



CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: City Council **DATE:** December 8, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

PREPARED BY: Thomas O'Neal, Police Captain

PRESENTER: Thomas O'Neal, Police Captain

AGENDA TITLE: Grand Jury Report-Care Response Unit Statistics

RECOMMENDATION

Approve report as presented and provide suggestions for data collection and reporting for future reports.

BACKGROUND

On April 17, 2025, the Mendocino County Civil Grand Jury issued a report titled Homelessness: A County-Wide Issue. The report provided an in-depth review of homeless programs in Mendocino County and included a recommendation that the Fort Bragg Police Department present *"verified results from the Care Response Unit program, both positive and negative, to be reported to the City Council of Fort Bragg by December 2025."*

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Definition of Success

CRU's overarching mission is to ***Reduce contacts between individuals with mental health illness and/or substance use disorders and law enforcement.*** CRU's unofficial motto is ***Addressing the chronic to prevent the acute.*** CRU pursues its mission through several approaches, with primary methods being:

1. Identifying and addressing gaps in current social services programs to more effectively reduce chronic homelessness, mental illness, and substance use disorders (SUD).
2. Advocating for and supporting clients in receiving available social services.
3. Developing streamlined processes to improve access to social services and enhance their effectiveness.

The Care Response Unit (CRU) has been working for the past two months on identifying what data and information should be included in the Grand Jury-requested report to City Council. CRU reviewed all of its applicable programs, began a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, and reached out to other similar programs in the county to request what data or benchmarks of success those programs used.

Presenting data for the CRU program is challenging because much of the information is qualitative. Rather than measuring success by the number of clients served, ***CRU evaluates its impact based on its ability to address complex overlooked or underserved social problems that directly affect public safety and law enforcement.*** This problem-focused approach has led CRU to expand into several sub-programs, each designed to meet the needs of distinct populations.

Each of these sub-programs tracks different types of quantitative data, often based on funding requirements or the nature of services provided. Further complicating data collection efforts is the issue of funding agencies frequently defining similar services and data categories in different ways. To ensure consistency and clarity for the purpose of this report, CRU has attempted to merge and standardize these definitions across programs.

Defining success for a program as innovative as CRU is difficult. One core metric used is the reduction in arrests among homeless individuals. This measure can be tracked through Police Department statistics and translated into taxpayer savings by showing reduced strain on the criminal justice system and other acute treatment systems such as hospital emergency rooms. Unfortunately, this metric does not reveal whether those savings are simply shifted to other social service programs. For example, a person who spends six months in an in-patient rehabilitation program for substance use disorder may avoid arrest during that time, but the treatment itself still carries significant costs. Since most participants are covered by Medi-Cal, those expenses ultimately remain taxpayer funded.

CRU has tried to measure the costs its clients place on outside social service programs, but data collection has been difficult due to privacy laws and barriers to information sharing. In addition, some CRU programs compete with other existing initiatives for a shrinking pool of social service funding. This competition has, at times, created tension with other providers and reinforced the siloing of information and data.

CRU has collected a significant amount of qualitative data demonstrating the program's success. Much of this evidence comes from client success stories, where individuals with frequent law enforcement contacts were connected to social services. In many cases, this support led to a substantial reduction, or even a complete end, to their interactions with law enforcement. These client stories are not just "feel good" stories, they represent a clear example of CRU achieving its mission.

As an example, below are three success stories from just the last 90 days that demonstrate CRU's ability to solve complex issues.

An elderly woman who has been living on the streets of Fort Bragg for nearly five years was finally placed on mental health hold in part due to the work of CRU in documenting its ongoing efforts to address the client's chronic mental health issues. The client is now in the process of obtaining housing through Redwood Community Services (RCS) respite housing.

An elderly housed male was calling 911 multiple times a day for months despite having no medical need. The calls for service resulted in approximately twenty unnecessary ambulance transports, law enforcement dispatches and emergency room visits. CRU worked with partners to complete a "wraparound" meeting where a comprehensive plan was created to close the gaps in the client's care, resulting in a significant drop in calls for medical and police services.

CRU and RCS partnered to find long-term housing for a homeless individual with an alcohol-related substance use disorder that resulted in him being arrested and transported to county jail approximately six times in one month with those arrests typically involving emergency room visits for medical clearance. The individual has generated no calls for service in the last sixty days.

