

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
AB 1932 (Elhawary)
As Amended April 16, 2026
2/3 vote. Urgency

SUMMARY

Revises the Community Response Initiative to Strengthen Emergency Systems (C.R.I.S.E.S.) Grant Pilot Program, subject to appropriations in the annual budget, by removing localities grantees and instead designating community-based organizations (CBOs) as grantees, making the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) the sole grant administrator, updating stakeholder workgroup responsibilities, and extending the program's sunset date. Adds an urgency clause.

Major Provisions

- 1) Clarifies that "community-based organization" is a nonprofit organization that is exempt from federal income taxation under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or exempt from state income taxation under Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d.
- 2) Revises "grantee" to mean a CBO that receives a grant rather than a county, city, or tribe, or a department of a city, county, or tribe that receives a grant. Thereby, making CDSS the sole grant administrator.
- 3) Clarifies that the C.R.I.S.E.S. Grant Pilot Program is subject to an appropriation in the annual Budget Act instead of the 2021 Budget Act.
- 4) Requires CDSS to include the stakeholder workgroup in determining grant eligibility to award grants to eligible grantees and awarding grants, rather than CDSS acting independently.
- 5) Specifies that organizations partnered with law enforcement are not eligible grantees.
- 6) Specifies that CDSS, rather than the prior locality grantees, is now responsible to award 90% or more of the grant funds to qualifying CBOs to create and strengthen community-based alternatives to law enforcement; publicly solicit partnerships with CBOs; and, prioritize the awarding of program funds to qualified CBOs that demonstrate the capacity to lead the proposed program and demonstrate experience providing community-based alternatives to law enforcement or civilian crisis response in communities.
- 7) Requires CDSS to convene regular meetings with the stakeholder group at least quarterly.
- 8) Revises the stakeholder workgroup's responsibilities to include partnering with CDSS to evaluate and make appropriate changes to criteria for qualified grantees and providing support and oversight on implementation and priorities for technical assistance and removes the existing requirement to provide input regarding criteria for qualified grantees and providing consultation on implementation and priorities for technical assistance.
- 9) Requires CDSS, within 30 days after the effective date of this act, to review existing appointments to the stakeholder workgroup and, as necessary, identify vacancies or members

who are no longer able or willing to serve. Requires CDSS to confirm in writing that each stakeholder has acknowledged their ability and willingness to serve.

- 10) Requires CDSS, no later than 45 days after the effective date of this act, to issue a public solicitation for applications from interested stakeholders to fill any vacancies. Requires the solicitation to be posted on CDSS' internet website and distributed to organizations and individuals with relevant expertise or interest in community-based crisis response.
- 11) Requires CDSS, no later than 75 days after the effective date of this act, to fill any vacancies and reconvene the stakeholder workgroup.
- 12) Requires any member of the stakeholder workgroup who has not attended three or more consecutive meetings without prior notice to CDSS be deemed to have vacated their seat, and CDSS to fill the vacancy within 90 days.
- 13) Requires CDSS to fill vacancies to the stakeholder workgroup as they occur within 90 days of the vacancy.
- 14) Requires CDSS, upon allocation of funding to eligible entities, to report to the Legislature and post publicly on its internet website, information about the grants funded, including which specific eligible entities received grants, the grant award number for each eligible entity, and the length of time each pilot program or project will be administered.
- 15) Removes the requirement that CDSS include policy recommendations to guide the Legislature and Governor in scaling a permanent program from the report due six months after the pilot program concludes.
- 16) Revises CDSS authority to enter into agreements with entities to facilitate the implementation of the program, which may not exceed 5% of appropriated funds, to include providing technical assistance to members of the stakeholder group.
- 17) Extends CDSS' requirement to award all grants on or before January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, and to be subject to an appropriation in the annual Budget Act for purposes of these provisions.
- 18) Extends the sunset date from June 30, 2026, to June 30, 2032, and repeals these provisions on January 1, 2033.
- 19) Provides that this act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are: In order to ensure the continued operation and expansion of community-based emergency response programs that provide alternatives to law enforcement in mental health, substance use, and other crisis situations, and to prevent gaps in critical services that could result in harm, or loss of life, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

COMMENTS

Background: *Community Response Initiative to Strengthen Emergency Systems Act*. AB 118 (Kamlager), Chapter 694, Statutes of 2021, established the original C.R.I.S.E.S Act, which

created a C.R.I.S.E.S. Grant Pilot Program to support CBOs in developing and implementing an alternative to law enforcement responses to certain emergency situations. Current law authorizes CDSS to award grants to cities, counties, and tribes, which must then distribute at least 90% of grant funds to CBOs to operate community-based crisis response programs. Current law also requires CDSS to convene a stakeholder workgroup, collect program data, and issue a public report evaluating program outcomes and fiscal impacts following the conclusion of the pilot program. Current law establishes the C.R.I.S.E.S. Program Fund in the State Treasury, limits administrative costs, and provides that the program is operative only if funding is appropriated in the 2021 Budget Act. The original pilot program required grants to be awarded by January 1, 2023, and the statutes sunset and repeals on June 30, 2026.

