



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

**AB 6436  
March 19, 2024  
Consent Agenda**

**AGENDA BILL INFORMATION**

<b>TITLE:</b>	AB 6436: Interlocal Agreement with Eastside Fire & Rescue for Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	Authorize the City Manager to execute the interlocal agreement with Eastside Fire & Rescue to provide Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Services on Mercer Island.	

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Youth and Family Services
<b>STAFF:</b>	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration
<b>COUNCIL LIAISON:</b>	n/a
<b>EXHIBITS:</b>	1. Interlocal Agreement between the City of Mercer Island and Eastside Fire & Rescue for Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Services
<b>CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:</b>	4. Focus efforts and actions to be an environmentally and fiscally sustainable, connected, and diverse community.

<b>AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE</b>	\$ n/a
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	\$ n/a
<b>APPROPRIATION REQUIRED</b>	\$ n/a

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda bill is to review and authorize the City Manager to sign an interlocal agreement with Eastside Fire & Rescue to provide Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) services on Mercer Island.

- 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 City’s MIH program began in early 2023 and the services are currently funded by the King County through the EMS levy.
- The City of Mercer Island and Eastside Fire & Rescue entered into an interlocal agreement for fire protection, fire suppression, emergency medical, and related administrative services effective January 1, 2024.
- The City recognizes the benefits of transferring the responsibility for MIH services to EFR.
- Eastside Fire & Rescue has an established MIH program, CORE Connect, which can enhance MIH services on Mercer Island.

## 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.

An MIH Intervention Specialist was hired in fall 2022 to provide the primary direct service support to the program. Since then, clients have been referred by MIFD personnel (now EFR personnel) during calls. The MIH Intervention Specialist conducts home visits with a firefighter to better understand the client's situation, needs, and concerns, and creates a plan to connect the individual with the right resources.

## ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Eastside Fire & Rescue has an established MIH program, C.O.R.E. Connect, that is operated by a mobile, multidisciplinary team of firefighters and care coordinators. Each member brings unique skillsets and specialized training to best meet the needs of the individual. They deliver quality care by coordinating resources, developing care plans, and navigating individuals to the right level of care.

Staff are proposing transferring the responsibility of MIH services to Eastside Fire & Rescue through an interlocal agreement to enhance cooperative advantages and opportunities for more efficient delivery of services within the City of Mercer Island (see Exhibit 1).

In order to do this, the City's MIH levy funding would be available to EFR to provide MIH services on Mercer Island. EFR agrees to maintain the current service level within the City and adhere to the King County EMS participation guidelines and requirements. Exhibit A to the interlocal agreement details EFR's responsibilities under the transfer.

A few potential programming enhancements with this transfer are:

- Streamlined referrals – one less step to get clients connected with services than now.
- A larger pool of staff is available for client follow-up services. There will always be a team of two (Firefighter and Care Coordinator) ready to assist.
- Oversight is by a licensed independent clinical social worker, who provides clinical oversight, training, and daily case management consultations.
- Metrics for client utilization, case management activities, and outcome measures are tracked. After a period, data and community trends can be analyzed to develop reports.

Prior to the transition with EFR, the MIH Intervention Specialist only had access to two MIFD firefighters to conduct home visits. Due to shift work and where the firefighters resided, it was difficult to schedule visits, and as such from July 2023 through December 2023, the Specialist was only able to go on one home visit accompanied by a firefighter. All other home visits were done alone, with a different City of Mercer Island employee, or via the phone. At the time of the transition to EFR, there was a waitlist of approximately 20 clients that had been contacted but who had not been seen in person yet. Since the first of the year, the support from EFR's C.O.R.E. Connect support and access to EFR Firefighters has allowed the Specialist to go out on six home visits with firefighter accompaniment and everyone on the waitlist has been visited.

The City's MIH Intervention Specialist will be hired as a Care Coordinator for EFR. In the event that there is a reduction or cessation of King County EMS levy funding, the City will conduct an assessment of the City's requirement for MIH services. If there is a reduction or cessation of King County EMS levy funding, the Care Coordinator position at EFR may need to be discontinued. If this is the case, the City and EFR agree to equally share the financial impacts resulting from impact bargaining with the union representing the Care Coordinator.

In addition, EFR will deliver an annual report to the City regarding MIH services on Mercer Island and Public Health – Seattle & King County, Emergency Medical Services Division (the division that oversees mobile integrated health levy funds) is aware of this potential transition.

The proposal to contract with EFR for MIH services is a strategic move to enhance the quality and efficiency of healthcare services. By leveraging EFR's expertise and resources, the City aims to further its commitment to the well-being of its community members.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Following the City Council's approval and the execution of the interlocal agreement, City staff will coordinate with EFR staff for a smooth transition for the impacted employee and current clients. City staff will update the website and MIH materials and notify pertinent agencies about the transition.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Authorize the City Manager to execute the interlocal agreement with Eastside Fire & Rescue to provide Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Services on Mercer Island.