

1 Sponsored by: Councilmember Dave Morell

2 Requested by: County Council

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4 **RESOLUTION NO. R2020-20**

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6 **A Resolution of the Pierce County Council Requesting the Regional System**
7 **of Care Committee Deliver to the Council by October 1, 2020,**
8 **a Strategic Plan for Behavioral Health System Improvements**
9 **to Inform Future Behavioral Health Tax Expenditures;**
10 **Specifying the Council’s Intent to Act on an Ordinance**
11 **Imposing a Behavioral Health Tax No Later than**
12 **December 31, 2020.**

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14 **Whereas**, in 2016 the Council commissioned a report from the Human Services
15 Research Institute (HSRI) to identify the County’s behavioral health needs, catalog
16 available behavioral health resources and gaps, and provide general recommendations
17 on how to improve the behavioral health system in Pierce County; and

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19 **Whereas**, the 2016 HSRI report recommended Pierce County improve its
20 behavioral health infrastructure by establishing a central coordinating body, supporting
21 current efforts to enhance and integrate provider data systems, developing system
22 metrics to track progress on key goals, conducting further data-driven assessments of
23 need and access, and ensuring a culturally competent and trauma-informed system;
24 and

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26 **Whereas**, the 2016 HSRI report acknowledged that the report was “only one step
27 in Pierce County’s assessment and analysis efforts” that could serve as “the basis for
28 future planning efforts”; and

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30 **Whereas**, in 2017 Pierce County began transitioning to an integrated service
31 delivery model where physical and behavioral healthcare for Medicaid recipients are
32 provided through a single, coordinated system; and

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34 **Whereas**, the Pierce County Integration and Oversight Board was established to
35 oversee and support providers and county partners in the transition from the previous
36 behavioral health organization model to an integrated system; and

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38 **Whereas**, in 2018 HSRI completed an addendum to its previous report that
39 found “[t]he most promising starting point for the central coordinating body is the Pierce
40 County Integration and Oversight Board” because it involves key entities who are
41 “undertaking considerable work that aligns closely with the HSRI recommendations”;
42 and



1 **Whereas**, the Regional System of Care Committee is a subcommittee of the
2 Pierce County Integration and Oversight Board that includes representation from mental
3 health providers, managed care organizations, the Health Care Authority, crisis system-
4 justice system administrative service organizations (Beacon), Elevate Health
5 Accountable Communities of Health, substance use disorder providers, pediatric
6 behavioral health and physical care providers, physical health providers, and Pierce
7 County; and

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9 **Whereas**, the Regional System of Care Committee also receives input from first
10 responders, tribal communities, workforce development advocates, long-term care
11 providers, justice-related service providers, affordable housing developers, federally
12 qualified health centers, peer to peer service providers and medical providers for the
13 developmentally disabled; and

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15 **Whereas**, the Regional System of Care Committee is well-suited to develop a
16 strategic plan for behavioral health system improvements because of its superior
17 access to data, expertise, and resources; and

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19 **Whereas**, proposed Ordinance No. 2020-24s would impose a new sales and use
20 tax on Pierce County residents prior to having a specific plan for how the money is to be
21 spent, what outcomes are expected, and how performance will be measured; and

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23 **Whereas**, imposing a new tax without a specific and fiscally responsible plan
24 undermines public confidence and risks the uncoordinated expenditure of behavioral
25 health resources, including by local municipalities; and

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27 **Whereas**, the Council finds that Pierce County residents need expanded access
28 to behavioral health services; and

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30 **Whereas**, the Council intends to raise additional revenues for these purposes
31 once it is convinced the money will be spent efficiently and effectively; **Now Therefore**,

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33 **BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of Pierce County:**

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35 Section 1. The Council hereby requests the Pierce County Integration and
36 Oversight Board Regional System of Care Committee prepare and submit to the
37 Council by October 1, 2020, a strategic plan for behavioral health system improvements
38 that would, if implemented, efficiently and effectively expend revenues projected to be
39 raised by the behavioral health and therapeutic courts tax authorized under RCW
40 82.14.460 by, at minimum:



- 1 A. Clearly articulating goals, objectives, and action steps that prioritize areas for
- 2 short-, medium-, and long-term change; and
- 3 B. Identifying relevant performance and outcome measures for specific objects
- 4 of expenditure, with an emphasis on accountability, key implementation
- 5 milestones, and measurable results; and
- 6 C. Prioritizing implementation steps based on cost-effectiveness; and
- 7 D. Maximizing the impact of county-directed spending by leveraging non-county
- 8 resources where possible; and
- 9 E. Identifying improvements to system oversight and governance, including
- 10 opportunities for ongoing engagement by the Pierce County Council and
- 11 Pierce County Human Services Department.

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13 Representatives from the Regional System of Care Committee are requested to provide
14 periodic updates to the Council during the development of this strategic plan.

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16 Section 2. Where relevant, the strategic plan referenced in Section 1 should
17 incorporate the Council's policy goals to:

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- 19 1. Reduce the number, time, and rate of avoidable behavioral health crises; and
- 20 2. Ensure broad access to treatment for Pierce County residents in both urban and
- 21 rural communities, regardless of the type of health insurance coverage or lack
- 22 thereof; and
- 23 3. Prioritize especially vulnerable populations, particularly youth and veterans; and
- 24 4. Divert adults and youth with behavioral health needs from costly interventions
- 25 (e.g., emergency rooms, hospitals, jails, police, EMS, etc.) to more appropriate
- 26 services; and
- 27 5. Reduce rates of substance use morbidity and mortality; and
- 28 6. Reduce rates of suicide and other self-harm; and
- 29 7. Link and leverage programs and services; and
- 30 8. Provide trauma-informed, culturally competent services.

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32 Section 3. The Council intends to review and endorse the strategic plan
33 referenced in Section 1 prior to imposing any new taxes for behavioral health.

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35 Section 4. The Council intends to act on an ordinance imposing the behavioral
36 health and therapeutic courts sales and use tax authorized under RCW 82.14.460 no
37 later than December 31, 2020.



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Section 5. The Council Clerk is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to the Regional System of Care Committee, Director of Human Services, and the Executive.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2020.

ATTEST:

PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL
Pierce County, Washington

Denise D. Johnson
Clerk of the Council

Douglas G. Richardson
Council Chair