Care Response Unit: Sub-Programs

1. Care Response Unit

The Care Response Unit (CRU) was the title given to the original program funded through the Behavioral Health Justice Institute Services grant in 2022. CRU now is commonly used as a generic term for all social services programs operated by the Fort Bragg Police Department. The core CRU program most commonly works with adults who frequently come into contact with law enforcement.

2. Proposition 47 (Cohort 4)

Proposition 47 (Prop 47) refers to a program funded in 2025 through the Board of State and Community Corrections. Prop 47 is intended to reduce recidivism by working directly with individuals who have had recent contact with the criminal justice system. Prop 47 encompasses several approaches, including:

- Funding six transitional beds through the Hospitality Center
- Funding one emergency stabilization bed through the Hospitality House
- Providing CRU services on the Mendocino Coast outside of the City of Fort Bragg
- Funding additional direct client services through the Hospitality Center

- Coordinating the Proposition 47 Local Advisory Committee in order to solicit feedback related to the program from the public and a diverse group of stakeholders.

3. Project Right Now

Project Right Now (PRN) primarily focuses on youth 14-25 years of age who are experiencing substance use disorder related to opioids. PRN is funded through the California Youth Opioid Response (YOR) program. PRN is currently partnered with the Fort Bragg Unified School District, Mendocino High School, and Mendocino College. PRN was funded in Cohort 3 and Cohort 4. PRN's primary services include:

- Partnering with the schools to ensure immediate access to substance use disorder treatment (SUDT) for youth.
- Providing Narcan training and Narcan to the schools, public, and community organizations.
- Pursuing the goals identified by the City of Fort Bragg's Fentanyl Task Force.
- Developing preventative programs aimed at reducing SUD amongst youth.

4. Emergency Weather Shelter

The Emergency Weather Shelter (EWS) is funded by the County using pass-through funds from the Homeless, Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) grant. The EWS provides motel room vouchers during moderate to severe weather during the winter months in order to shelter homeless individuals. Prior to December 2021, the EWS was operated by the Hospitality Center using various churches on the Mendocino Coast for housing. The Police Department took over the EWS in 2021 due to a lack of interest by local non-profits in maintaining the program. Funding for the EWS is expected to run out this winter season.

5. Homeward Bound

Homeward Bound is funded through the County and is intended to connect individuals experiencing homelessness with established resources, such as family members outside of Mendocino County. From 2022-2024, CRU operated

this program through County reimbursements. Sometime in approximately 2024, the Homeward Bound program transitioned to Redwood Community Services.

When the program was operated by CRU, CRU completed a screening with the client and communicated with a family member or other established resource in the outside community to ensure a plan was in place to receive and house the client. CRU then completed the travel arrangements and followed up with the client and receiving resource to ensure the client arrived safely.

Now that the program has transitioned to RCS, CRU assists in connecting the client with RCS in Ukiah in order to complete the Homeward Bound process. This involves communicating the initial client screening results to RCS.

Statistics

The below statistics are broken out by program and by timeframe when possible. Each data set also includes statistical insights and definitions related to services when applicable.

Care Response Unit

	Care Response Unit		
	Referrals to Mental Health	Completed Screenings	Clients Reported to Receive/Have Received SUD Services
2022 Q1 Jan - Mar	0	49	0
2022 Q2 April - Jun	0	0	0
2022 Q3 Jul - Sept	3	14	4
2022 Q4 Oct - Dec	0	101	0
2022 Totals	3	164	4
2023 Q1 Jan - Mar	3	75	0
2023 Q2 April - Jun	5	74	30
2023 Q3 Jul - Sept	14	46	17
2023 Q4 Oct - Dec	8	26	28
2023 Totals	30	221	75
2024 Q1 Jan - Mar	7	52	0
2024 Q2 April - Jun	10	48	33
2024 Q3 Jul - Sept	7	69	15
2024 Q4 Oct - Dec	3	73	65
2024 Totals	27	242	113
2025 Q1 Jan - Mar	5	96	36
2025 Q2 April - Jun	End of Grant (Refer to Prop 47)	End of Grant (Refer to Prop 47)	-
2025 Q3 Jul - Sept	End of Grant (Refer to Prop 47)	End of Grant (Refer to Prop 47)	-
2025 Totals	5	96	36
Start to Present Totals:	65	723	228

Definitions	
Referral to Mental Health	Referral for a person not already connected to mental health. Referral actions include assisting with making initial contact with a mental health provider.
Completed Screenings	This is the number of clients who have been screened for services. Refer to the attached Needs Screening Form for additional information on the screening process.
Clients Reported to Receive/Have Received SUD Services	These are the number of clients who are assisted with enrolling in or maintaining substance use disorder services for both inpatient and outpatient treatment types.

