

Careline Alaska's requests for additional funds for call center facility and operations

Capital Request: Additional grant to named recipients under DCCED, \$1.5m total to Careline Alaska.

- **\$1m for purchase or leasing of a new facility in Fairbanks.**
 - A new building has already been identified. It is 1,500 square feet larger than their prior facility and will meet need for additional space for the call center, as well as space for mobile crisis teams to co-locate.
- **\$0.5m for retrofitting of the building.**
 - The new building is not currently set up for call center operations.

Fund source: UGF

Background on Careline Alaska: Careline is a statewide call center in AK that has operated since 2005. They are currently the only call center designated as a National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (NSPL) contact center in Alaska. Careline consistently has met the national benchmarks set forth by SAMHSA on resolving crisis calls and connecting individuals to resources in their home community. Previously they operated under a fiscal agent, but they are now stepping out on their own as a 501(c)(3).

The problem:

A few weeks ago, Careline Alaska's only call center in Fairbanks was declared condemned because of a natural disaster. **They are currently operating out of the emergency DV center where 11 people are working in three workspaces.**

In addition to needing a new facility as a result of the old one being destroyed, the call center needs to expand given a projected doubling in volume as a result of both a federal initiative and the implementation of Crisis Now in Alaska.

In working with their evaluator, Vibrant, which has served other suicide hotline members, **Careline anticipates 45,000 calls next year, almost a 100% increase from their recorded 23,000 calls last year.**

Why it matters:

Careline Alaska will be the only network set up to respond to 988 calls, the three-digit number designated in 2020 through the national hotline designation act to be used for mental health crisis. In under 90 days, (on July 16th), 988 will go live and Careline will begin to take these calls. At the same time 988 goes live, the call center will also step into an enhanced role as the "Care Traffic Control Center" for the Crisis Now pilot communities.

To offer some context of the impact of the Crisis Now projects on the contact center: the 911 dispatch center in Anchorage, which is part of APD, is in the process of working with Careline to begin transferring their crisis behavioral health calls (calls that do not require EMS, law enforcement, or fire). The Careline contact center has been told to anticipate 300-500 contacts a month from the APD 9-1-1 call center. The Careline contact center also receives these transfers from the Fairbanks and MatSu 9-1-1 call centers. Congruently, as part of Crisis Now implementation, Careline will step into the role of acting as a central dispatch point for mobile crisis teams across the state.

Currently, Careline Alaska has no other fund sources available to them outside what they receive from the state.

Contacts:

Susanna Marchuk, Executive Director, Careline Crisis Services

O: (907) 452-2771

C: (907) 347-0318

executivedirector@akcci.org

Megan Holland

Chief of Staff to Rep. Spohnholz

O: (907) 465-2696

Megan.holland@akleg.gov