

## Crisis Intervention Team

### **418.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to the employees of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office when using members of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT).

### **418.2 POLICY**

It is the policy of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office to provide a team, of specially trained Deputies who will work with the community to provide service to mentally unstable persons in crisis.

### **418.3 OVERVIEW AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP**

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program is a community effort enjoining both law enforcement and the community for the common goals of safety, understanding, and service to individuals (and their families) who are mentally unstable and in crisis. This instability may be due to any number of factors, including alcohol/drug dependency, emotional trauma, or some form of mental illness. The CIT program provides an avenue for the development of community partnerships and the collaboration of working together for community interest of service and care regarding those with mental disorders. CIT recognizes people with mental disorders require special care, treatment, and service. CIT is about doing the right thing for the right reason.

#### **418.3.1 GOALS AND MISSION**

The goal of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is the diversion of certain persons suffering from mental health disorders away from the criminal justice system and toward treatment through referrals to the proper social agencies, whenever available and appropriate.

The mission of CIT is to use understanding and skills gained through specific training and experience to identify and provide a safe, effective and compassionate response to law enforcement situations involving people in mental health crisis.

CIT is a commitment for change that brings together a true partnership between law enforcement, persons suffering from mental illness or other mental health disorders, their families and the mental health community.

### **418.4 ROLE AND FUNCTION**

A primary function of CIT is to assist as needed, the Patrol Division in providing a supportive response to certain crisis situations. These situations involve subjects that are suspected of or have been diagnosed with a mental illness or other mental disorders and who are experiencing a severe crisis. The Crisis Intervention Officer (CIO) will bring additional skills that could prove beneficial in addressing the current crisis as well as provide referrals to resources that the subject in crisis could benefit from.

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### **418.5 SELECTION AND TRAINING**

The CIT will include a Sergeant who will act as the team coordinator. Other team members will consist of Sergeants and Deputies from Patrol and other investigative divisions within the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office.

- Selection of Crisis Intervention Team members
  - Openings are to be announced through an internal office communication to all eligible Sergeants and Deputies.
  - Minimum qualifications will be listed
  - Application Process will be listed
  - Screening Process will be listed
- Training
  - All those selected will complete a 40-hour CIT certification class
  - CIT members will be provided continuing education training
  - CIT members are encouraged to seek out and attend when authorized; additional training that would benefit and further advance their skills and that of the team.

### **418.6 RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

All responses to calls involving suspected or confirmed cases of mental illness will follow the Sheriff's Office policy 417 "Responding to Persons with Mental Illness". An involuntary or emergent mental illness commitment will follow the Sheriff's Office policy "Mental Illness Commitments".

When on duty and available, the CIO should respond when requested by fellow officers to assist with calls for services involving subjects in a suspected mental health crisis. The CIO may also be requested to assist during investigative interviews and interrogations of subjects where mental illness is believed to be a factor.

All outside agency requests for a CIO response will be approved by the on-duty supervisor.

When the circumstances warrant the activation of the SWAT Team, continued use of the CIO will be at the discretion of the SWAT Team Leader and/or the Crisis Negotiation Team Leader.

If no CIT member is on duty, the on-duty supervisor may choose to contact the off-duty CIO team leader or an off-duty CIO for a consult or possible call out.

When not acting in the capacity of a CIO, the team member will perform their normal duty functions.

### **418.7 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESPONDING CRISIS INTERVENTION OFFICER**

If the CIO is dispatched to a scene with a subject in crisis due to a mental disorder, they will need to evaluate what, if any additional resources are needed at the scene and make those requests. When the CIO is dispatched as a secondary officer, their primary responsibility is to assist the lead officer assigned to the case. Backup officers on scene should consider where they physically

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position themselves so as to not overwhelm the subject in crisis while at the same time being available to immediately assist as needed. Officer safety will never be jeopardized.

Upon arrival at any scene, the CIO will gather as much information as possible from officers, witnesses, family, etc. After being briefed on the situation, the CIO should assume operational control of the communication with the person in crisis with the goal of bringing the current situation to a successful conclusion. The CIO (with input from the lead officer and/or supervisor) will decide if an involuntary mental illness commitment will take place.

If the subject in crisis is not taken into custody for an involuntary commitment, the CIO will assist as needed by providing outside agency referral information for further care of the subject. If the subject needs to be transported, the CIO may be the best choice so as to continue dialogue with the subject. The CIO will be expected to write a supplemental report documenting his/her actions.

### **418.8 ALERT FILE**

Deputies (to include CIT members) in contact with subjects suffering from what appears to be a mental disorder crisis may submit a request for an entry into the Records Management System (RMS) Alert/Notes File or other designated database. The entry into the RMS can provide important information for officers who have contacts with the same subject in future crisis situation. The RMS entry request will be submitted to CIT who will further review the request to determine if it is an appropriate entry. If it is determined that the provided alert information will be entered into the RMS, a designated CIO will make the entry. The entry will describe unusual behaviors exhibited by the subject. The entry will not be a diagnosis of a mental health condition. The entry will include the date and CIO's name/badge # that makes the entry. Besides describing behaviors observed, the entry may also include the following:

- Triggers that may cause stress in the subject
- What calms and brings focus for the subject
- Names and contact information for friends, family or case workers who can help in the time of crisis