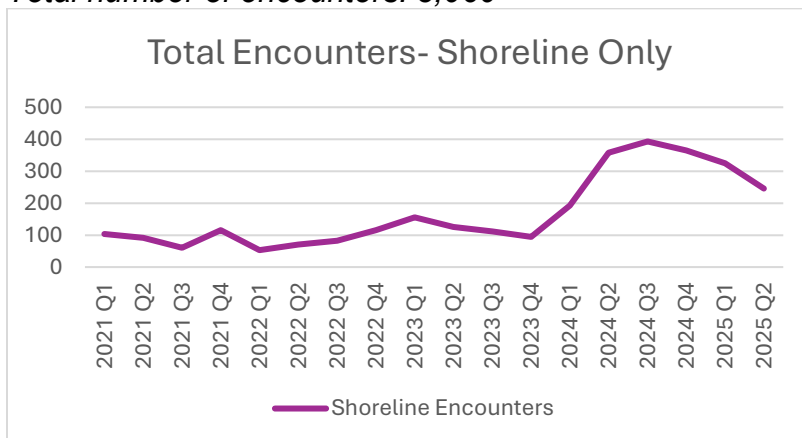
*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (full date range, January 1, 2021- June 30, 2025): 10*

*Average Weekly Encounter Hours (July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025): 45*

*Individuals Served: 1,531*



*Total number of encounters: 3,060*



**Regional Crisis Response Agency**  
**Community Need Analysis**

***Considering 24/7 Operations***

The Regional Crisis Response (RCR) Agency was created by the cities of Bothell, Kenmore, Kirkland, Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, Washington to provide appropriate responses to people in behavioral health crisis through the 911 system. The Interlocal Agreement (ILA) that establishes the RCR Agency calls for some form of 24 hours per day, 7 days per week (24/7) coverage and services for community members in crisis.

RCR staff has been engaged in an analysis of community need for Crisis Response support during the overnight hours, with the goal of understanding the depth of need of 24/7 coverage to community members in crisis, as called for in the RCR ILA.

***Analysis Description***

<i>Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To identify data points across data systems which reasonably proxy the volume and type of calls that the RCR Team might expect to respond to on overnight shift</li><li>• To define volume and acuity of relevant calls for service during overnight hours as compared with day and swing hours</li><li>• To collect and analyze appropriate and available data to inform RCR Executive Board decision-making regarding 24/7 Crisis Responder Coverage and potential operational models</li></ul>
<i>Period of analysis</i>	1/1/2023-12/31/2023 for Kirkland, Shoreline and Kenmore 11/1/2023-12/31/2023 for Bothell and Lake Forest Park
<i>Breakdown</i>	Day of the 7-day week, and by hour of the 24-hour day
<i>Relevant text from RCR ILA</i>	<b>SECTION 4. AGENCY GOALS</b>  The goals of the Agency shall be to: ... c. Enable Agency service coverage 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

***Unmet need***

During 2023, RCR Crisis Responders provided services to over 860 individuals in acute behavioral health crisis, and we are confident that the need is much greater. While it is difficult to measure calls that merited but did not get a Crisis Responder because of availability, we know from the Community Need Analysis discussed below that there were at least 5,000 calls across our five cities during 2023 that were potential RCR calls based on clearing code, and we believe this to be a significant undercount. Approximately 500 of these were during the 1:00am to 6:00am block.

Crisis Responders in the field are frequently faced with multiple concurrent calls and triage based on acuity and potential for impact. In addition, there are many calls that we are not responding to because of the nature of our relationship with our 911 call centers and the discretion of our first responder colleagues. And finally, RCR is not currently responding to any in-progress calls that come in between 1:00am and 6:00am (however does follow up on referrals from these calls).

### **Data Analyzed**

RCR Staff requested and received call for service and clearing code data from RCR Police and Fire Agencies, as well as NORCOM 911. These police call classifications included “Mental/Emotional,” “Transient,” “Suicide,” and others. Fire data was not instructive and therefore has not been included here. King County Sheriff’s Office data reflects only a single clearing code, likely resulting in a significant overall undercount of potential RCR calls for the cities of Shoreline and Kenmore.

