



# Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 13-1797, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **CREATING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE TO REDUCE CRIME COMMITTED BY PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND/OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

**WHEREAS**, the County of Cook is a home rule unit of government as defined in Article VII, Section 6(a) of the 1970 Constitution of the State of Illinois, and as such may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Illinois has primary responsibility for individuals with mental illness and drug addiction and it has imposed upon Cook County tax payers to shoulder the entire financial burden; and

**WHEREAS**, the closing of Illinois mental health institutions and resources for treatment at the local level, are the driving influences for the increase in the homeless population, the crime rate, and overcrowding at Cook County Jail; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the latest law enforcement data approximately 65% of homicides are committed by individuals with mental illness and/or drug addicted; and

**WHEREAS**, Cook County has experienced a drastic increase in gun crimes resulting in injury, and death of innocent babies, youth, and bystanders, which has drawn attention throughout the country and abroad; and

**WHEREAS**, the release of thousands of ex-offenders and returning veterans who have exhausted all legal means to supply their basic needs, creates fertile ground for expanding violent subcultures; and

**WHEREAS**, gangs and other criminal elements have formed a culture of violence and retaliation which has begun to dominate economically distressed communities with fear, human trafficking and economic exploitation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and Board of Commissioners create an intergovernmental task force to reduce crime committed by persons with mental illness and/or substance abuse.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the task force is represented of federal, state, county, local government and community stakeholders. The purpose of the task force is twofold; (1) to develop a collaborative system of services to facilitate our crime reduction efforts and (2) to provide more humane services for homeless individuals with mental illness, drug addicted, jobless veterans and ex-offenders who have exhausted all legal means for supporting their critical human needs.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the task force should be comprised of 24 members selected by the following:

1. Two appointed by the County Board President;
2. Two appointed by Cook County Hospital Systems Board;
3. Two appointed by the Governor or the General Assembly: from Health & Human services;
4. Three appointed by the Federal Department: one from Health & Human Services, one from HUD and one from the department of Veterans Affairs;
5. Three appointed by the Mayor of Chicago: one from Department of Human Service,

two from law enforcement;

6. Two appointed by Cook County Sheriff;

7. One appointed by Suburban Mayors Association: one appointed by Suburban 708 Mental Health Board;

8. Two appointed by Cook County Circuit Court: one from Mental Health Court and one from Drug Court;

9. Three appointed by Community Mental Health Care Providers Association;

10. One Clinical Psychologist;

11. One appointed by Hospital Association; and

12. One appointed by the Coalition of the Homeless.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the duties of the task force shall include but not limited to the following:

1. Determine the number of homeless individuals with mental illness, drug addicted, veterans and ex-offenders who have no legal means to supply their basic human needs;

2. The number of aforementioned population who have committed serious crimes;

3. Establish a system of treatment services to respond to their essential human needs in accordance with federal, state and local laws;

4. Develop a funding consolidation plan that will support holistic individualized services that can be funded by different government providers who are responsible for various service needs;

5. Contract for professional and technical support with Cook County Board approval for staff and other technical and professional services that's essential to fulfill the task force responsibilities, whenever possible, utilize existing qualified county task forces and volunteers; and

6. Within ninety days provide a progress report to the Cook County Board.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the specific action plan shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. Assess the number and quality of service providers in the targeted areas;

2. Identify specific services and needs of returning homeless veterans. Conduct meetings with US Department of Veteran Affairs, local veteran centers, and organizations;

3. Identify current and past government funding sources and dollars spent on service needs over the last several years in the targeted areas;

4. Conduct a review of all government special use funds specific to Human Services including grant funds for the target population;

5. Establish a Cook County Housing Trust Fund in collaboration with the state housing trust fund, Chicago Housing program, HUD, US Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Cook County Homes Program which could be administrated under Cook County Land Bank Authority to ensure their low income housing goals;

6. Establish rules for spending priorities from money saved from crime reduction in Cook County;

7. Lobby the state Governor and legislators to revisit mandatory sentencing laws;

8. Expand Crisis Intervention Teams to all police districts to targeted areas.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that all options are explored to establish coordinated funding pools made of stakeholders who target the needs of the family, including but not limited to the following:

1. Employ professionals who qualify for federal reimbursement for health services including psychological and emotional problems;

2. Work with universities' schools of social work to utilize their students who need to meet their practical work experience requirements;

3. Establish tuition reimbursement programs for students who agree to work for the county for a specified time and in high crime areas;

4. Utilize dollars saved by diverting individuals suffering from mental illness and /or drug addiction from the Cook

County jails and 1115 waiver;

5. Consider utilizing the new federal law that allows cities to establish 708 mental health Boards;

6. Employ clinical social workers and legal advisors to assist law enforcement with domestic violence crisis involving children and families. Funding pool establish in collaboration with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services and mental healthcare reimbursement for clinical social workers;

7. Establish a shared funding pool to maximize the use of existing dollars. The pool shall be comprised of:

- a. Government and private funds designated for crime prevention and intervention;
- b. Health and Human Services at all levels of government;
- c. Housing Funds at all levels of government;
- d. Job training workforce investment funds;
- e. Special grants;
- f. Redirecting a percentage of tax levy for public safety;
- g. Shifting funds from programs inside prisons and jails to expanding services at the community level.