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Acton Police Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Acton Police Department Receives Grant to Hire Mental Health Clinician

ACTON – Chief Richard Burrows and Town Manager John Mangiaratti are pleased to announce that the Acton Police Department has received a multi-year grant to improve the way the Department serves those with mental health or substance use challenges.

The grant, funded by the state Department of Mental Health, will help Acton Police establish its own Jail/Arrest Diversion Program. **The grant will provide \$84,500 in the first year, and \$XX,XXX in subsequent years.**

The bulk of the funding will be used to hire a clinician, who will be an Acton Police Department employee. The Police Department has shared clinician services with eight other departments for the past five years.

“Participating in a regional, shared Diversion Program showed the Town the need and value of pursuing an independent, full-time model,” Chief Burrows said. “The community has identified the need for clinical expertise within public safety, and recognized that our Department plays a vital role in delivering behavioral health support.”

The clinician will:

- Partner with police officers to provide resources, support and assistance to those struggling with substance use and mental health challenges;
- Respond when police are called to incidents involving substance use and/or mental health;
- Follow up after those incidents to connect those individuals with resources and programming;
- Train officers for improved and more consistent responses on mental health calls;
- Serve as the Department's conduit to organizations that provide community-based substance misuse and mental health services;
- Use existing links with community resources for different cultural groups in the Town, ensuring the program is culturally competent, accessible, and equitable to all.

The Acton Police Department adopted the One Mind Campaign, supported by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. Through the campaign, departments pledge to implement practices to improve mental health programming, training, and procedures.

"Mental health and substance misuse calls are among the most challenging calls to which our officers respond," Chief Burrows said. "This grant will help us better respond to these calls, and improve how we can connect people to the resources they need."

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