



Missoula Public Library Social Work Program

FY26 Executive Summary

In just 10 months (September 2025–June 2026), the Missoula Public Library Social Work Program evolved from a newly launched service into a trusted community crisis response hub that:

- Exceeded its annual service goal by more than 4×
- Supported 308 unique individuals
- Delivered 1,232 direct crisis response and resource navigation contacts
- Connected families to stable housing, treatment, employment, and benefits
- Became integrated into County behavioral health and housing systems
- Increased staff capacity to safely manage behavioral health crises
- Built sustainable workforce capacity through practicum students and partnerships

1. Demand for the Program

Growth in Direct Service

Quarter	Contacts
Q1	52
Q2	306
Q3	438
Q4	436
Total	1,232

Growth from launch: +738%

By Q3 the social worker was responding to **more than 100 crisis interventions alone**, plus hundreds of additional resource navigation contacts.

2. Annual Goal Achieved Early

The grant objective was: Serve at least 250 patrons during the grant period. The program had already provided **796 direct service contacts** by the end of Q3, over **3 times** the annual goal.

Even using unique individuals:

- Q1: 30
- Q2: 109
- Q3 cumulative: 245 unique individuals

The program was essentially at its annual unique-client target while still having another quarter remaining.

3. Housing Outcomes

The program prevented homelessness and helped people regain housing stability.

Examples include:

Families Housed

- 3 families with children housed (Q2)
- 4 additional families housed (Q3)

Transition to Stability

Rather than remaining in crisis, patrons received help with:

- permanent housing
- employment
- treatment
- family support

Examples:

- employment waiting in Texas
- treatment program in Utah
- multiple bus tickets to permanent housing

- young veteran secured housing within 3 weeks after years of living in his car
- three transitional-age youth obtained employment and moved toward shared housing
- increased focus on vulnerable elders needing memory care and assisted living
- Adult Protective Service (APS) engaged for dementia-related homelessness cases

4. Crisis Intervention

Across the reports:

- 43+ interventions (Q2)
- 106+ interventions (Q3)

These are patrons experiencing:

- suicidal ideation
- behavioral health crises
- severe instability
- emotional dysregulation

The library became an early intervention site instead of waiting until crisis escalated to:

- EMS
- law enforcement
- emergency department
- jail

5. Systems-Level Impact

The social work team didn't simply refer people; the program became integrated into the community crisis response network.

Examples:

- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) implementation
- Complex Case meetings
- Missoula County Coordinated Entry System (MCCES)
- HOT Team
- Mobile Support Team
- Housing Solutions Fund
- Refugee services
- Community Justice
- Watershed

- Hope Rescue Mission
- United Way
- Public Health
- 12 additional community connections established in Q4
- Mayor's Office engaged
- Summit Career Center partnership
- Community Justice Department office hours hosted at MPL
- Hope Rescue Mission transportation and medical coordination
- Weekly community partner office hours embedded in the library

6. Staff Capacity

The program didn't only help patrons; it made library staff more capable by increasing capacity and initiating training. These are organizational improvements that remain even if staff turnover occurs. Examples include:

Training:

- Window of Tolerance
- Narcan
- ongoing debriefs
- STAR-T

Infrastructure:

- radios
- referral forms
- Teams communication
- daily safety briefings

8. Workforce Development

The program created future behavioral health professionals.

Outcomes include:

- two MSW practicum students
- 34+ hours of supervision
- crisis intervention certification
- Mental Health First Aid
- Skilled Assessor training

- law enforcement ride-alongs
- weekly clinical supervision
- 20 staff completed a half-day STAR-T resilience training
- 11 staff committed to ongoing monthly resilience practice groups
- staff feedback described it as “one of the best trainings they had attended.”

9. Return on Investment

The grant was:

\$89,990

The grant funded an integrated crisis response system that strengthened both the library and the county's behavioral health network.

Access: The library reaches people who often never enter traditional behavioral health settings.

Early Intervention: Problems are addressed before becoming emergencies.

Systems Coordination: The social worker connects fragmented systems into coordinated care.

Community Impact: The program improves outcomes not only for patrons, but also for staff, partner agencies, and the broader behavioral health system.

What Success Looks Like

- 1,232 direct service interactions delivered in 10 months.
- 308 unique individuals received crisis intervention, stabilization, or intensive resource navigation.
- 246+ documented crisis interventions helped prevent escalation to higher-cost emergency systems.
- 7 families with children secured stable housing, with additional veterans, youth, and vulnerable elders stabilized through coordinated support.
- Project Community Connect served 300+ individuals through coordinated on-site services.
- Dozens of behavioral health and housing partnerships were established, including embedded office hours at the library.
- Library staff received resilience and crisis-response training, strengthening organizational capacity.
- Future behavioral health professionals were trained through practicum placements and advanced supervision.