



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

## Mayor Barlow announces Oswego Police to hire Mental Health Clinician within Department

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OSWEGO – Mayor Barlow announced today the Oswego Police Department will now have a Mental Health Clinician as part of its police force. First announced in Mayor Barlow’s State of the City Address back in January, Barlow says embedding a mental health clinician within the department is an innovative approach to addressing mental health disorder and substance use disorder in our community and serves to reduce law enforcement contact and emergency hospitalization of those within our community living with mental health disorders and/or co-occurring substance use disorders, increase connection to behavioral health services and substance use treatment, and other services within the community.

The initiative was finally given the green light to be implemented thanks to funding secured from the Richard S. Shineman Foundation in the amount of \$75,000 as well as anticipated funding secured through Senator Mannion’s Office in the amount of \$100,000 to support the implementation of an embedded mental health clinician within the Oswego City Police Department.

“The embedded clinician will respond on-scene to assist our officers and provide crisis intervention, while also analyzing police department data related to calls for service, incident reports, arrests, and mental hygiene transports to help proactively follow-up and assist individuals within our community,” said Mayor Billy Barlow. “I am tremendously grateful to the Richard S. Shineman Foundation and Senator John Mannion for securing this funding to make this initiative a reality,” Barlow said.

The Oswego City Police Department has observed a considerable increase in the number of mental health related calls for service that officers have responded to within a three year period and the City of Oswego recognizes the critical need to provide additional support to our officers, to help further the well-being and safety of our community.

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*Senator John W. Mannion said, “this \$100,000 state grant to embed a mental health professional with the Oswego Police Department will enhance public safety while improving access to mental health services. Officers will now be able to quickly access the expertise that can de-escalate situations and provide appropriate care to individuals in crisis. I commend Mayor Barlow and the City of Oswego for this innovative approach to public safety and for their partnership with my office in securing these dollars.”*

The funding secured will support the placement of a full-time embedded mental health clinician within the Oswego City Police Department to work with our officers and develop crisis response plans to assist those within our community living with mental health disorders and co-occurring mental health substance use disorders, who have high rates of contact with emergency services.

This welcome addition also further promotes the building of strong social bonds between law enforcement, mental health professionals, and the community. By fostering understanding, trust, and empathy between these groups, creating a more connected and

cohesive community. This collaborative effort with an intersection of law enforcement and mental health professionals will allow for the maximization of resources, knowledge, and expertise, making both officers and embedded clinician more effective in addressing community needs.