Referrals to Substance Use Disorder Treatment (SUDT) (Inpatient) (Data through 09/30/2025)					
Year	Number of Referrals	Unique Individuals Served (Yearly)	Detox Only	Completed 30 Days	Completed 60 Days
2022	4	4	0	0	0
2023	20	19	0	6	1
2024	30	24	2	3	1
2025	9	8	0	1	0
PROGRAM TOTALS	63	55	2	10	2

Referrals to SUD (Inpatient) (Data through 09/30/2025)					
Year	Completed 90 (<) Days	Completed 6< Month Program	Transferred to SLE	No Discharge Date Reported	Returned to Treatment through CRU at least once (to date)
2022	1	0	1	3	-
2023	3	2	2	5	-
2024	5	0	4	7	-
2025	3	0	2	3	12
PROGRAM TOTALS	12	2	9	18	12

Annual Arrest Statistics						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	369	291		181	129	92
Total Arrests	755	534		637	511	361
Percentage Homeless	48.87%	54.49%		28.41%	25.24%	25.48%

Broken Down by Month						
January						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	39	26		18	14	5
Total Arrests	57	44		58	43	36
Percentage Homeless	68.42%	59.09%		31.03%	32.56%	13.89%

February						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	28	25		20	10	5
Total Arrests	66	43		58	39	32
Percentage Homeless	42.42%	58.14%		34.48%	25.64%	15.63%

March						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	29	24		17	13	10
Total Arrests	66	40		59	54	31
Percentage Homeless	43.94%	60.00%		28.81%	24.07%	32.26%

April						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	30	29		18	5	6
Total Arrests	62	51		63	38	37
Percentage Homeless	48.39%	56.86%		28.57%	13.16%	16.22%

May						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	36	22		11	8	12
Total Arrests	66	36		28	37	31
Percentage Homeless	54.55%	61.11%		39.29%	21.62%	38.71%

June						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	45	28		14	6	18
Total Arrests	77	44		40	24	44
Percentage Homeless	58.44%	63.64%		35.00%	25.00%	40.91%

July						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	57	25		27	5	19
Total Arrests	105	37		86	46	53
Percentage Homeless	54.29%	67.57%		31.40%	10.87%	35.85%

August						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	38	28		15	8	4
Total Arrests	61	47		55	31	31
Percentage Homeless	62.30%	59.57%		27.27%	25.81%	12.90%

September						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	39	28		15	16	8
Total Arrests	65	45		55	63	33
Percentage Homeless	60.00%	62.22%		27.27%	25.40%	24.24%

October						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	26	37		13	12	5
Total Arrests	51	61		49	50	33
Percentage Homeless	50.98%	60.66%		26.53%	24.00%	15.15%

November						
	2018	2019	CRU	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	21	25		12	16	
Total Arrests	39	45		43	38	
Percentage Homeless	53.85%	55.56%		27.91%	42.11%	

December						
	2018	2019	CR	2023	2024	2025
Number of Homeless Arrests	17	16		12	16	
Total Arrests	40	41		43	48	

Percentage Homeless	42.50%	39.02%	27.91%	33.33%	
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Statistical Insights: Care Response Unit

- Data for Q2 of 2022 was not located. This was during the start of the program as we were working to determine what data was required for the grant. There were additionally employee/responsibility changes at the time related to data collection.
- Referrals to substance use disorder treatment during 2025 appear to be cooling. CRU attributes this to stronger relationships with SUDT providers, resulting in clients being directly connected to SUDT without CRU's assistance.
- 19% of the clients referred to SUDT (inpatient) worked with CRU a second time following relapse to reenter inpatient treatment.
- Arrests related to homelessness continue to be lower compared to the introduction of CRU. It is worth noting that data related to 2020-2022 are not included due to the statistical anomalies related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Proposition 47

