



Department of Community and Human Services

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September 29, 2025

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Zahilay:

As required by the Crisis Care Centers (CCC) Levy Implementation Plan, this letter transmits notification that I have authorized an exception, allowable under the Implementation Plan, to permit Connections Kirkland, the first Crisis Care Center site, to use CCC Levy capital funding to complete necessary facility renovations needed to serve youth at the site. As required by the Implementation Plan, this authorized exception is consistent with the Levy's paramount purpose.

Legislative Requirements

The CCC Levy Implementation Plan states that CCC Levy proceeds shall not be used to make capital improvements in leased facilities if the operator does not have an agreement to purchase the facility. However, the Plan permits an exception to this restriction if the exception is not inconsistent with the Levy's paramount purpose, which is to establish a network of five crisis care centers throughout King County. The Implementation Plan requires me to describe the rationale and terms of any exception in a letter to the King County Council within 90 days of approving the exception. This letter provides the rationale and terms of this exception.

Background

DCHS selected Connections Kirkland as a launch-ready crisis care center in March 2025 through the initial Crisis Care Centers Request for Proposals (RFP).

Rationale

The Implementation Plan indicates that youth will be able to seek behavioral health urgent care services at all crisis care centers. Accordingly, under the terms of the RFP, launch-ready crisis care centers must be fully operational, offering all components of a crisis care center, including serving both youth and adults in their behavioral health urgent care setting, within 60 days of their operational contract start date. To meet this requirement and best serve youth, Connections Kirkland proposes to complete renovations to build a separate youth urgent care space, establishing three new consult rooms and a bathroom dedicated to youth services. Connections Kirkland also needed to complete capital work for first responder drop-off privacy and canopy, an elevator replacement, furnishings, and associated planning costs.

Authorizing an exception to allow Connections to renovate the north crisis response zone (CRZ) Crisis Care Center ensures Connections meets operational requirements and expedites service delivery for young people. Per the RFP, as a launch ready crisis care center, Connections Kirkland must initiate comprehensive operations, including providing youth urgent care services, within 60 days of execution of its operational contract on August 1. Based on this requirement, Connections had until September 30, 2025, to complete the necessary capital work to support full-scale service delivery. My decision to fund these renovations this summer provided the resources necessary for Connections' general contractor to stay on schedule and meet the timeline requirement for the operational contract.

Terms

The exception I authorized provided \$1,427,015 to Connections Kirkland for the costs of modifying existing space into a youth urgent care, as well as drive-through privacy work and canopy; elevator replacement; furniture, and associated costs. Specifically, the exception allowed CCC Levy funds to be spent for design, construction, renovation, furniture, fixtures, equipment, and related expenses. Connections completed renovations for the youth urgent care at the end of August 2025. The other capital improvements under this exception are expected to be completed before the end of 2025.

Conclusion

My authorization of this \$1,427,015 exception to the CCC Levy Implementation Plan's capital spending guidance for leased facilities provided the resources needed for Connections to complete renovations necessary to deliver the full range of Crisis Care Center services in Kirkland by September 30, 2025.

If your staff have any questions, please contact me at 206-263-5780.

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay

September 29, 2025

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Rider', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelly Rider

Director, Department of Community and Human Services

King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Stephanie Pure, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive