



## CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

### AGENDA ITEM

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Report: Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with The Counseling Team International to establish a Peer Support Program for employees of the Glendale Police Department and Glendale Fire Department.

1. Motion authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to execute an amendment to the Professional Service Agreement between the City of Glendale and The Counseling Team International increasing the amount of the contract by \$45,000.00 over the next four years for a maximum cost of \$670,000.

### COUNCIL ACTION

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**Item Type:** Consent Calendar

**Approved for** March 30, 2021 **calendar**

### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

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**Submitted by:**

Carl Povilaitis, Police Chief  
Silvio Lanzas, Fire Chief

**Prepared by:**

Andrew Jenks, Police Captain  
Shawn Milligan, Police Sergeant

**Reviewed by:**

Michele Flynn, Director of Finance  
Michael J. Garcia, City Attorney

**Approved by:**

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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It is recommended that the City Council authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement between the City of Glendale and The Counseling Team International increasing the maximum cost of the contract by \$45,000.00 to \$670,000 over the next four years for the Glendale Police and Fire Departments to develop a peer support program.

## **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

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First responders experience high levels of physical and mental stress on a regular basis. Repeated exposure to traumatic incidents impact emergency personnel in different ways. In 2019 there were a total of 148 law enforcement line of duty deaths and 48 firefighter line of duty deaths in the United States. In that same year 239 officers and 139 firefighters/paramedics died by suicide. The mental health and emotional wellbeing of our first responders must be a priority.

The City Council recognized this need when it authorized the execution of a Professional Service Agreement with The Counseling Team International (TCTI) on June 18, 2019. The agreement provides all police and fire personnel with confidential counseling services. The agreement's initial term was July 15, 2019 through July 14, 2020. The agreement contains a provision that allows for renewal periods of one year through July 2024. The Police and Fire Departments seek to expand this program by incorporating a peer support program.

A peer support program compliments the services provided by TCTI. The program expands available resources by offering choices to personnel who want to talk with a trained peer supporter. The addition of a peer support program will increase the likelihood that employees will utilize the services for themselves and qualified family members.

Despite the availability of licensed mental health services, some first responders are unwilling to seek professional help and prefer to talk with a trained peer. Having a peer support program gives employees an option to seek assistance at their current level of comfort. Some people are more likely to respond to professional help when the recommendation comes from a trusted peer. A robust peer support program helps create a stigma-free environment where assistance is celebrated.

The state legislature recognized the need for public safety peer support programs in recent legislation. California Assembly Bill Nos. 1116 and 1117 were signed by the Governor and became effective on January 1, 2020. The bills authorize local law enforcement and fire agencies to establish a peer support and crisis referral program comprised of trained peer support representatives who are available to assist fellow employees. The new laws allow for confidentiality with respect to specified communications between a first responder and a peer support team member. However,

in order to be eligible for the confidentiality protections, a peer support team member must complete a training course on peer support. The course may include training on: pre-crisis education, critical incident stress defusing, critical incident stress debriefing, on-scene support services, one-on-one support services, grief support, and active listening skills.

The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training illustrated the importance of over-all officer wellness in their 2020 publication: *De-Escalation - Strategies & Techniques for California Law Enforcement*. The report states:

Today, as policing changes, becomes more sophisticated, and develops to meet contemporary challenges, health, wellness, and emotional intelligence (EI) for law enforcement is substantially important; even life-saving. The President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing highlighted six primary areas of focus surrounding six pillars. The sixth pillar is Officer Wellness and Safety. The Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act of 2017 (LEMHWA) was signed into law in January 2018, recognizing that law enforcement agencies need and deserve support in their ongoing efforts to protect the mental health and wellbeing of their staff. An enlightened organizational culture, quality training, and available stigma-free resources for good mental and psychological health is just as vital as good physical health for law enforcement officers. To enjoy the success and longevity of a quality law enforcement career, officers should consider a holistic approach to wellbeing; the whole package – mind (EI) and body (wellness). (California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, 2020)

In today's climate it is more important than ever that our first responders work toward the goal of wellness and safety. Agencies that utilize peer support programs tend to benefit from the services by providing a way for employees to overcome issues before they negatively impact people's personal lives and job performance. The benefits of such a program include decreased absenteeism, reduced accidents, positive morale, increased productivity, and overall wellbeing of employees.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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The cost for TCTI to establish the peer support program and provide the necessary training is estimated to be \$45,000, with the initial year being \$15,000 and each subsequent year through July 2024 being \$10,000; which increases the maximum contract amount to \$670,000.

There is sufficient funding for the initial year of the peer support program within the current fiscal year's budget for Glendale Police and Fire Departments:

43110-1010-GPD-7002-P6501-T0000-F0000-0000-0000- \$12,010

43110-1010-GFD-4002-P0000-T0000-F0000-0000-0000- \$2,990

Future years funding for the on-going peer support program will be requested during the annual budget process.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

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Alternative 1: The City Council may adopt the motion approving the request of the Glendale Police and Fire Departments to increase the maximum cost of the professional services agreement with TCTI in order to establish a peer support program.

Alternative 2: The City Council may deny the request of the Glendale Police and Fire Departments to amend the professional services agreement and utilize the current contracted services provided by TCTI that do not incorporate the additional services of a peer support program.

Alternative 3: The City Council may consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

## **CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE**

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In accordance with the City Campaign Finance Ordinance No. 5744, the following are the names and business addresses of the members of the board of directors, the chairperson, CEO, COO, CFO, Subcontractors and any person or entity with more than 10% interest in the company proposed for contract in this Agenda Item Report:

Officers of Nancy K. Bohl, Inc. dba The Counseling Team International (TCTI):

Full Name	Title	Business Address	City	State	Zip
Nancy K. Bohl	Director/ President	1881 Business Center Dr. Suites 11 & 12	San Bernardino	CA	92408
Julie Casto Koot	Chief Financial Officer	1881 Business Center Dr. Suites 11 & 12	San Bernardino	CA	92408

## **EXHIBITS**

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None.