

Law Enforcement–Mental Health Learning Sites

Jurisdictions across the country are exploring strategies to improve the outcomes of encounters between law enforcement and people with mental illnesses. As a growing number of communities develop or enhance their comprehensive police-mental health collaboration (PMHC), many agencies are struggling with the planning process and how to tailor successful implementation strategies from other jurisdictions to address their own distinct problems and circumstances.

In an effort to expand the knowledge base for law enforcement agencies interested in starting or enhancing a PMHC, the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, with assistance from a team of national experts and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), selected six police departments to serve as national law enforcement–mental health learning sites. These learning sites represent a diverse cross-section of perspectives and program examples and are dedicated to helping other jurisdictions improve their responses to people with mental illnesses. The original six learning sites, selected in 2010, are the Houston (TX) Police Department, the Los Angeles (CA) Police Department, the Madison (WI) Police Department, the Portland (ME) Police Department, the Salt Lake City (UT) Police Department, and the University of Florida Police Department. In 2017, due to the success of the program, four new sites were added, including the Arlington Police Department (MA), the Gallia, Jackson, Meigs Counties Sheriffs’ Offices (OH), the Madison County Sheriff’s Office (TN), and the Tucson Police Department (AZ).

Salt Lake City (UT) Police Department

Total number of agency personnel: 533

Sworn: 437

Civilian: 96

Total population served: 186,000

Jurisdiction and state: Salt Lake City, Utah

Program Highlights

- Small city and rural community collaboration and coordination across multiple jurisdictions
- Employs a complementary three-team approach through the Community Connection Center (CCC), which includes:
 - Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)
 - Homeless Outreach Service Team (HOST)
 - Community Connection Team (CCT)
- The CIT multi-county collaboration:
 - Provides 40-hour training for patrol and corrections-based academies
 - