§ 36.07 Behavioral health crisis technical assistance center.

(a) The commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of the office of addiction services and supports, shall establish a behavioral health crisis technical assistance center within the office of mental health. The commissioners shall jointly be responsible for the structure and operation of the behavioral health crisis technical assistance center.

(b) The behavioral health crisis technical assistance center, shall:

1. develop standardized protocols and procedures for a community-based public health-led response to behavioral health crises. The protocols and procedures shall be designed to:

(i) de-escalate situations involving individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, when possible;

(ii) utilize the most appropriate treatment for individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis;

(iii) maximize the use of voluntary assessment and voluntary referral of individuals experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis;

(iv) minimize physical harm and trauma for individuals who experience a mental health or substance use crisis; and

(v) deliver culturally competent care;

2. assist local government units in the development of local service plans that address their local crisis service needs and implements a community-based public health-led crisis response. Such assistance shall include tailoring such plans to meet the needs of urban, suburban, and rural communities;

3. support implementation of standardized procedures and protocols;

4. in collaboration with the division of homeland security and emergency services and the state emergency medical services council, pursue efforts to improve coordination between the 9-1-1, 9-8-8, local government units, and statewide emergency response systems;

5. provide consultation and training to local government units and local crisis response teams on best practices on the assessment and

response to mental health and substance use crises; and

6. maintain a database of best practices for a community-based public health-led response to behavioral health crises.

(c) In execution of its duties under this section, the technical assistance center shall employ a peer or peers with lived experience and shall consult with, as appropriate: peers with lived experience of mental illness or substance use disorders, or family of such peers and/or peer-led organizations; licensed mental health or addiction clinicians; licensed mental health or addiction counselors; licensed physicians, nurses, or mental health or addiction providers; mental health or addiction counselors; representatives of not-for-profit disability justice organizations; emergency medical technicians; and crisis health care workers.

(d) 1. The center shall prepare an annual report which shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

(i) data on the extent to which local governmental units have implemented community-based public health-led responses to behavioral health crises and the effectiveness of such efforts;

(ii) a summary of any assistance provided, action taken, or progress made in relation to the duties required under this section;

(iii) recommendations to improve the operation and financing of a behavioral health crisis response system; and

(iv) any other information deemed relevant by the center.

2. Such report shall be submitted to the governor, speaker of the assembly and temporary president of the senate no later than December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-seven and annually thereafter and shall be made available on the official agency website for the office of mental health and the office of addiction services and supports.