

Crisis Assistance Team - Capacity Expansion

*2026 Montana Opioid Abatement Trust
Grants*

Flathead City-County Health Department

Jennifer Rankosky
1035 1st Ave W
1035 1st Ave W
Kalispell, MT 59901

hacontactus@flatheadcounty.gov
O: 406-751-8101

James Pyke

1035 1st Ave W
1035 1st Ave W
Kalispell, MT 59901

jpyke@flatheadcounty.gov
O: 406-751-8250
M: 406-885-4097

Application Form

Region Selection

To collaborate with someone else on this request, click the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner.

Project Name*

Crisis Assistance Team - Capacity Expansion

You may only select one Abatement Region, if you are applying for funding from more than one region you will need to fill out and submit a separate application for each region.

Select Multi County Abatement Region OR Metro Region*

Select the Multi-County Abatement Region **OR** the Metro Region you are requesting grant funds from. Click [HERE](#) for a detailed map of Multi-County Regions and Metro Regions.

Flathead County Metro Region

Regional Funding Request*

If you are applying to multiple regions, please select all the regions to which you are submitting applications.

N/A

Application Overview

About the Organization/Program*

Give a brief description of the Organization/Program/Project. Include the mission statement and the services provided.

Crisis Assistance Team, Flathead County, Montana.

Mission Statement:

A mobile response team dedicated to de-escalating and stabilizing people in crisis, while connecting them to essential resources for continued support.

The Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) is operated by the Flathead City-County Health Department and provides mobile crisis response services for Flathead County as an integral part of the 911 system. The CAT program primarily responds to crises involving mental health and/or substance use disorders. The program employs licensed therapists and care coordinators that respond together to individuals in the community that struggle with mental health, substance use, or the ability to meet basic needs. Individual care continues after a mobile crisis response, with care coordination services offered for a minimum of 14 days. The team operates 7 days per week, 12 hours per day. CAT personnel work closely with law enforcement, EMS, and behavioral health providers throughout the valley. The program is also able to work with incarcerated individuals through a contract with the Flathead County Detention Center.

In 2025, the CAT program had approximately 1500 client contacts, for 450 unique individuals. This resulted in approximately 300 emergency room diversions and 40 jail diversions in Flathead County.

What category does the program fit into*

Check the category/categories the program fits into. You may select more than one option.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of approved opioid remediation uses

Treatment

Recovery

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule A - select all that apply

- E. EXPANSION OF WARM HAND-OFF PROGRAMS AND RECOVERY SERVICES
- F. TREATMENT FOR INCARCERATED POPULATION

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule B - select all that apply

- B. SUPPORT PEOPLE IN TREATMENT & RECOVERY
- C. CONNECTIONS TO CARE
- D. ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE-INVOLVED PERSONS
- I. FIRST RESPONDERS

How does the program meet the Opioid Remediation Guidelines*

Provide a detailed explanation of how the program fits into the approved Opioid Remediation Guidelines selected in the above question.

Please be specific

The Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) directly aligns with the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust (MOAT) approved remediation guidelines across three primary levels of service delivery, targeting the treatment, recovery, and criminal justice intervention strategies outlined in Exhibit E.

1. Connections to Care

The CAT program utilizes licensed therapists and care coordinators to provide immediate, community-based assessment and crisis de-escalation for individuals struggling with substance use disorders (SUD). In 2025, the program managed 101 calls where substance use/abuse was the primary crisis issue, and 26% of all clients (119 individuals) had a documented SUD diagnosis. The team regularly provides referrals and warm hand-offs to community partners that provide outpatient SUD treatment, as well as direct coordination with the emergency department when acute medical intervention is required.

2. Support for Incarcerated and Justice-Involved Persons

CAT actively mitigates the intersection of substance use and the justice system through a direct contract with the Flathead County Detention Center. In 2025, the team conducted 86 jail visits to provide behavioral health support and transitional planning for 35 unique incarcerated individuals. Furthermore, by managing community crises on-site, CAT estimated 40 jail diversions and arrest rate of 4% in 2025, effectively steering individuals away from incarceration and toward therapeutic intervention.