Proposition 47 (10/03/2024-09/30/2025)			
Deliverables	Unique Individuals	Percentage	Definition
Individuals Served	180		Reported to BSSC - meets justice-involved criteria of arrest, conviction, probation/parole; Includes One-Time Intervention Services (examples: meals, mail services, ID vouchers, EWS)
Individuals Enrolled	117	65%	Reported to BSSC - meets justice-involved criteria of arrest, conviction, probation/parole
Mendocino County Recidivism	38	32%	New arrests or citations after enrollment
Program Specifics			
Obtained Employment At Program Completion - 16 individuals	6	38%	Increase in employment: either movement from unemployment to part-time or full-time employment, or movement from underemployment to full-time employment
Obtained Housing At Program Completion - 16 individuals	14	88%	Either permanent housing or permanently living with friends/family.
Individuals in the Bridge Transitional Housing Program	4.5		Individuals whose Transitional House bed at MCHC is being paid for by the Prop 47 grant. These individuals are receiving case management services with CRU & MCHC, as well as working towards goals of employment and stable housing. (To date, this program has been offered to 15 individuals.)
Emergency Shelter Bed	5		Prop 47 pays for one emergency shelter bed at the Hospitality House to be used at CRU's discretion for the purpose of stabilizing an individual who has been living unsheltered. The goal is to provide a short-term safe place for the individual prior to them entering inpatient treatment. (Of the 5 individuals: 2 entered inpatient treatment, 2 were not SUD involved and were elderly, and returned to the streets. 1 was provided a bus ticket to go to Building Bridges in Ukiah at their request.)

Project Right Now

	Project Right Now - Cohort 3				
	Narcan Distributed	Individuals Served	Eval & Referrals to MAT	Instances of Outreach	Instances of Case Management
2023 Q1 April - Jun	0	16	2	413	153
2023 Q2 July - Sept	49	8	0	1555	241
2023 Q4 Oct - Dec	124	23	0	593	240
2023 Totals	173	47	2	2561	634
2024 Q1 Jan - Mar	118	24	2	759	255
2024 Q2 April - Jun	30	45	5	606	201
2024 Q3 Jul - Sept	205	46	0	217	254
2024 Totals	353	115	7	1582	710
Cohort 3 Totals	526	162	9	4143	1344

	Project Right Now - Cohort 4				
	Narcan Distributed	Individuals Served	Eval & Referrals to SUDT	Instances of Outreach	Instances of Case Management
2025 Q1 May - June	15	5	4	4	33
2025 Q2 Jul - Sept	21	5	0	17	64
2025 Totals	36	10	4	21	97
Cohort 4 Totals	36	10	4	21	97

Definitions	
Narcan Distributed	How many units of Narcan are distributed to the general public during school events, trainings, and by request.

Unique Individuals Served	How many unique individuals were served during the quarter as ongoing clients.
Evaluation & Referrals for SUDT	How many individuals were evaluated and referred for substance use disorder treatment (SUDT).
Instances of Outreach	Outreach at the schools during events such as individual outreach, city events, homecoming, football games, rallies, etc., or tabling in general at the schools or with the general public.
Instances of Case Management	Number of times meeting with a client (ongoing services).

Statistical Insights: Project Right Now

- The changes in the number of clients served between Cohort 3 and Cohort 4 are due to a change in the program model. Cohort 3 involved one full-time employee and approximately five sub-contractors delivering services. Cohort 4 only funds one full-time employee.
- While not listed is estimated the Project Right Now has trained over 2000 Mendocino coast residents in the use of Narcan to include virtually all of the High School staff and students in Fort Bragg and Mendocino.

Emergency Weather Shelter

	Emergency Weather Shelter				
	Unique Individuals	Total Bed Nights	Motel Voucher Cost	Administrative Overhead	Percentage
December 2021	36	97	\$729.30	\$0.00	
January 2022	12	97	\$2,917.20	\$0.00	
February 2022	14	33	\$3,086.69	\$0.00	
March 2022	24	62	\$6,563.70	\$0.00	
April 2022	29	104	\$8,605.74	\$0.00	
2021 - 2022 Totals	115	296	\$21,902.63	\$0.00	0%
November 2022	17	20	\$1,752.00	\$0.00	
December 2022	66	240	\$20,878.00	\$0.00	
January 2023	69	175	\$24,659.68	\$0.00	
February 2023	43	120	\$7,689.80	\$0.00	
March 2023	43	154	\$7,689.80	\$0.00	
April 2023	5	5	\$339.24	\$0.00	
2022 - 2023 Totals	243	714	\$63,008.52	\$0.00	0%
December 2023	24	58	\$4,070.88	\$1,151.69	
January 2024	50	120	\$8,820.24	\$2,450.32	
February 2024	40	126	\$6,671.80	\$2,323.60	
March 2024	38	125	\$7,350.19	\$2,390.60	
2023 - 2024 Totals	152	429	\$26,913.11	\$8,316.21	24%
November 2024	52	206	\$16,352.00	\$215.25	
December 2024	38	117	\$11,972.00	\$1,515.68	
January 2025	33	123	\$10,512.00	\$2,115.75	
February 2025	54	266	\$20,903.00	\$1,782.38	
March 2025	30	145	\$11,826.00	\$1,638.00	
2024 - 2025 Totals	207	857	\$71,565.00	\$7,267.06	9%
PROGRAM TOTALS	717	2296	\$183,389.26	\$15,583.27	8%

Statistical Insights: Emergency Weather Shelter

- The administrative costs beginning in December 2023 were due to adding a part-time EWS clerk in order to allow CRU Team members to focus on providing direct client services.

