



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 6238
March 21, 2023
Study Session**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

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| TITLE: | AB 6238: Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program Update | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution |
| RECOMMENDED ACTION: | Receive report. No action necessary. | |

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| DEPARTMENT: | Youth and Family Services |
| STAFF: | Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Tambi Cork, Administrator Doug McDonald, Interim Deputy Fire Chief |
| COUNCIL LIAISON: | n/a |
| EXHIBITS: | n/a |
| CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY: | n/a |

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| AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE | \$ n/a |
| AMOUNT BUDGETED | \$ n/a |
| APPROPRIATION REQUIRED | \$ n/a |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to update the City Council on the Youth and Family Services (YFS) Department and Mercer Island Fire Department (MIFD) launch of the Mobile Integrated Health Program, MIH 191.

- Mobile Integrated Health programs connect low-acuity and vulnerable emergency medical services (EMS) clients to the appropriate resources to address their complex needs through alternative response and referral strategies.
- The Youth and Family Services Department staffs the MIH191 program with an MIH Intervention Specialist, who works in coordination with the MIFD MIH Lead.
- All costs associated with the MIH191 personnel, equipment and operating supplies are reimbursed by the King County EMS levy.

BACKGROUND

The regional Medic One/EMS system is primarily funded by a countywide, voter-approved EMS levy. In 2019, King County voters elected to renew this levy for a six-year period and the expansion of Mobile Integrated Health services was identified as a top priority for the 2020-2025 levy funds. The total allocation to regional MIH efforts is \$4 million each year, and the City has access to approximately \$110,000/year in

reimbursements to fund personnel, equipment and other costs directly related to Mobile Integrated Health services. These funds roll over through the lifespan of the levy.

There are two service delivery models for MIH – response and referral. The MIH191 program operates as a referral unit through Youth and Family Services. An MIH Intervention Specialist was hired by YFS in fall 2022 to provide the primary direct service support to the program.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Fire departments often respond to incidents where additional needs are identified but fall outside the traditional scope of responsibility for a fire department. This can include unsafe living conditions, homelessness, vulnerable adult situations, and mental health and substance abuse challenges. Through the MIH program, firefighters can make a referral to the YFS MIH Intervention Specialist and know that the MIH191 team will follow up to provide meaningful intervention outside of the 911 emergency system. After the MIH191 team receives a referral, a Mercer Island Fire Department MIH Lead and YFS MIH Intervention Specialist conduct a home visit to better understand the situation, needs and concerns, and create a plan to connect the individual with the right resources. This service is provided at no cost to the resident and all costs are covered via reimbursement from the King County EMS levy.

MIH191's ability to connect community members to appropriate resources and provide care coordination for individuals with complex needs helps to ensure non-emergent needs are appropriately addressed by human services rather than emergency (911) response. MIH191 is responsible for contacting and supporting community members, working proactively in coordination with the Mercer Island Fire Department to provide enhanced health services to the community and help keep emergency responders available for crisis calls.

The City of Mercer Island's has a unique ability to provide all MIH191 services within the City departments due to the existence of the Youth and Family Services department. YFS is a full-service community-based human services department serving residents of Mercer Island. Rather than contracting out to a human services system, all resources needed for this type of integrated care are available within a partnership between YFS and MIFD. The YFS Intervention Specialist can coordinate with Aging and Disability Services, King County Falls Prevention, and other local and county programs, including other YFS service areas like mental health counseling and emergency assistance.

NEXT STEPS

MIH191 initiated client contacts in February 2023 and have already identified a number of Mercer Island residents that are benefiting from this collaborative approach to outreach and care coordination. MIFD fire teams have been trained to identify referrals for MIH follow up and are able to make referrals to MIH directly within the fire records management system (ESO) at each call.

Currently, the funding of this program restricts referrals to Fire calls only, so only residents identified by MIFD personnel during a call are eligible for these services. YFS and MIFD staff are evaluating what opportunities are available to expand services to MIPD, YFS, and other referral sources. MIH191 staff will return annually to update Council on program outputs and outcomes.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report. No action necessary.