The cities of Bothell and Lake Forest Park transitioned their 911 call dispatch to NORCOM 911, and comparable call for service data was available only for the period of November 1, 2023-December 31, 2023, and was extrapolated to cover the full year. More qualitative analysis of Lake Forest Park data over the course of the entire 2023 calendar year was consistent, validating this approach. Each agency uses clearing codes in different ways, so the comparisons are not perfect, however the analysis does provide a general idea for the frequency of potential RCR call types over the course of the 24-hour day.

When this analysis was conducted in 2022 for a 26-week period, the results were similar, which supports the validity of the 2023 analysis.

Currently, the hours of 1am-6am are not covered by any RCR staff (represented in the charts below by red dashed lines).

### **Quantitative Results**

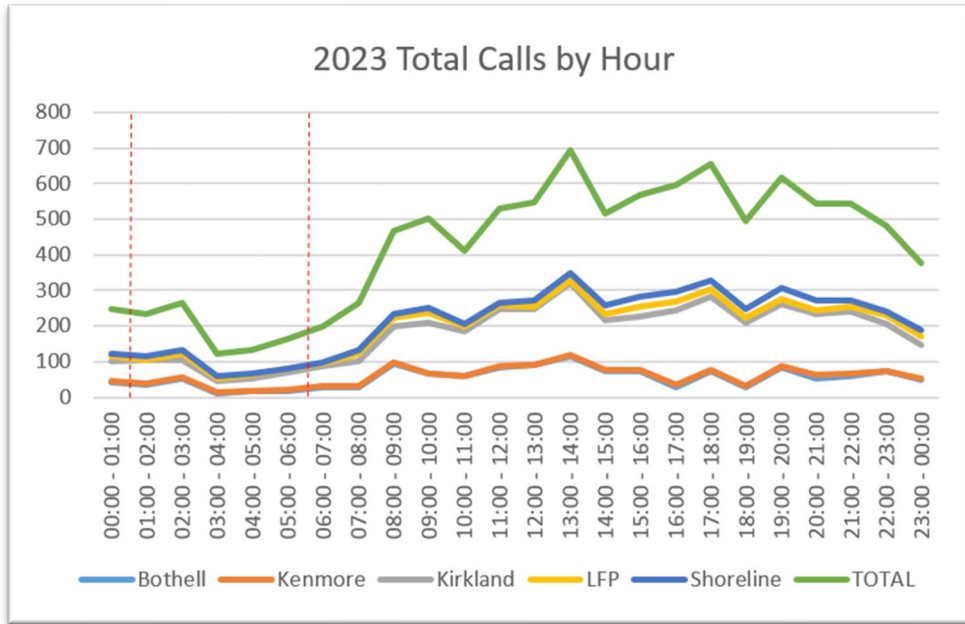
Data analysis shows that there are **an average of at least 1.26 calls per night during the 1:00am-6:00am window, across the RCR region**. Broken down by city, these averages are as follows:

*Average daily potential RCR calls during the 1:00am-6:00am window, by city*

Bothell	0.46
Kenmore	0.02
Kirkland	0.63
LFP	0.13
Shoreline	0.09
<i>Total</i>	<i>1.26</i>

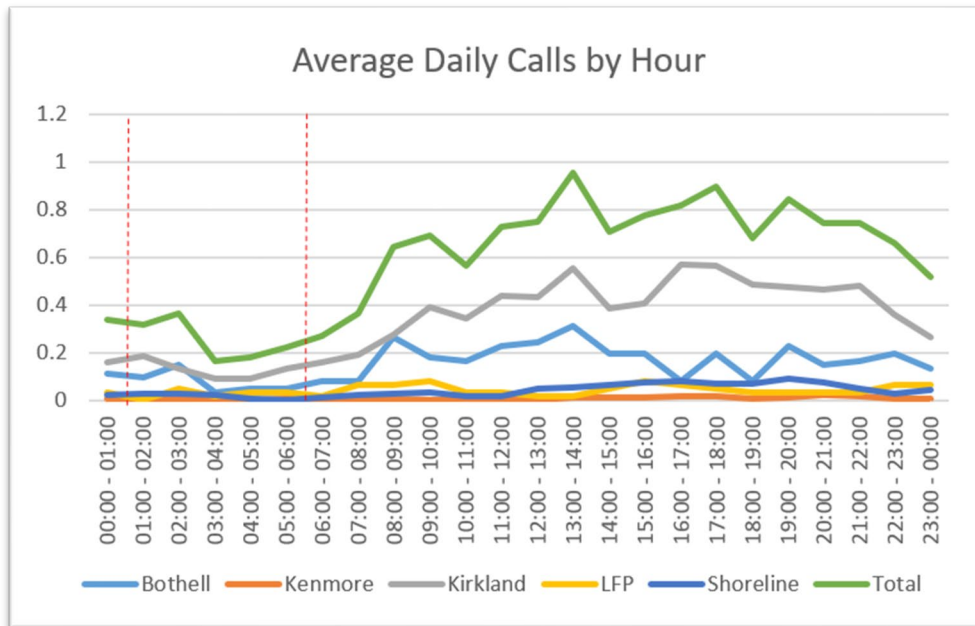
RCR Crisis Responders can spend anywhere from 15 minutes to multiple hours on a single call. During 2023 the **average encounter length was 46 minutes**, which generally does not include the Crisis Responder’s travel time.