CDSS announced on February 1, 2024, that \$9.5 million in grant funding was awarded under the C.R.I.S.E.S Grant Pilot Program to four jurisdictions and their CBO partners: the City of Oakland and Family Bridges Inc; County of Marin Health and Human Services and Marin County Cooperation Team; County of Sacramento Department of Health and Bay Area Community Services, Inc.; and, Santa Cruz County Behavioral Health and Family Services Agency of the Central Coast. The grant pilot program operates from October 1, 2023, through April 30, 2026, during which grantees are required to implement pilot programs, collect data, and report outcomes related to program implementation, services provided, and impacts on emergency response systems. The purpose of the pilot is to identify promising community-based crisis response practices and develop policy recommendations for the Legislature and Governor regarding whether and how to expand community-based crisis response programs statewide.

This bill restructures the C.R.I.S.E.S Grant Pilot Program, subject to an appropriation in the annual budget, by shifting grant administration from local governments to CBOs, revising stakeholder workgroup responsibilities, and updating reporting requirements. *This bill* further establishes timelines for stakeholder workgroup implementation and increases transparency regarding grant awards. Additionally, *this bill* extends the program's sunset date to January 30, 2032, allowing the pilot to continue to operate for several more years while modifying how the program is administered and evaluated.

According to the Author

"Every day, people experiencing mental health or substance use crises are met not with care, but with uniforms and armed response that can escalate already intense situations. These moments of vulnerability call for compassion, understanding, and specialized support, yet too often, the system sends the wrong kind of help. When law enforcement is asked to respond to crises they are not trained to handle, situations can escalate quickly. Too many of these encounters have ended in unnecessary trauma, injury, or loss of life, all which could have been prevented with the right response. Filling a gap between enforcement and those needing help, [this bill] seeks to provide culturally competent care that will ultimately save lives. By using community-based response measures, the outcomes of emergencies that require a lacking presence of enforcement are rather met with support. This bill does not create a new system but instead extends the already working response of capable organizations serving as cost effective lifesaving resources."

Arguments in Support

A coalition of 42 organizations write, "[This bill] would continue the CRISES program to fund community-based alternatives to law enforcement as first responders in crisis situations that are not related to fire department or emergency medical service (EMS) response. In place of law

enforcement officers who are often not trained or equipped to respond to mental health or substance use crises, community organizations are successfully responding to emergency situations that are better handled by peer support specialists, mental health providers, or trained crisis counselors. These community-based, life-saving services should be part of a broader emergency response system. "

"In light of recent immigration enforcement actions that have intensified fear in many immigrant communities, it is crucial to invest in community-based alternatives to law enforcement responses, including, but not limited to, providing mobile crisis teams or community paramedicine teams to respond to emergencies involving mental health, intimate partner violence, community violence, substance abuse, or natural disasters. These community-based emergency response teams shall not include law enforcement officers or agencies as first responders or co-responders..."

"Community-led response teams—composed of trusted local organizations—can provide culturally competent, trauma-informed, linguistically accessible care without the threat of violence or arrest. By separating emergency care from policing, these models build trust, encourage early intervention, and ensure that vulnerable residents can safely access support in moments of acute need. Investing in such alternatives promotes public health, strengthens disaster resilience, and enhances community safety for everyone..."

"In many cases, involving armed officers can heighten feelings of fear and instability, increasing the risk of arrest, deportation, or harm to the person experiencing a crisis. It can also lead to unnecessary expenses, including the time and resources required for officers to respond. The arrival of armed officers can quickly escalate a crisis and intensify an already volatile situation. In the most tragic circumstances, the use of force against someone in crisis has resulted in preventable deaths and serious injuries—outcomes that underscore the need for responses led by trained care and support practitioners rather than armed enforcement."

"The CRISES Act program addresses a critical gap in emergency response services for vulnerable communities. It ensures that undocumented people, young people of color, people with disabilities, gender-nonconforming individuals, those disproportionately impacted by police contact, formerly incarcerated individuals, and unhoused people can access safe, high-quality emergency support. These services are delivered by trained practitioners who provide culturally responsive care and who have established, trusted relationships within the communities they serve."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 13, 2026:

- 1) General Fund (GF) cost pressures in the millions of dollars annually to fund the grants to CBOs.
- 2) Estimated ongoing GF administrative costs to CDSS in the high hundreds of thousands of dollars to the low millions of dollars annually for the duration of the pilot for four to six staff to implement the changes and administer the program.

The program is subject to an appropriation in the annual budget act. The author has requested \$10 million in the 2026-27 state budget to fund the grant program.

According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the General Fund faces a structural deficit in the tens of billions of dollars over the next several fiscal years.

VOTES

ASM HUMAN SERVICES: 6-0-1

YES: Lee, Castillo, Calderon, Elhawary, Jackson, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Tangipa

ASM JUDICIARY: 11-1-0

YES: Kalra, Macedo, Bauer-Kahan, Bryan, Connolly, Dixon, Harabedian, Pacheco, Papan, Stefani, Zbur

NO: Sanchez

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-0-2

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

VERSION: April 16, 2026

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FN: 0002794