

Police-Mental Health Collaboration Programs



■ Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT)

Crisis intervention teams are composed of experienced law enforcement officers who volunteer to receive specialized training to respond to mental health calls. These officers are then dispatched to mental health calls or assist other officers who are not CIT trained.



■ Co-Responder Teams

Trained law enforcement officers and mental health professionals who respond to mental health calls as a team and generally work together for an entire shift, riding in the same car.



■ Mobile Crisis Teams

Mental health professionals working as a team with specialized training to help stabilize individuals during law enforcement encounters and during crisis situations. Teams can respond to law enforcement or mental health calls.



■ Case Management Teams

Behavioral health professionals, law enforcement officers, peers and others that form a team to coordinate care and develop collaborative solutions to reduce repeat interactions with individuals.



■ Crisis Stabilization Centers

Facilities where law enforcement officers can take individuals experiencing mental health crisis that serve as alternatives to jail and emergency departments.

Police-Mental Health Collaborations

People with mental illness are not more likely than anyone else to commit violent acts. In fact, it is 10 times more likely that people with severe mental illness will be victims of a violent crime than the general population. However, bystanders frequently call 911 when a person near them experiences a mental health crisis, making it much more likely that a person in crisis will encounter law enforcement officers rather than mental health professionals.

Because of facts like these, law enforcement agencies and state lawmakers have been working to improve law enforcement responses and develop alternatives. Recent legislation has required or funded crisis intervention team training, authorized and funded crisis triage centers, and otherwise supported law enforcement efforts to deflect individuals with mental health needs away from criminal justice system involvement.

For more information about police-mental health collaborations visit www.ncsl.org/blog/collaboration.



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