Total counted calls, visible both by city and total number for all five RCR cities, over the course of one year and divided by hour of the day



--- = un-covered overnight hours

Average daily counted calls, visible both by city and total number for all five RCR cities, divided by hour of the day



--- = un-covered overnight hours

## **Qualitative Results**

RCR Staff conducted informal stakeholder interviews with public safety and Crisis Responder partners, as well as with members of the Community Advisory Group (individuals with lived experience in the crisis system). Key findings:

- Several police chiefs mentioned that their overnight shifts have asked for RCR Crisis Responder Coverage.
- Crisis Responder staff and RCR Leadership are aware that calls come in during the overnight shift but do not think the volume is high enough to merit a full overnight shift.
- Community Advisory Group members have emphasized that they feel community members should have access to a Crisis Responder regardless of day or time.

## **Possible staffing models for providing some form of overnight coverage**

There are several potential staffing models which could address the overnight coverage need, presented here from least to most robust coverage. Cost estimates are very rough, and could be refined with further decision-making around the specifics of each model.

### *Potential staffing models to address overnight coverage*

<i>Option</i>	<i>Characteristics and basis for costing</i>	<i>Estimated biennial cost</i>
1. Current status: No RCR coverage, first responders have access to the county-wide Mobile Crisis Team	Response times are quite long, will not respond to higher-acuity calls, officers in our region tend to be reluctant to use this resource because of the pitfalls.	No cost
2. Provide phone-based support to on-scene police and fire personnel	Would allow for some basic triage and support, would create a seamless referral pathway for further RCR intervention during the day shift.  Cost estimate based on RADAR Navigator Program experience with contractors and colleague programs.	\$100,000
3. On-call Crisis Responders who deploy to the scene	Potentially longer response time than a standard on-duty staffer. Crisis Responders would deploy only to existing police or fire scenes.  Cost estimate based on previous estimates plus COLA increases.	\$208,488
4. Staff at least one Crisis Responder every overnight shift to cover the five cities	Crisis Responders would deploy only with another first responder, eliminating the ability for a "Crisis Responder-only" response.	\$1,149,610

	Cost estimate based on current and projected staffing costs plus 2% overnight differential.	
5. Fully staffed overnight shift	Full service, 24/7. Crisis Responders could potentially respond to calls as a pair without police or fire personnel.  Cost estimate based on current and projected staffing costs plus 2% overnight differential.	\$3,800,000

The 2023-2024 Approved RCR Budget included funding for on-call or overtime coverage at the amount of approximately \$190,000 for the biennium. This is projected to rise to \$208,488 for the 2025-2026 biennium and is included in the RCR Proposed 2025-2026 Biennial Budget for the RCR Executive Board’s consideration.

**Conclusion**

The RCR ILA calls for some form of overnight coverage. The potential volume of RCR-appropriate calls does not seem to merit a full overnight shift, but analysis does show that our community would benefit from some form of coverage. Option 3 above, on-call Crisis Responders who deploy to the scene, is already included in the previously approved steady state budget for 2025-2026 and could meet some of the unmet need on the overnight hours. It could also serve as a stepping stone to deeper overnight coverage in the future as the program grows. However, with this staffing model and based on average call numbers, there will likely still be calls on the overnight shift that do not get a RCR Crisis Responder because of limited capacity.