

Crisis Template - Data & Technology Requirements

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (“WASPC”) is administering a mental health field response grant program for their member law enforcement agencies, created by Washington State Legislature under HB 2892.SL. The goal of the grant is to “assist local law enforcement agencies to establish and expand mental health field response capabilities, utilizing mental health professionals to professionally, humanely, and safely respond to crises involving persons with behavioral health issues with treatment, diversion, and reduced incarceration time as primary goals.”

RideAlong Labs, Inc. (“RideAlong”) is a technology company focused on providing vulnerable populations with the best possible resources by equipping those serving them with real-time information in the field. RideAlong believes that providing this information responsibly and safely, while simultaneously protecting the person’s privacy, will lead to better long-term outcomes. RideAlong has experience working with multiple law enforcement agencies in Washington State, including integrating with their existing legacy software systems.

WASPC is partnering with RideAlong to provide the Crisis Template and Admin Dashboard to WASPC and all Grantee Agencies under HB 2892.SL for the duration of the initial grant. Through the grant, the Crisis Template and Admin Dashboard will allow each Grantee Agency to collect and view data for their individual agencies. Each Grantee Agency will be able to view their own data, but not that of other Grantee Agencies. The tool will also allow WASPC to view the data collected in the app for all Grantee Agencies at the aggregate level, with no personally identifiable information. This will support WASPC with assessing the efficacy of the programs and getting a holistic picture of how calls involving mental illness affect different agencies.

Data Collection Tool

Many departments collect little or no data about 911 calls that involve someone experiencing a mental health or chemical dependency crisis. This lack of information creates a blind spot when addressing the sensitive and dynamic nature of these calls. By addressing underreporting with basic data collection, law enforcement agencies can understand how many 911 calls involve mental health, what happens on these calls, how officers generally respond to specific behaviors, and how resources are being used on the calls.

The data collection tool that RideAlong and WASPC are jointly developing for the grant will help to bridge these gaps in knowledge – enabling data-driven decisions. The data collected includes:

- Observed subject behaviors exhibited during the call
- Weapons (if any) present on the call
- Actions / techniques used by the officer
- Training of the officers on the scene
- Disposition of the call (specific to calls with individuals experiencing mental illness), such as arrest or referral to a service provider

Technical Requirements

Required Fields from Local Agency's Database

To minimize officer effort and save time, the data collection tool is designed so that officers only fill out key components about the call (behaviors, action taken, disposition, etc.). Often, police officers are interacting with the same people experiencing mental illness on multiple incidents. This existing data means we can help officers confirm the person's identity and populate that information for them – removing unnecessary data entry.

With the data collection tool, officers start typing a name and have the system prompt them to autocomplete the name and basic information for the right person. To ensure accurate data collection and a good officer experience, we need to retrieve this information from the local agency's structured database. (This should be standard for any records management system, aka RMS, system.) The basic amount of information from your RMS database includes:

- First name, last name, middle initial, aliases
- Date of birth, sex, race
- Height, weight, Hair color, eye color
- Scars, marks, and tattoos
- Veteran status (if kept)

User Authentication

The most secure and straightforward way for agencies to authenticate users is to enable single sign-on (SSO). This allows officers to be automatically signed into the app when they log into the computer, mobile data computer/terminal (MDC/MDT), or smartphone with their existing login credentials. Single sign-on has the added benefit of allowing agencies to more easily control who has access to the app through their central system, automatically updating new hires, etc.

RideAlong works with the local agency to match the existing sign-in protocol, including using SSO. Our current customers use ActiveDirectory as their single sign-on provider, using SAML. We work with departments to implement single sign-on using their preferred SSO provider, or to create a different authentication system based on their technical systems.

Integration Process

We work to make the integration as painless as possible for existing departments. We have experience integrating with multiple legacy systems. Our integration process includes:

1. Ensuring that the required data fields listed above are present in the RMS system
2. Setting up the single sign-on integration
3. Working with us to set-up the virtual appliance that sends the required fields
4. Adding your agency to our existing infrastructure

This is a fairly lightweight process and can be done in 2-4 weeks.