

**WHATCOM COUNTY
EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE**
County Courthouse
311 Grand Ave. Suite #108
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Jack Louws
County Executive

Crisis Stabilization Facility Groundbreaking Set for September 30

For Immediate Release, September 23, 2019 -- BELLINGHAM, WA

On September 30, Whatcom County officials will break ground on an expanded Crisis Stabilization Facility for Whatcom County. The new 24,450 square foot space will more than double the capacity of the current facility and expands the range of behavioral health services available to those in need of acute care.

Construction of the facility has been made possible by a \$7 million allocation from the Washington State Department of Commerce. The North Sound Behavioral Health Organization, which oversees crisis services in the northwest Washington region, contributed an additional \$2.5 million to the project. Whatcom County's Behavioral Health Fund provided an additional \$3 million to the project.

The current [Crisis Stabilization Facility](#) has five beds to serve clients with acute mental health concerns and eight beds for substance use withdrawal services. The expanded facility will have 16 beds for mental health services and 16 beds for withdrawal services. The new facility will also provide medically monitored acute substance withdrawal services for clients with potential complications associated with withdrawal.

Expanding the current Crisis Stabilization Facility was identified as a key priority by the Whatcom County [Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force](#). The increased capacity at the facility will enable law enforcement to offer alternatives to arrest and incarceration by better linking individuals in need to appropriate behavioral health care. It will also reduce the number of individuals in crisis who seek treatment at PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center's emergency department, with the added result of cost-savings for the community.

The Crisis Stabilization Facility offers voluntary services to adults experiencing acute mental health or substance use challenges and helps them restore and stabilize their health. In addition to managing immediate crises, the Facility provides other behavioral health services such as medication-assisted withdrawal and connection to community services and is often a first step into the coordinated continuum of behavioral health care provided by many local agencies.

Whatcom County Crisis Stabilization Facility Groundbreaking Ceremony

Date: Monday, September 30, 2019 at 3:30pm, program to begin at 3:45 p.m.

Location: 2026 Division Street, Bellingham, WA

Speakers: Whatcom County Executive Jack Louws, Whatcom County Councilmember Barry Buchanan, Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force Co-chair Jack Hovenier, Whatcom County Health Department Human Services Manager Anne Deacon

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