3. First Responders

As an integrated component of Flathead County's 911 system, CAT personnel act as specialized behavioral health first responders, providing an established alternative responder model to address substance-use emergencies with dedicated clinical expertise. By working in tandem with local law enforcement and EMS throughout the valley, the team drives vital pre-arrest diversion and deflection strategies that successfully steer at-risk individuals away from incarceration and toward therapeutic intervention.

New Program or Existing*

Is the funding intended for a new program or to expand an existing program?

A proposed supplement or expansion to a program.

Fiscal Information

Requested Amount*

\$39,400.00

Program Budget*

How will the funds be allocated? Attach a detailed line item budget breakdown for the program. If the funds are intended for a multi-year program please specify the amount budgeted for each year.

CAT Capacity Expansion Project_Budget.pdf

Source of Funding*

Does the program currently receive funding from another source? If yes, please explain in detail. (i.e. amount, funding source, etc.)

Grant funding is intended for the creation or expansion of opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery projects. The money is **NOT** meant to replace or supplant existing funding.

The budgeted operating costs for the Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) in FY27 total \$593,909. The program receives funding from the Crisis Diversion Grant, Medicaid reimbursement, and from Montana Opioid Abatement Trust (MOAT) funds distributed to Flathead County and the City of Kalispell.

The Crisis Diversion Grant is a Montana Department of Health and Human Services grant and contributes to the salary of the CAT program supervisor and one care coordinator. Grant funds were used for provider training and to purchase a vehicle for the program in FY26. However, there are no additional grant funds for program expansion in FY27. The grant is budgeted to contribute \$101,318 towards staff salaries FY27.

Medicaid billing for mobile crisis response services began in July 2024, with the intent of supporting programs like CAT throughout the state. The CAT program operates at, or near, capacity each month but is only forecasted to receive \$120,960 in Medicaid reimbursement in FY27, about 20% of the program budget. This is largely due to inadequate reimbursement rates and narrow state billing policy guidelines.

MOAT funds received directly at Flathead County and the City of Kalispell support the remaining operating expenses of the CAT program each year. These funds are forecast to provide \$371,631 in support of the program in FY27, covering staff costs and routine operating expenses not reimbursed by Medicaid.

Do you have a Fiscal Agent*

Yes

Fiscal Agent Contact Info

Fiscal Agent Name*

Desiree Nelson

Fiscal Agent Email Address*

dnelson@flatheadcounty.gov

Program Abstract

Program Description*

Describe the objectives of this project. Provide a detailed overview of the program, including its purpose, priorities & objectives, and intended results.

The Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) capacity expansion project will provide communications and safety equipment to support the growth of the CAT program. Some team equipment is outdated, purchased years ago with grant funding and with no financial plan to replace it. The goal of this project is to replace essential equipment so the team can function effectively as it grows to add more response capacity for Flathead County.

1. Portable Radios: this project would provide two new radios so that each licensed therapist would have an updated radio when they are on shift. The proposed radios are the Motorola APX 8000 model, they work on an 800MHz frequency, allowing for enhanced building penetration. This would be especially useful when CAT personnel are in schools, the hospital, and jail. Additionally, the radios would be the same model used by the Flathead County Sheriff deputies, which allows for seamless integration and maintenance from county staff.
2. Body Armor: ballistic vests are individually sized, and the ballistic panels expire after five years. We have aging vests that need to be replaced, and new personnel hired that will need to be issued vests. The CAT

program is updating the policy for wearing vests and will begin requiring a concealed vest on all 911 responses. To meet this requirement, the program will need to purchase six new vests, one for each staff member. The vests will be worn under a jacket or shirt in a concealed carrier so CAT personnel are not mistaken as law enforcement personnel.

3. Computers: aging laptops need to be replaced and new computers need to be purchased to support the growth of the team. The CAT program needs to purchase two Toughbook laptops for licensed therapists on the team. Toughbooks are ideal for responses in the community and compatible with vehicle console mounts for easy access while in the vehicles. Two care coordination laptops need to be upgraded and those will be Dell models that are used throughout the health department. Existing computers were not part of the county replacement plan (CERF) and will need to be purchased at full price.

All equipment purchased with project funds will be put on a replacement schedule with annual funds budgeted based on the lifespan of each item.

