



## **CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM PROGRAM(CIT)** **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### **ABOUT CIT**

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Program provides training and education to law enforcement officers to assist them in more effectively managing crisis events in the community when they, as first responders, encounter individuals who are experiencing behavioral health crises due to mental illness and/or co-occurring substance use disorders, along with the information necessary to guide officers in re-directing these individuals away from the criminal justice system and into emergency behavioral health facilities.

The Crisis Intervention Team Program is a community based partnership includes behavioral health and human service providers, consumers and their families, together with law enforcement, all volunteering toward common goals of providing safer interventions for officers and community members while showing concern for citizen's well-being. CIT relies on a crisis system that is vibrant, easily accessible and responsive to the needs of law enforcement.

Officers who choose to attend CIT, receive 40 hours of specialized instruction from behavioral health experts from their community, previously trained CIT officers and actual consumers and family members. This intensive advanced-officer training, is designed to help Officers gain understanding about mental health disorders, substance use disorders and developmental disorders, developing a basic foundation from which officers build their skills.

Upon completion of the course, officers are better prepared to:

- Understand signs and symptoms of mental illnesses and co-occurring disorders
- Recognize when those signs and symptoms represent a crisis situation
- Safely de-escalate individuals experiencing behavioral health crises
- Utilize community resources and diversion strategies that are available to provide emergency assistance

### **CIT Core Elements**

The core elements of the CIT program are the foundation for this effective response model.

The core elements are grouped as follows:

#### **Ongoing Elements**

1. Partnerships: Law Enforcement, Advocacy, Mental Health
2. Community Ownership: Planning, Implementation & Networking
3. Policies and Procedures

#### **Operational Elements**

4. CIT: Officer, Dispatcher, Coordinator
5. Curriculum: CIT Training
6. Mental Health Receiving Facility: Emergency Services

#### **Sustaining Elements**

7. Evaluation and Research
8. In-Service Training
9. Recognition and Honors
10. Outreach: Developing CIT in Other Communities

### **Benefits of CIT**

CIT is a cost effective way to create, promote and sustain safety in communities. CIT offers many benefits to law enforcement agencies, providers and consumers and their families. These benefits include:

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| ✓ Immediacy of response  | ✓ Reduced unnecessary arrests or use of force   |
| ✓ Increased officer safety   | ✓ Avoidance of costs to criminal justice system This is hard to prove   |
| ✓ Reduced officer/citizen injuries                                 | ✓ Positive perception of program  |
| ✓ Increased jail diversion   | ✓ Linkages to long-term services promoting recovery for the consumer and services in the behavioral health system |
| ✓ Increased chance for consumer to connect to mental health system |   |
| ✓ Increased officer confidence in skills                           |   |
| ✓ Reduced liability  |   |