

[MENTAL HEALTH](#)

Boston Reveals How It Will Change Police Response to Mental Health Crises

"These pilot investments will connect residents and their families with the care they need as we bring more safety, justice, and healing to Boston neighborhoods," Boston Mayor Kim Janey said

By [Asher Klein](#) • Published August 5, 2021 • Updated on August 5, 2021 at 7:13 pm

Medical and mental health professionals as well as community members will be more involved in responding to mental health crises in Boston under a pilot program announced by Mayor Kim Janey Thursday.

Starting immediately, teams of emergency medical technicians and mental health workers can be sent to 911 calls citywide for mental health crises that don't pose a safety risk, the city said.

Two other response methods will debut later: more standardized deployment of dedicated teams of police officers and mental health workers to mental health crises that pose a safety risk downtown and in Charlestown and Roxbury, to begin in September, as well as a response in which trained people with experience in the community, to be developed with the community this year.

"I am proud to launch a pilot program that reimagines how we respond to mental health calls," Janey said in a statement. "These pilot investments will connect residents and their families with the care they need as we bring more safety, justice, and healing to Boston neighborhoods."

She had [announced the pilot program](#) was under development in April, as part of a larger push for police reform in Boston to bring more accountability and transparency. Other investments announced at the time included expanding the police cadet program by 50%, adding "20 new diverse officers to the police force," and reviewing allegations against police officers for policies the department has "discontinued due to disparate impacts on officers of color," Janey said, noting the need to "reimagine how we respond to violence in our city."

Boston Mayor Kim Janey is ready to put \$1 million towards an agency tackling police reform.

Last year, more than 10,000 911 calls for mental health crises were made in Boston, according to the city, with Dorchester, Roxbury and the South End having the highest call volumes, as well as higher overall call volumes.

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