



**NEVADA COUNTY  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
AGENCY**

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## **NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Memo**

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**MEETING DATE:** June 22, 2021  
**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** **Phebe Bell**

**SUBJECT:** Resolution approving execution of a renewal contract with SPIRIT - Peers for Independence and Recovery, Inc. for peer support services for individuals in emotional crisis as a component of the County's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Community Services and Supports (CSS) Plan in the maximum amount of \$99,769 for fiscal year 2021/22.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve the attached Resolution.

**FUNDING:** Services are fully funded from MHSA (Mental Health Services Act) monies. The Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63) provides an ongoing revenue source for the expansion and enhancement of mental health services as provided by State and County agencies. Services are included in the F/Y 2021/22 Department Budget. There are no county general fund dollars required in the Agreement.

**BACKGROUND:** The process of coming into the hospital for a crisis assessment can be intimidating and frightening. While the crisis team is comprised of compassionate professionals, the wisdom and care of a peer who has experienced their own mental health crises can be invaluable to the person who has come in for assessment. The extra support from someone who can explain the process to you as well as empathize with how you are feeling can help normalize what can be a confusing and scary process.

Under this Agreement, SPIRIT will continue to provide support and counseling to individuals in emotional crisis while waiting for a 5150 evaluation at Sierra Nevada Memorial Emergency Room, or the Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) and will also provide subsequent follow up services to those who have not met the 5150 criteria and have been released from the ER. The follow up services

provided by SPIRIT help to avoid unnecessary repeat Emergency Room visits and helps to prevent symptoms from increasing or escalating out of control.

The objectives of the SPIRIT-ER Crisis Program are to:

- Enable individuals in mental health crisis to utilize other community resources and move towards recovery. Peer Supporters will provide networking and referrals.
- Reduce recidivism rates of mental health clients at the SNMH-ER/Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU). Peer Supporters will provide resources that offer early intervention.
- Reduce the number of inpatient psychiatric hospital days used. Peer Supporters will provide lower cost resources that offer early intervention and increase capacity of individuals to self-regulate before symptoms escalate to high cost crisis status.

It is recommended that the Board approve this renewal agreement as Peer support from people with similar life experience has proven to be extremely valuable in helping individuals navigate through difficult situations. Peer Supporters can offer more authentic empathy, validation and practical suggestions for coping strategies to individuals in their path to recovery and wellness.

**Item Initiated and Approved by:** Phebe Bell, MSW, Behavioral Health Director