

# Business Case for Community-Based Crisis Management in Georgia

## Advocacy Talking Points

The Georgia Senate Appropriations Committee approved **\$409 MILLION** for a new 300-bed mental health hospital, particularly for those with mental health support needs who have entered the prison system. Next, the budget goes to the House Appropriations Committee for approval or amendment. While crisis infrastructure matters, we must also invest in solutions that prevent crises and reduce long-term costs.

Now is the time for UnlockGA members to contact state legislators to help them understand why they need to focus on investing in increasing NOW/COMP Waivers that help people before they go into crisis, rather than costly facility-based supports for after crisis happens.

If you don't know who your legislator is, you can use this resource from GCDD to find your legislator's contact information!

[https://gcdd.org/images/2025/advocacy\\_days\\_2025/Finding-our-State-Legislator.pdf](https://gcdd.org/images/2025/advocacy_days_2025/Finding-our-State-Legislator.pdf)

Building facilities is the most expensive and least cost-effective way to grow crisis infrastructure in Georgia. They are an inefficient band-aid that fails to address the root cause of needed mental health infrastructure throughout the community-based service system.

It is estimated that up to 40% of people who are jailed due to behavioral health incidents may also have developmental disabilities, meaning unmet IDD needs are driving higher corrections and emergency system costs. Moving people from jails to facilities means long-term incarceration for people with IDD who have entered the prison system due to inadequate mental health supports.

Community-based NOW/COMP waivers cost significantly less per person than institutional or jail-based care. Funding **at least 1,217 waivers at \$132 million** is a strategic investment that reduces emergency room visits, law enforcement involvement, incarceration, and psychiatric hospitalization. In the long run, prevention costs less than crisis response and produces better outcomes for families and communities.

Investing in community support keeps dollars in local economies by funding provider agencies, creating DSP jobs, stabilizing the disability services workforce, and helping families remain in the workforce and contribute to their local economies (instead of staying home to support their loved ones).

**Georgia needs to invest in stability for people who need supports in their communities rather than facility-based institutionalization.**

