

## Mental Health Services and Alternative Care

The creation of Chatham County's Behavioral Health Unit is of paramount importance in addressing the growing need for compassionate, effective response to mental and behavioral health crises.

Since the start of the pandemic, Chatham County has been experiencing an increased volume of calls for non-violent persons experiencing mental and behavioral illness. The impact is felt among many first responders and service providers in the community, including dispatch, paramedics, law enforcement, and emergency rooms.

### POLICE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH UNIT

Chatham's strategy is to:

- ~ INCREASE the number of Chatham County's first responders who have Crisis Intervention Training
- ~ TRAIN first responders and dispatchers on new processes and tools designed to assist officers in diffusing and diversion
- ~ ALLOW a follow-up capability to ensure that individuals stay connected to care and treatment

Behavioral  
Health Unit  
essentials:

- ~ Data sharing
- ~ Data tracking
- ~ Legal Guidance



# CHATHAM COUNTY

For more information on this project,  
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# Heading up Chatham's Behavioral Health Unit, CPL. HIRAM RIVERA

**“Mental illness isn’t a crime, and we don’t want to criminalize those who are having underlying issues with mental health.”**



**“The BHU is designed to follow up and provide connectivity to resources for individuals who are suicidal, addicted to drugs or alcohol, or who have the types of disorders that are affecting their day to day activity.”**

