

Date of Hearing: January 23, 2020

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

AB 823 (Arambula) – As Amended January 6, 2020

Policy Committee: Human Services Vote: 8 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill requires a contract between the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and a regional center to include having, or contracting for, mobile crisis services to assist consumers remain in, or return to, the community. This bill further requires each regional center to post its memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the county mental health agency on the regional center's internet website.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Unknown costs, but likely minor, to DDS who indicates regional centers already provide mobile crisis services.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill seeks to improve regional center consumer access to mobile crisis services to stabilize and assist consumers and prevent unnecessary psychiatric hospitalizations and police involvement by requiring every regional center to provide or contract for mobile crisis services. According to the author:

As California closes its state-run Developmental Centers it is important to have a comprehensive, easy to access community safety net for regional center consumers. One critical safety net component for consumers who have behavioral challenges is access to timely mobile crisis intervention services.

- 2) **Background.** DDS contracts with 21 regional centers, private nonprofit entities whose primary purpose is to connect consumers with services in the community. DDS estimates a statewide caseload of approximately 345,600 regional center consumers as of January 2019. Regional centers do not directly provide services to individuals and their families, but instead provide information and coordinate the delivery of services to consumers, such as residential placements, supported living services, respite care, transportation, day treatment programs, work support programs, and various social and therapeutic services and activities.

Existing law requires regional centers to provide emergency and crisis intervention services as needed to maintain individuals in the living arrangement of their choice and establish emergency housing in the individual's home community in the event that crisis intervention services are unsuccessful. Existing law also requires regional centers to develop an MOU

with a county mental health agency to coordinate services, identify dually diagnosed consumers and develop procedures for crisis intervention.

- 3) **Mobile Crisis Services.** Mobile crisis services provide immediate on-site crisis management through assessment, intervention, consultation and referral, with follow-up to ensure linkage to recommended services after a crisis. A mobile crisis team is a team of professionals—commonly a social worker and a nurse—available to respond to mental or behavioral health crisis situations in the community. The purpose of the mobile team is to attempt to stabilize consumers in crisis to keep them in their homes, with an ultimate goal of reducing unnecessary hospital transports and connecting people to community-based mental health services and supports.

- 4) **Prior Legislation.**

SB 81 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 28, Statutes of 2019, among other things, requires an average service coordinator-to-consumer ratio of 1 to 25, as specified, for consumers with complex needs including consumers receiving regional center-funded mobile crisis services by a department-approved vendor or who have received those services within the past six months.

AB 959 (Holden), Chapter 474, Statutes of 2017, requires DDS to establish and maintain a page on its internet website that includes a list of services purchased or provided by regional centers, and also requires regional centers to provide a link to the page on their own internet websites.

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