



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

PUBLIC SAFETY

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council President Griffin and Members of Council

FROM: Public Safety

RE: Ordinance No. 1198-2024

DATE: November 10, 2025

The Administration supports the spirit of Tanisha's Law, and we share the intent surrounding care-response and non-law-enforcement interventions where appropriate.

However, the Administration does not support the current version of the legislation as drafted.

This is not because of disagreement with the intent, but because the legislation, as structured today, is not yet administratively ripe. Through the Connect & Protect Grant, a third-party call analysis will be conducted to determine the scope of need, which will provide clearer insight into how this should be structured. Legislative action should follow that call analysis.

Administration Commitment

The Administration is fully committed to a whole-of-government approach to improving emergency mental-health response in Cleveland — including a commitment to a care-response dispatch model that incorporates mental-health expertise into call intake, assessment, and into deployment where a non-law-enforcement intervention is appropriate.

Our roadmap for this is already underway. The Connect & Protect Grant — in addition to funding the third-party analysis — will support implementation of mental-health dispatching services within EMS once federal approval is granted.

Specific Administrative Concerns with Ordinance No. 1198-2024

- We do not support the creation of a new City department.
- Creating a new cabinet-level department is structurally unnecessary and creates duplicative bureaucracy.
- According to our research, no city in the country has codified its CIT or care-response programs. This suggests that jurisdictions nationwide recognize the importance of allowing these policies to evolve over time, rather than embedding them in ordinance in a way that could limit necessary



flexibility and adaptation. The City should carefully consider this precedent to ensure any legislation preserves the ability for these programs to continue evolving and improving over time.

- CIT / co-response programming is already occurring and is compliant with federal court expectations.
- Unarmed care-response functions, if ultimately legislated, should be implemented through an existing non-law-enforcement department or a contracted third-party partner rather than through the creation of a new department.
- We do not yet have the call analysis required to determine staffing or structure — therefore this legislation is premature.

If Council chooses to move forward against our recommendation

We would recommend the following actions:

1. remove the creation of a new department;
2. relocate Division of Police CIT language into Chapter 135; and
3. clarify that non-law-enforcement unarmed response services are aligned to an existing non-law-enforcement department or third-party provider.

Conclusion

We support the intent. We support the outcome. We do not support creating a new department, nor advancing the legislation before the call analysis is complete.

However, if Council intends to move legislation now, we respectfully request that Council consider adopting our suggested recommendations.

Thank you for your consideration.