



Justin Elicker
Mayor

CITY OF NEW HAVEN

COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



May 12, 2026

Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers
President, Board of Alders
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

Dear Honorable President Walker-Myers,

The Department of Community Resilience requests approval to enter into an agreement with Continuum of Care, Inc to continue operations of the Elm City COMPASS Community Responder Program.

Elm City COMPASS is a comprehensive, community-based initiative to build a system of sustainable supports for individuals in New Haven experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis and was first launched in November 2022.

This request is to fund the COMPASS community responder program staffed by Continuum of Care from July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 in an amount not exceeding \$1,270,000 with three (3) options to renew for a 12-month term each. The community responder team is integral to our crisis response system in New Haven and so continued funding at current staffing levels is critical to the future sustainability of the overall program. The team operates 7 days a week from 8 AM – 3 AM.

Elm City COMPASS Community Responder Program has had a hugely positive impact in New Haven summarized below:

- Completion of over 4,240 crisis responses under current staffing levels of 3 shifts, with about half of responses made to 911 emergency calls and half to targeted outreach; 5% of 911 emergency calls are direct response by the team only.
- Ongoing targeted outreach to the New Haven Green, Union Station, public library branches, encampments, shelters and warming centers, and City hotspots where this is open drug use to engage individuals and provide support and access to services.
- Support to homeless service providers in registering unhoused individuals with the Coordinated Access Network (CAN), a database managed by region and coordinated statewide, so individuals are eligible for housing.
- Transports of individuals in crisis to shelters, warming centers, essential services, and REST – New Haven's new crisis stabilization center run by Continuum of Care.
- Additional information about the team is available at www.elmcitycompass.org.

NEW HAVEN IT ALL HAPPENS HERE

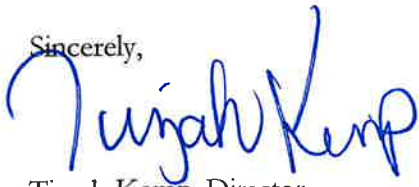
165 Church Street, 2nd Floor - New Haven, CT 06510
www.newhavenct.gov
(203) 946-7846

Continuum of Care, Inc has hired, staffed, and supervised the COMPASS team since its launch in November 2022, working first under a subcontract through Yale University and then starting FY26 directly contracted with the city.

This matter is time-sensitive and respectfully requires prompt consideration. The request could not be submitted earlier because the City first needed to confirm funding availability. Now that this review has been completed, we are submitting the request as soon as possible to avoid delays and to allow the work to proceed within the necessary timeframe.

We believe that the continuation of the Elm City COMPASS team is vital to the health of our city and that enter directly into this agreement with Continuum of Care, Inc advances our shared goal of ensuring the sustainability of the program for the coming years. We look forward to providing more details to you and your colleagues and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tirzah Kemp". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tirzah" and last name "Kemp" clearly distinguishable.

Tirzah Kemp, Director
Department of Community Resilience