

**Subject: Expansion of the MOST program (Mobile Outreach Support Team)**  
**Related Department: DHS**

**FY 2025 Proposed Budget**  
**Budget Work Session Follow-up**

**4/3/2024**

The following information is provided in response to a request made by Mr. de Ferranti at the work session on March 14, 2024, regarding the following question:

*Provide the current plan for expanding the MOST program. Response should describe the current and proposed hours, positions, and funding sources in addition to any other relevant information regarding expansion plans.*

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**CURRENT PROGRAM**

The Mobile Outreach Support Team (MOST) began operations July 31, 2023. MOST provides outreach to individuals in the community who are in a behavioral health crisis or are referred for potential need for mental health and/or substance use assessment. MOST provides connection to appropriate services at DHS.

The hours of MOST were selected based on data from the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) indicating when the bulk of behavioral health-related calls came in:  
**1:00 pm to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday.**

Between July 31, 2023, and February 26, 2024, MOST saw 323 individuals. 32% were diverted from arrest, 35% were referred to DHS and, of those, 68% had documented follow ups. MOST has an average response time of 13 minutes and co-responds with law enforcement upon request. 35% of referrals come from law enforcement, who have been enthusiastic about this new program. The MOST team is dispatched from the ECC.

The MOST began providing these services with a team of two: a 1.0 FTE **licensed clinician** and a 1.0 FTE **peer recovery specialist** (a person with lived experience). An outreach worker from the TOW program (Treatment on Wheels, which focuses on outreach to unhoused individuals with serious mental illness and/or substance use problems) is also temporarily deployed as part of the program start-up.

Due to the non-standard operational hours of MOST and the case complexity, DHS identified the need for a dedicated supervisory position and used federal grant funds from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to create a 1.0 FTE Supervisor, effective March 2023.

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The program is **funded with a two-year SAMHSA (federal) grant** that expires on September 30, 2024. The SAMHSA grant also funded consulting services with Health Management Associates (HMA), a national healthcare research and consulting firm assisting with tracking data. The only locally funded contribution was a retrofitted van, which was repurposed from the Clarendon House program.

### **PROGRAM EXPANSION FUNDED BY NEW GRANT**

DHS recently applied for the federal **Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) funding** through the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS). This grant is up to \$478,286 (on a one-time reimbursement basis only) and will allow the expansion of MOST by three positions: **a 1.0 FTE supervisor, a 1.0 FTE licensed clinician, and a 1.0 FTE case manager**. The BSCA funding expires on September 30, 2024.

With this additional grant funding, MOST will have a total of 5 dedicated positions: a 1.0 FTE therapist supervisor, 2.0 licensed clinicians, 1.0 FTE peer specialist, and a 1.0 FTE case manager.

DHS analyzed behavioral health related calls provided by the ECC and the tentative proposed hours for the expanded team are 7:00 am to 3:30 pm. Once the new clinicians are hired and onboarded, MOST coverage will be available on weekdays from 7 am to 9 pm. Expansion of hours after 9 pm is not recommended due to limited behavioral health calls at night.

### **FUTURE FUNDING**

As part of the local plan for Marcus Alert, which has been in development for two years, DHS applied to receive **DBHDS ongoing funding of \$600,000** effective July 1, 2024. This funding will be used to support the two MOST teams during the last three quarters of FY 2025.