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Cerro Gordo County Launches Community Crisis Response Team

(Mason City, IA)— A powerful new partnership is reshaping emergency response in Cerro Gordo County. The Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT), launched in 2025, brings together law enforcement, fire, behavioral health, and social service agencies to respond to 911 calls involving mental health, substance use and emotional distress.

This group built specialized teams made up of behavioral health professionals to provide rapid response to 911 calls involving behavioral health crises. On-site care will focus on de-escalation, support and connection to services rather than alternatives like hospitalization or arrest. “This effort will reduce strain in police, paramedics and other traditional first responders while helping individuals in crisis get the right kind of help, faster,” said Carl Ginapp, Cerro Gordo County Supervisor and 43 North Iowa Board member.

Led by Cerro Gordo Public Health, the coalition includes a Cerro Gordo County Supervisor, Mason City Police Department, Cerro Gordo County Sheriff & 911 Dispatch, Prairie Ridge, 43 North Iowa, and the Mason City Fire and Rescue. “In my previous work, I witnessed firsthand how individuals in crisis often lacked timely access to appropriate support. With opioid settlement funding available and the partnerships in this community, I recognized a critical opportunity to build a rapid-response system that could meet those needs directly in the community,” added Ginapp.

Funded by local grants and Cerro Gordo County’s opioid settlement allocation, the CCRT operates daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., with plans to expand to 24/7 coverage. This marks a major step toward a more integrated, compassionate emergency response system for Cerro Gordo County.

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