

**Northwest Connections  
Crisis Services for Children Network  
Step by Step Match Process – Voluntary Respite Agreement**

1. County or their contracted agent completes a crisis assessment to determine the specific needs of the consumer. This serves as the screening process.
  - Northwest Connections has a formalized, DHS 34, crisis assessment form that may be utilized.
2. County or their contracted agent contacts Northwest Connections for voluntary respite services.
3. Based on the specific face-to-face crisis assessment, Northwest Connections completes a matching process from and considering the following factors:

Priority #1 - Which agencies are able to meet the needs of the consumer

- Northwest Connections has information from each participating agency including an outline of the specific services, skills, and limitations available within their agency.
- Northwest Connections has both business hours and after-hours contact information for each participating agency that would be able to process any potential “grey area” matches.

Priority #2 - Which agency is in closest proximity to the support network of the consumer

- Geography will play a role as it is in the best interest of a child to be closer to their natural support system.
- A county may request a specific agency and/or request that proximity to supports not be an issue in determining a match.
- If a county has a request that varies from the protocol outlined by the Crisis Services for Children Network, then it is recommended that the county document those requests in the consumer’s detailed Crisis Plan, which according to DHS 34, would be available to the face-to-face worker and therefore, available to be relayed to Northwest Connections.

Priority #3 - Which agency is slated to receive the next referral

- Northwest Connections tracks the flow of referrals and has available information regarding who received a referral and when.
- Northwest Connections will utilize a spreadsheet that will note when referrals are taken and to whom they are provided.
- When all else is equal within Priorities #1 & #2, the referrals would be rotated within the network agencies with the agency receiving the most recent match being placed last on the list following that match.
- Agencies have a right to refuse a match and this does not mean that they then drop to the bottom of the list.
- The rotation is based on match, not request for match.
- If a county were to request a particular agency, then that agency would rotate to the bottom of the list upon acceptance of that referral.

4. Northwest Connections contacts the potential agency for match.
  - If the initial agency declines the match, then Northwest Connections Mental Health Crisis Worker would continue down the list, until services are accepted.
  - If the agency accepts, then that agency would engage with the county directly to make transportation arrangements for services.
  - If no agency, providing the least restrictive level of care, is willing/ able to accept the child for services, then the mental health institutions would be the last option.
5. Northwest Connections documents the contact with the party doing the face-to-face assessment as well as the communication with the agency accepting the match.
  - This documentation is sent on to both the county and the receiving agency for their records.
  - The county receiving the paperwork will notify and coordinate with their internal units of services (JJ, CPS, MH/AODA) regarding the use of respite services.
6. When requested to do so by the county, Northwest Connections will arrange for transportation to the designated receiving agency.
  - Northwest Connections will have information from each participating agency regarding whether they are willing to provide transportation.
  - Northwest Connections will also have information from each county regarding transportation contact information regarding who is available to provide transportation services within their respective county.
  - Northwest will explore transportation options and coordinate so as to meet the youth's needs.
7. Unless there are problems with the match, ongoing communication regarding a youth's needs will be between the receiving agency and the placing county.
8. Northwest Connections will initiate communication for feedback and quality assurances purposes on the next business day following match.
9. Each provider will work directly with the county to re-evaluate level of care and engage Northwest Connections as appropriate. However, if a youth is determined to need service reconsideration, the three entities (Northwest Connections, receiving agency, and county placing agency) will work together to develop an alternative plan to deal with the situation. The telephone worker will review the crisis assessment and/or complete an updated crisis assessment and contact other service providers who are qualified to meet the youth's needs and work toward an alternative match. The process would start over at step one, two, three, etc. as needed. The reconsideration would be tracked by documentation completed via the telephone worker. Every contact with a telephone worker is documented in the emergency services system. This contact will be reviewed in the quality assurance process.