

**NEWS RELEASE** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | June 15, 2022

## **North Central Human Service Center to expand crisis behavioral health services in August with walk-in stabilization facility in Minot**

*Preview for community stakeholders and media is Friday, June 17 at 9 a.m.*

BISMARCK, N.D. – In August, the North Dakota Department of Human Services' North Central Human Service Center will expand its behavioral health crisis response services by opening a 24-hour walk-in crisis stabilization facility to support the behavioral health needs of people in the Minot region.

The facility allows people ages 18 and older who are experiencing a mental health or substance use disorder crisis that does not require medical intervention to walk in or be dropped off for immediate help and support. They will be met by a specially-trained crisis response team who will help de-escalate the situation and provide short-term interventions, assessments for services that best meets their needs or referrals to community provider for appropriate services.

NCHSC expanded Open Arms, its crisis residential unit, to accommodate this new treatment model.

Ahead of the official opening, NCHSC officials will be hosting an open house on Friday, June 17, from 9 to 9:45 a.m. CT for members of its community coordinating council and other key stakeholders.

"Our team has worked hard to expand our crisis services over the last few years to serve individuals experiencing a substance use or mental health crisis more effectively and efficiently," said John Butgereit, the center director. "This is a monumental shift in how we serve people in crisis. The goal is to get people relief quickly, while reducing unnecessary law enforcement involvement, emergency room use or inpatient hospitalization."

Law enforcement and other first responders will have a designated area to drop off individuals for immediate care that allows first responders to quickly return to their shifts. On June 1, NCHSC launched a soft opening of the unit with the Minot Police Department.

"Our collaboration with North Central Human Services Center has been vital to helping our community respond more effectively to the mental health and addiction issues," said Minot Police Chief John Klug. "The addition, this new service will allow the police department to link more people in the Minot community to the services they need. We appreciate the funding provided by the legislature for these services that are critical to the people we serve."

The expanded walk-in stabilization facility will be available 24-hours a day, seven days a week, including weekends and holidays for everyone in the Minot region, not just individuals who receive services through NCHSC.

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In 2020, the department through its eight regional human service centers, launched a comprehensive statewide behavioral health crisis response system that includes a three-digit crisis line (211) that anyone can call for help and mobile crisis response. The walk-in crisis stabilization facility is the final component to the behavioral health initiative implementation in Minot.

West Central Human Service Center in Bismarck, Southeast Human Service Center in Fargo and South Central Human Service Center in Jamestown have opened their walk-in crisis stabilization facilities. Efforts are underway to offer these services in the Devils Lake, Dickinson, Grand Forks and Williston regions with several human service centers close to full implementation.

Lawmakers authorized funding and additional full-time positions to enhance the 24-hour crisis response system during the 2019 legislative session. The department contracts with FirstLink 211 for the phone support services.

The behavioral health crisis response services are already benefiting people in the Minot region. Calls to the 24-hour crisis line grew from 156 calls in 2020 to 1,116 calls in 2021. Some reasons to call could include substance use, depression, suicidal thoughts, trauma, relationship conflict, concerns for loved ones or other challenges.

Anyone experiencing a behavioral health crisis should call 211 for immediate help 24-hours a day.

The newly expanded walk-in crisis stabilization facility in Minot is located inside Open Arms at 18 Third St. S.E., Suite 800.

For more information on crisis response services, visit [www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/crisis](http://www.behavioralhealth.nd.gov/crisis).

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**Media Availability:**

North Central Human Service Center Director John Butgereit and a representative from the Minot Police Department will be available for media interviews about the expanded 24-hour walk-in crisis stabilization facility and how the services will benefit the people in the Minot region.

**WHEN:** 9:30 a.m. CT Friday, June 17

**WHERE:** 18 Third St. S.E., Suite 800 (inside Open Arms)

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