



**Committee:** Directly to Council  
**Committee Review:** N/A  
**Staff:** Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst  
**Purpose:** To introduce agenda item – no vote expected  
**Keywords:** #crisis prevention, #hotline

AGENDA ITEM #40  
November 30, 2021  
**Introduction**

---

## SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the County's Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Behavioral Health and Crisis Prevention, Crisis Prevention & Intervention Services-Montgomery County Hotline, \$350,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves) and Amendment to Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget Resolution 19-872, Section G, FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award Status: EveryMind

## EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Introduction – no Council vote is expected.

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The County Council will introduce a special appropriation of \$350,000 from County General Fund Reserves to the DHHS FY22 Operating Budget and designate a non-competitive contract award to EveryMind to maintain current Hotline staffing levels and service and prepare for the transition of the National Suicide Prevention Line to 9-8-8.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- In Fiscal Year 2022, the Council appropriated increased funding of \$350,000 to the DHHS base budget to support expanded Hotline services that were previously supported with federal CARES Act and one-time private funds through December 2021.
- The higher level of staffing supported by this funding addressed the increase in call volume experienced by the Hotline during the pandemic and provided for additional hours for text and chat services. This funding allowed EveryMind to field a 33% increase in the number of calls answered from Fiscal Year 2020 to Fiscal Year 2021.
- For Fiscal Year 2022, the Council provided partial year funding to provide DHHS and EveryMind to determine the appropriate level of the service and funding needed for the Hotline in the context of improvements to the County's crisis response system and other changes to crisis call services at the state and national levels. Thus, the Council anticipated coming back mid-year to

make an additional appropriation to support Hotline services through the second half of Fiscal Year 2022.

- This appropriation is needed to provide supportive listening, information and resource referrals, and crisis intervention to individuals in crisis. It will allow EveryMind to maintain the current level of services through the second half of Fiscal Year 2022 and to prepare for the transition of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to 9-8-8, which change is expected to triple the call/contact volume. Without this funding Hotline would need to reduce staffing to pre-pandemic levels, which would result in a corresponding reduction in the program's answer rate.
- The resolution also amends Resolution 19-872, Section G, FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Award Status to add funding to the contract with EveryMind with the purpose to "provide confidential, supportive mental health hotline for County residents and a youth suicide prevention hotline."
- Public Hearing and action are scheduled for December 14, 2021

**This report contains:**

Proposed Resolution

© 1-3

**Alternative format requests for people with disabilities.** If you need assistance accessing this report you may [submit alternative format requests](#) to the ADA Compliance Manager. The ADA Compliance Manager can also be reached at 240-777-6197 (TTY 240-777-6196) or at [adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Resolution No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Introduced: \_\_\_\_\_  
Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

---

Lead Sponsors: Council Vice-President Albornoz and Councilmembers Friedson and Jawando

---

**SUBJECT:** Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Behavioral Health and Crisis Prevention  
Crisis Prevention & Intervention Services-Montgomery County Hotline  
\$350,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves) and  
Amendment to Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget Resolution 19-872  
Section G, FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive  
Contract Award Status: EveryMind

**Background**

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization declared coronavirus COVID-19 a pandemic, and it has spread rapidly throughout the world. As of November 22, 2021, there were 84,443 confirmed cases in Montgomery County. There were 1,678 confirmed deaths and 52 probable deaths in Montgomery County.
3. Since the State of Emergency was declared in Maryland on March 5, 2020, there have been various restrictions imposed to slow transmission of the disease including closing schools and non-essential businesses; masking, distancing, and limiting congregation in indoor spaces; and vaccination and testing requirements. Because of these restrictions, many county residents have been challenged with unemployment or significantly reduced work and income, difficulty meeting basic needs, such as food and housing, increased family tensions, and feelings of alienation and isolation. Consequently, mental health supports have been in great demand by County residents struggling with COVID-19

related challenges.

4. EveryMind's Montgomery County Hotline (Hotline) provides supportive listening, information and resource referrals, and crisis intervention (including suicide assessments) through telephone, text, and chat services, and has supported County residents expressing increased stress and anxiety due to the virus as well as significant loneliness and isolation as a result of the need to quarantine and social distance.
5. The Council appropriated \$395,000 in federal CARES Act and local County funding of on July 28, 2020 to address increased call volume experienced by the Hotline during the pandemic and add additional hours for text and chat services. The funding supported increased staffing and higher level of service through December 2020. After the calendar year ended, EveryMind pieced together one-time contributions and grants to continue the higher level of service through the end of Fiscal Year 2021. This funding allowed EveryMind to double-staff the Hotline during the busiest shifts and resulted in a 33% increase in the number of calls answered from Fiscal Year 2020 to Fiscal Year 2021.
6. Because EveryMind was not able to sustain private funding levels from Fiscal Year 2021 into Fiscal Year 2022, the Council appropriated \$350,000 to support the program. The funding was intended to support services through December 2021 to provide the opportunity to determine the appropriate level of the service and funding needed for the Hotline in the context of improvements to the County's crisis response system and other changes to crisis call services at the state and national levels.
7. The EveryMind Hotline answers the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, which will transition to 9-8-8 on July 16, 2022 and is an integral part of the crisis response continuum. More than 90% of contacts to the Hotline are resolved without the need for Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, Crisis Center, Fire and Rescue, or Police intervention. The Hotline also receives calls transferred from non-emergency police lines. With the change to 9-8-8, EveryMind anticipates a three-fold increase in the volume of contacts.
8. Funding to maintain a higher level of service from EveryMind's Montgomery County Hotline is needed for individuals in crisis. This appropriation is needed to maintain the current level of services through the second half of Fiscal Year 2022 and to prepare for the transition to 9-8-8. Without this funding Hotline would need to reduce staffing to pre-pandemic levels, which would result in a corresponding reduction in the program's call answer rate.
9. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

### Action

A special appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government, Department of Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Crisis Services, in the amount of \$350,000 is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Expense</u>	<u>Operating Expense</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Source TOTAL of Funds</u>
\$0	\$350,000	\$0	General Fund Reserves

The funding appropriated in this resolution must be added to a noncompetitive agreement with EveryMind to maintain Montgomery County Hotline staffing and services at current levels and prepare for the transition to 9-8-8.

This resolution amends Resolution 19-872, Section G, FY21 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Award Status to add funding to the contract with EveryMind with the purpose to "provide confidential, supportive mental health hotline for County residents and a youth suicide prevention hotline" in the amount of \$350,000.

This appropriation is needed to address a public health emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

---

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.  
Clerk of the Council