Specific Goals*

Describe the primary goals your program seeks to achieve. For each goal, explain how the program intends to accomplish it.

The Crisis Assistance Team Capacity Expansion project has three goals for FY27:

1. Increased Response Volume and Care Coordination Activities: current data shows that the CAT program is operating near, or at, capacity month over month. This project will help with equipment costs for newly onboarded personnel as the team grows and allow the program to increase the number of mobile crisis responses and care coordination hours. The project aims to increase mobile crisis response volume by 30% by adding a third co-responder, serving approximately 35 more individuals with SUD in the community setting. Additionally, the project aims to increase care coordination time by 50%, allowing an average of two additional follow up sessions per client and improved warm hand-off capacity.

This will lead to more individuals in the community getting the right care, at the right time, with a more seamless connection to necessary resources. An increase in CAT program activities should also result in an increase in emergency room and jail diversions for the community.

2. Ensure Reliable Communication: updating portable radios for the CAT program will lead to more consistent and reliable communication, especially in rural areas of the county and in large facilities like the health department, detention center, and hospital.

3. Increase Team Safety: new policies and procedures will be developed ensuring proper body armor is worn on all applicable mobile crisis responses. This would align the safety approach of this team with more established teams in metro areas around the nation. CAT personnel are not actively engaged with armed individuals during a 911 response, however, updating the body armor policies would provide a greater safety margin for CAT personnel.

Evaluation Method*

Please explain in detail how you will gauge the effectiveness and overall impact of the program. What specific evaluation methods, tools, or metrics will you use to measure success.

Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) data will be reported to the MOAT board through scheduled and ad hoc reports as requested by the board.

The CAT program supervisor will track mobile crisis response volume and care coordination activities through the following objective measures, all tracked monthly:

1. Total encounters: this metric includes mobile crisis responses, care coordination activities, and appointments in the detention center. Both billable and unbillable encounters are reported.

2. Mobile crisis responses: a mobile crisis response is an initial client encounter in the community or at a partner facility.
3. Care coordination time: this metric reports the amount of care coordination time in total and at an individual client level. This includes phone calls, emails, referrals, and warm hand-offs.
4. Emergency room diversions: total emergency room diversions are reported using a formula based on national research and customized for the local team model. The formula assumes that 25% of qualifying encounters will result in an emergency room diversion.
5. Jail diversions and arrest rate: jail diversions are reported by the responding CAT personnel. Arrest rate is calculated based on encounter data when CAT personnel respond alongside law enforcement.

The CAT program supervisor will track efficacy of communication equipment and team safety using the following subjective measures:

1. Communication efficacy: each team lead (co-responder) will be required to utilize the new Motorola radios on each shift. They will test the radios in facilities they are in regularly and in rural areas of the county. The team will report on communication efficacy and work with the Flathead County Office of Emergency Services to troubleshoot issues as the radios are put into service.
2. Safety policy adherence: the CAT program supervisor will update policy and procedures to reflect an updated approach to ballistic vest use by CAT personnel on mobile crisis responses. There will be a team training to review the new policies and get feedback from the team. Following the policy and training, the supervisor will conduct routine checks for compliance.

Data Source*

What data or evidence will you collect to show you are meeting your program goals? What specific information, metrics and documentation will you provide to demonstrate the program objectives have been achieved.

Data for project metrics will be compiled by the CAT program supervisor and will come from two sources.

1. Electronic Health Record (EHR): Flathead City-County Health Department utilized eClinicalWorks as its EHR platform. This platform has robust reporting tools that the CAT program supervisor uses for monthly reports. These reports track client demographic data, encounter characteristics, and treatment notes for billable and unbillable encounters.
2. 911 System Data: the CAT program supervisor works with the crime analyst from Kalispell Police Department to collect data from LERMS, CAD, and Mobile to reflect actual CAT utilization by the 911 system. These metrics show every call that CAT personnel were requested to, responded to, and which agency partners they worked with. This data is also used to generate the response heat map and track the busiest days and hours for the program.

Awareness*

How do you plan to create awareness of this program? Briefly describe what action the program plans to take to create awareness in the community.

