

CBHC Update on SB17-207: *Implementing Crisis System Enhancements*

Described as “landmark legislation” by Disability Law Colorado in Senate Committee testimony, SB207 is a historic advancement in how Colorado communities will respond to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. The bill strengthens Colorado’s statewide behavioral health crisis response system to achieve the goal of ending the use of jails for those in crisis who have not been charged with a crime. Additionally, the bill makes changes to Colorado’s civil commitment statute that are intended to divert individuals experiencing a mental health crisis from entering the criminal justice system at the earliest point possible.

SB207 Funding

Funding bolsters the statewide Behavioral Health Crisis System and related services by a total of \$9,428,755:

- \$2 million divided equally among the four designated regions for crisis service enhancements;
- \$976,000 to create a Crisis Stabilization Unit on the western slope;
- \$440,000 divided equally among the four designated regions for crisis coordinators to work with law enforcement;
- \$5.2 million for implementation and evaluation of Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) and police/clinician Co-Responder and other diversion pilot award programs;
- \$107,000 for first responder training development; and
- \$535,000 to implement and evaluate secure transportation pilot programs for individuals in behavioral health crisis in rural parts of the state.

Robust Stakeholder Engagement

In preparation for and following the passage of SB207, Colorado’s community behavioral health system collaborated closely with their law enforcement, county human service departments, fire departments, EMS providers, public health departments, hospitals, and other community partners to identify where service enhancements will create the most impact. ***This engagement process comprised more than 130 agencies around the state, including 75 individual police departments and Sheriff’s offices, and included:***

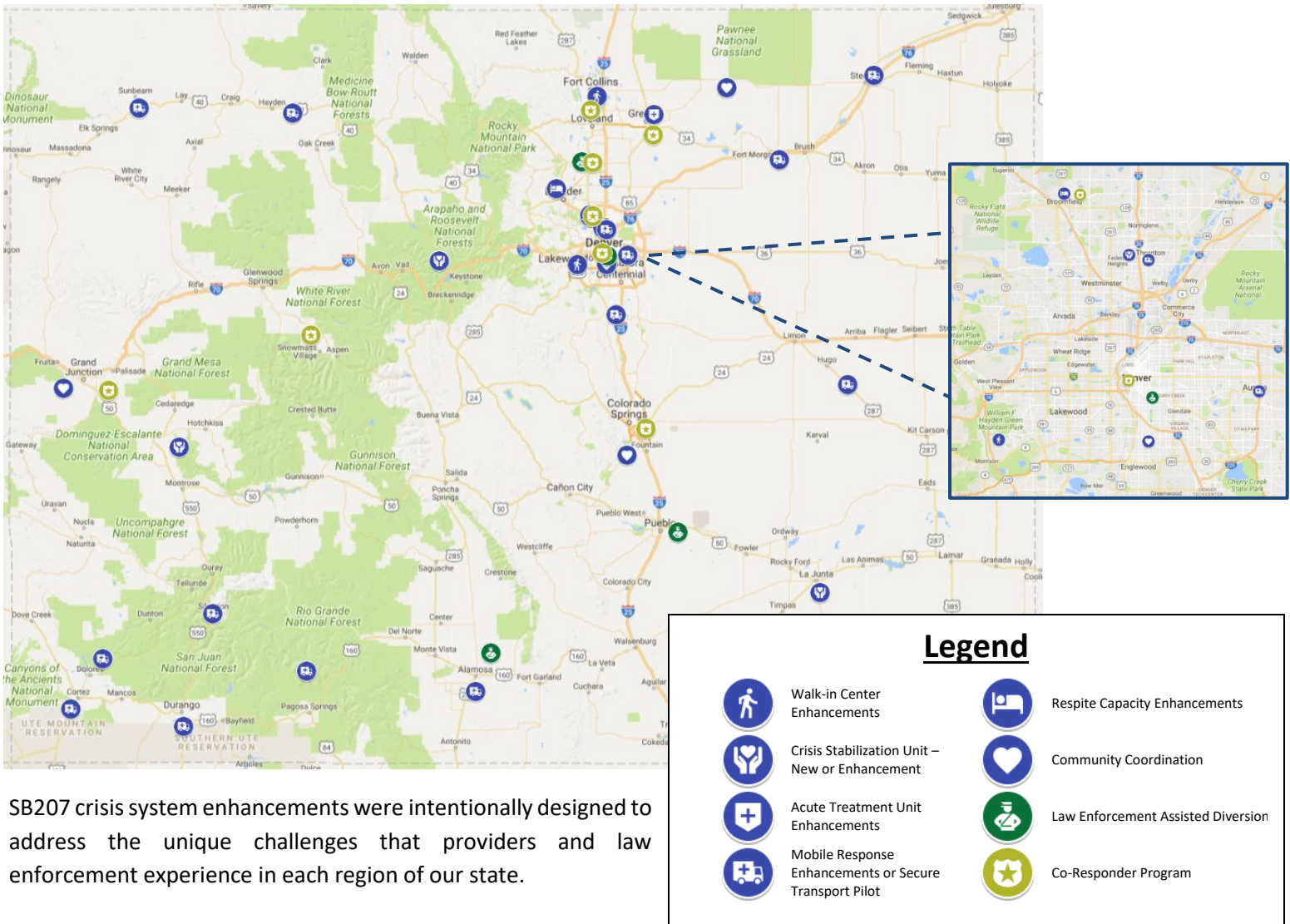
- Regional and community-level data analyses and needs assessments;
- Workgroups, stakeholder meetings, and other local feedback committees;
- Ongoing, direct engagement and partnership development with criminal justice partners;
- Community-driven proposals developed to enhance the crisis system in accordance with SB207, including gathering signatures and letters of support by law enforcement and other community partners; and
- Collaboration with the Office of Behavioral Health in the Department of Human Services to refine proposals and finalize scopes of work for SB207 funding.

Crisis System Enhancements

Allocations of SB207 funding leverage and enhance existing resources to thoughtfully address gaps in the service continuum and eliminate reliance on jails for managing individuals in behavioral health crisis. These enhancements, now built into contracts with the crisis services providers, are the direct result of the comprehensive stakeholder engagement process described above and include:

- Enhancing **walk-in** and **crisis stabilization capacity and security**;
- Co-locating facilities where possible to **streamline drop-off procedures for law enforcement**, including designated law-enforcement entrances and increased procedural education;
- Increasing **respite capacity** and **partnerships with detox and other healthcare systems**;
- Enhancing **mobile response** and **transportation capacity**;
- Hiring **regional crisis system coordinators to support law enforcement and other community partners**; and
- **Increasing staffing in crisis facilities** to prepare for volume increases related to SB207.

Locations and Types of New Crisis Resources Available via SB207



SB207 crisis system enhancements were intentionally designed to address the unique challenges that providers and law enforcement experience in each region of our state.

For additional details, please contact Frank Cornelia, Director of Government & Community Relations for the Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council, at cornelia@cbhc.org or at 720-454-570.