



# HART Expansion

## Harris County

PARTNERS



### Issue

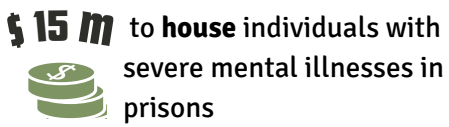
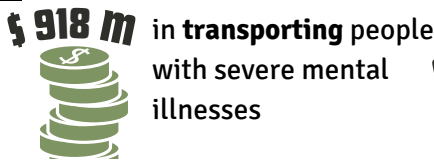
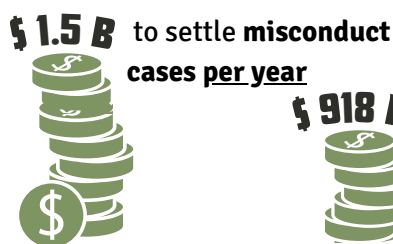
In the United States, it is estimated that **20%** of the **911 calls** received are related to mental health crisis and/or substance abuse. And when **police arrive** at those calls, people with **untreated mental illness** are **16x** more likely to be **SHOT by the police**, with **42%** of individuals that have **fatal police encounters** being either Black or Latinx. **80%** of **suspects** in Houston Police Department shooting events have been **killed or injured** in the **last five years**. This violence could have perhaps been **prevented** with the aid of **alternative response** programs like the Holistic Assistance Response Team [HART].



The Holistic Assistance Response Team [HART] is a program within Harris County Public Health that sends teams of social service providers to respond to certain eligible non-violent 911 calls, such as those related to mental health crises or drug use.

### Social Costs

**Police-first** response in these incidents costs **4x** as much as a community response approach Nationwide have spent...



### HART Impact

Alternative forms of intervention, such as the HART, not only provide **access to professionals** to those who need mental health assistance, but **alleviate strain for law enforcement**.

Harris County | HART

**3,500+** HART responses made

**2,265** calls diverted from law enforcement

Dallas | RIGHT Care Team

**11,400** calls answered

**1,500** people diverted from jail

*Citations provided upon request*



# Care Over Cages

## Harris County

Safety is more than ease in one's physical surroundings but also includes an individual's emotional and mental security. HART responders do more than intervene, they use their **behavioral health and on-scene medical expertise to link individuals with referrals to care** such as mental health, shelter, or counseling services among others. Health-focused initiatives address the roots of concern and implement preventative measures for residents as well as the criminal legal system, which has a backlog of **34,000** current criminal cases.

“A person having a mental health crisis is more likely to encounter law enforcement than they are to get any medical support or treatment, making jails the largest behavioral health facilities in the country. [Forbes]“

About **80%** of people detained at the **Harris County Jail** have a **mental health indicator** as of 2023.

### Savings

Harris County | HART | Precinct 1

**20%** 911 calls responded by HART

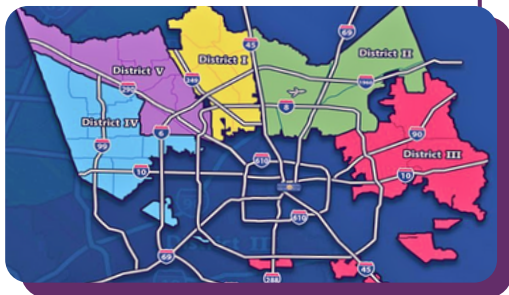
**675 hours** freed for law enforcement

**11** full-time deputies freed up

Houston | Crisis Call Diversion

**\$ 821,600**

estimated **savings** from **diverting calls** to mental health professionals and not police



### Solutions, Actions, Cost Estimate

- **EXPAND and SUSTAIN** HART coverage area to **ALL unincorporated patrol districts** in Harris County. This includes the addition of Districts 2, 3, and 5 to existing Districts 1 and 4.
- This necessitates an **increase in funding for expansion and sustaining** the program, which we estimate to be around \$12 million.

Expansion and increased funding of the program to serve all Harris County residents is a **promise of care over consequence**, aligning with Harris County Recovery Plan priority outcomes 20 and 5 of reducing unnecessary exposure to the criminal justice system and broadening access and availability of mental health services, while not pressuring the criminal justice system with additional unnecessary case loads.