



Virginia Department of Behavioral Health
and Developmental Services

Playbook for Building a Crisis Site



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Crisis Site Definitions

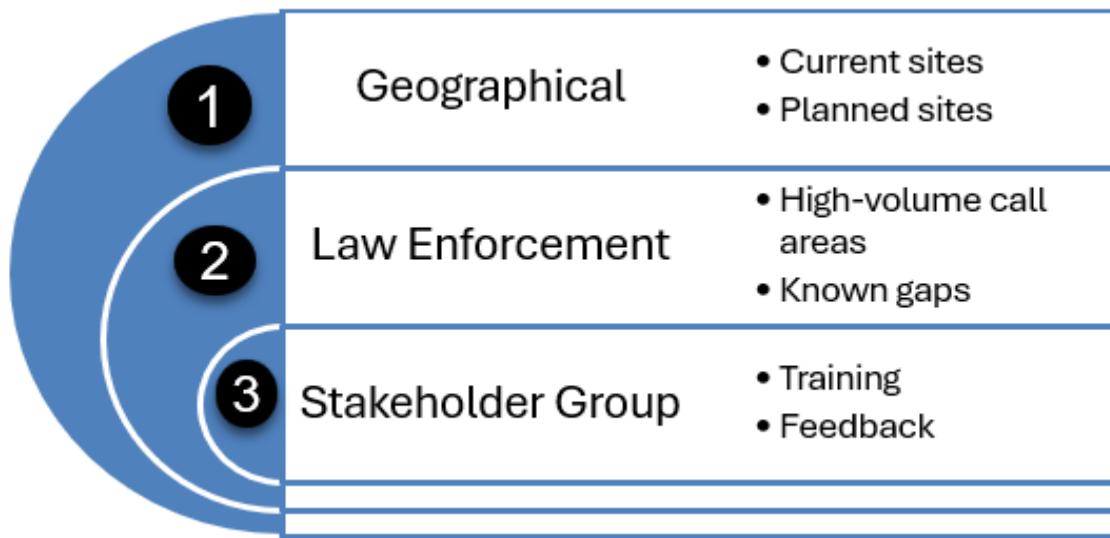
A **Crisis Receiving Center** (CRC or “23-Hour”) provides ongoing assessment, crisis intervention, and clinical determination of the level of care for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Services are offered for up to **23 hours** in a non-hospital, community-based crisis stabilization setting. CRCs may be co-located with other services, such as Crisis Stabilization Units.

A **Crisis Stabilization Unit** (CSU) is a residential service that is available 24/7 to provide short-term assessment, crisis intervention, and care coordination for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis. These services include advocacy and networking to connect individuals and their support systems with appropriate community-based services and resources, helping them access any benefits or assistance programs for which they may be eligible.

A **Crisis Therapeutic Home** (CTH) is a residential crisis stabilization component of the Regional Education Assessment Crisis Services Habilitation (REACH) program. It is intended for situations where community-based crisis services are ineffective or clinically inappropriate. A CTH is not meant for long-term residence or respite; instead, it provides stabilization for individuals in crisis, planned prevention, or as a step-down from state hospitals, training centers, or jails. Priority is given to crisis admissions over planned prevention or step-down admissions.

Research, Assess and Determine your Needs

In order to determine the type of crisis site most suitable for your community, first conduct research to assist in revealing any existing gaps within the system of your region. Three examples of items to include in your research would be:



1. **Geographical:** Information regarding current and planned crisis sites within your respective region, including physical address and service type of each listed site. Contact crisis_services@dbhds.virginia.gov for available information.
2. **Law Enforcement:** Information from local law enforcement agencies about their crisis calls and areas with existing gaps of services.
3. **Stakeholder Group:** Feedback from local committees covering crisis prevention or intervention trainings.

Location Pre-requisites

Once a service/type of site has been selected, there are pre-requisites that must be met in order to determine a location.

1. Physical Pre-requisites include:

- Meets the needs of the proposed program and complies with all regulatory requirements
- Area is non-residential and close to a populated commercial location
- Hospital or other supportive services are nearby.

2. Land Pre-requisites include:

- Enough land for the building and parking to accommodate the service
- Property is accessible from the road

3. Building (structure) Pre-requisites include:

- Enough space to accommodate and support the various needs outlined below:

a. Guest Spaces

- Space and square footage for chairs or beds, based on the service provided
- Adequate calming/private space

b. Clinical Spaces

- Employee workspaces
- Private guest interview spaces

c. Medical Spaces

- Nursing station
- Medication and medical supplies

d. Hygiene Spaces

- Appropriate number of toilets and showers based on service and capacity; Must meet licensing standards

e. Food Service

- Kitchen that meets VDH licensing standards
- Alternate food service and snack options to accommodate allergies

Operational Pre-requisites

After meeting location pre-requisites, operational pre-requisites should be met to ensure a smooth and successful opening for your site. It is also recommended to establish operational goals to ensure your expectations for the site are clear to your stakeholders.

1. Licensing Pre-requisites include:

- Completion of required licensing items needed, including those for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), Virginia Code, the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), as outlined in the [Checklist of Required Licensing Items](#), located at the bottom of the page.

2. Staffing Pre-requisites include:

- Enough staff to support full coverage of operation hours as required by the service
- Labor-sharing agreements in place to eliminate potential gaps in service

3. Supplies Pre-requisites include:

- Furnishings for both medical and guest offices
- Equipment for medical and technological needs

Resources:

1. Checklist of required licensing items needed:

- ✓ DBHDS: [Crisis-Service-Applications-Information-and-Timeframes.pdf](#)
- ✓ VA Code: [Rules and Regulations](#)
- ✓ VA Code: [Rules and Regulations-Crisis Services](#)
- ✓ DMAS: [Provider Enrollment & Revalidation | Virginia Medicaid](#)
- ✓ DMAS: [Provider Manual-Comprehensive Crisis Services](#)
- ✓ VDH: [Applying for a Food Permit](#)

Progress Reporting

An integrated crisis continuum of services is truly greater than the sum of its parts. As you develop your prospective site, it is encouraged that you email monthly progress updates to DBHDS, at CrisisSiteBuildout@dbhds.virginia.gov.

These updates help prepare us for upcoming site inspections and, more importantly, to facilitate smooth integration of your program into the broader system by informing Community Services Boards and other crisis providers about planned service expansions occurring within their respective regions.

In your report, please include the following details to assist us:

- Site Name/Address
- Referral Source, Date/Time, and Type
- Indication of ER Medical Care Deferment
- Admitted, or reason if not admitted
- Admission Date/Time
- Indication of Readmission
- ID/DD status
- Indication of Step-down from a State Hospital
- Indication of Discharge, and if so, Discharge Date/Time, and Type
- Indication of Withdrawal Management, and if so, Drug Category

Helpful Resources

[Crisis Resource Need Calculator](#)

[Home - National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors](#)

[Home - Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program](#)

[NAMI Virginia: Mental Health Support, Education & Resources](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\) | Mental Health Support, Education & Advocacy](#)