The Crisis Assistance Team (CAT) program conducts regular outreach activities to raise awareness for the program. These outreach activities help partner agencies learn to utilize the service appropriately and effectively. The presentations also serve as a learning opportunity for the CAT program, ensuring that it serves the needs of the community. The CAT program supervisor regularly schedules outreach presentations with agency partners, provider facilities, and county/city leadership. These presentations are 30-60 minutes and engage partners in learning how the program helps individuals navigate a complex service landscape. CAT personnel often provide ad hoc outreach activities as they visit provider facilities and make them aware of the service and how it could benefit a wide range of client needs.

The CAT program supervisor also creates program awareness through coalition work. These coalitions include the Flathead County Behavioral Health Collaborative, Suicide Prevention Coalition, Elder Care workgroup, and Collaborative Housing Solutions. The CAT Capacity Expansion project will enable increased community outreach activities as new personnel are onboarded and become active in this work.

Additional Documents

Tax Exempt Organization*

By clicking this box you are confirming the applying organization is a tax exempt organization.

Yes

Tax Exempt Determination Letter*

Please upload a copy of the Organization 501(C)(3) Tax Exempt Determination Letter.

Tax Exempt Letter 2026.pdf

Use this section to upload or explain any additional information regarding the program/organization. ie. a detailed budget projection, program/organization history, etc.

Upload #1

CAT Program Budget.pdf

Upload #2

Upload #3

Additional Information

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- CAT Capacity Expansion Project_Budget.pdf
- Tax Exempt Letter 2026.pdf
- CAT Program Budget.pdf

**Crisis Assistance Team
Capacity Expansion Project Budget**

Item	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost	Purpose
Portable Radios	\$ 8,500.00	2	\$ 17,000.00	Upgrade team radios to Motorola APX 8000 for 800mHz frequency and updated technology
Body Armor	\$ 2,200.00	6	\$ 13,200.00	Individually sized, concealable carriers and ballistic panels for each responder
Toughbook	\$ 3,200.00	2	\$ 6,400.00	Replace 1 out of date toughbook and add 1 additional for third co-responder
Dell laptops	\$ 1,400.00	2	\$ 2,800.00	Replace 2 out of date laptops used by care coordinators
		Total	\$ 39,400.00	

Flathead County
Board of Commissioners

(406) 758-5503

Brad W. Abell.
Randy L. Brodehl
Pamela J. Holmquist



January 28, 2026

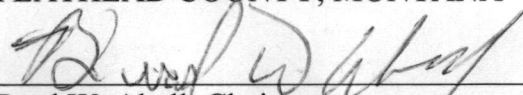
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT FLATHEAD COUNTY IS A TAX EXEMPT
GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.

THE FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER FOR FLATHEAD COUNTY IS:

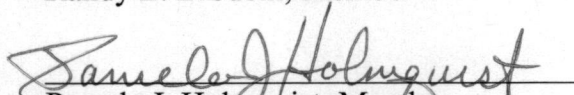
81-6001361

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COMMISSIONER
FLATHEAD COUNTY, MONTANA


Brad W. Abell, Chairman

Not Available for Signature

Randy L. Brodehl, Member


Pamela J. Holmquist, Member



FCBC:dlm

Crisis Assistance Team Program Budget - FY27	
Cost categories	Budget
Salaries	\$ 389,441
Benefits	\$ 156,116
Office supplies	\$ 500
Equipment	\$ 250
Operational Supplies	\$ 400
Clothing Uniforms	\$ 3,000
Vehicle fuel	\$ 8,000
Vehicle maintenance	\$ 2,000
Training supplies/food	\$ 500
Postage	\$ 250
Printing, forms, etc.	\$ 300
Training registration	\$ 300
Employee Training	\$ 2,500
Cell Phone	\$ 3,000
Professional Services	\$ 500
Training / Travel	\$ 3,000
Contracted services / ECW	\$ 17,000
Insurance	\$ 3,000
IT service charge	\$ 2,752
IT transfer to CERF	\$ 1,100
Total	\$ 593,909

Revenues	Budget
Medicad - Billed	\$ 120,960
CDG Reimbursement	\$ 101,318
Total	\$ 222,278