Homeward Bound

	CRU Homeward Bound				
	Referrals Completed	Successful	Unknown	Returned	Cost
2021 Q1 Jan - Mar	2	0	1	1	\$327.23
2021 Q2 April - Jun	2	0	2	0	\$271.78
2021 Q3 Jul - Sept	3	0	3	0	\$595.22
2021 Q4 Oct - Dec	7	0	4	3	\$985.51
2021 Totals	14	0	10	4	\$2,179.74
2022 Q1 Jan - Mar	3	0	2	1	\$557.11
2022 Q2 April - Jun	3	0	2	1	\$129.58
2022 Q3 Jul - Sept	7	0	5	2	\$993.59
2022 Q4 Oct - Dec	1	0	0	1	\$5.25
2022 Totals	14	0	9	5	\$1,685.53
2023 Q1 Jan - Mar	9	5	0	5	\$557.11
2023 Q2 April - Jun	6	5	0	2	\$1,738.10
2023 Q3 Jul - Sept	4	4	0	0	\$309.13
2023 Q4 Oct - Dec	1	1	0	0	\$265.00
2023 Totals	22	15	0	7	\$2,869.34
2024 Q1 Jan - Mar	1	0	0	1	\$23.00
2024 Q2 April - Jun	8	0	4	4	\$42.00
2024 Totals	9	0	4	5	\$65.00
CRU Program Totals	59	15	23	21	\$6,799.61
CRU Percentages:		25%	39%	36%	
RCS Takes Over Homeward Bound Process					
2024 Q3 Jul - Sept	4	1	1	2	\$10.50
2024 Q4 Oct - Dec	4	0	3	1	\$21.00
2024 Totals	8	1	4	3	\$31.50
2025 Q1 Jan - Mar	1	1	0	0	\$5.25
2025 Q2 April - Jun	2	0	0	2	\$10.50
2025 Q3 Jul - Sept	2	0	0	2	\$10.50
2025 Q4 Oct - Dec	0	0	0	0	\$-
2025 Totals	5	1	0	4	\$26.25
RCS Program Totals	13	2	4	7	\$57.75
RCS Percentages:		15%	31%	54%	
Program Totals	72	17	27	28	\$6,857.36
Program Percentages:		24%	38%	39%	

Homeward Bound Definitions	
Purpose	The purpose of Homeward Bound is to connect individuals with either their family or a resource center that they are already familiar with, and wish to seek some sort of resources or treatment from.
Successful	A "Successful" disposition means that the individual was successfully connected with their family, or arrived to a resource center of their choosing and began treatment or received some sort of care.
Unknown	An "Unknown" disposition means that we were unable to contact the client after they left.
Returned	A "Returned" disposition means that the individual was reunited with family or resources, but has since returned and has had Law Enforcement contact.

Statistical Insights: Homeward Bound

- Funding totals starting in 2024 Q3 only include the cost of travel for clients to reach RCS in Ukiah.

End of Statistics

FISCAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

Requests for additional data or research can have a diverse impact on staff resources based on the information requested.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

No environmental impact identified.

STRATEGIC PLAN/COUNCIL PRIORITIES/GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY

This research project aligns with City of Fort Bragg Strategic Plan Goal 5A.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The CRU Team has:

- Held two public stakeholder meetings in 2025 related to receiving public feedback and suggestions related to the program.
- Held two public meetings in the last six months of the Proposition 47 Local Advisory Committee, where public comment and feedback are allowed.
- Routinely takes and fulfills information requests from members of the public and both government and non-profit organizations.
- Presented this data at the November Public Safety Committee in order to receive feedback from both the public and the Committee.

ALTERNATIVES:

None identified.

ATTACHMENTS:

Grand Jury Report: Homelessness: A County-Wide Issue

Needs Screening Form

NOTIFICATION:

None identified.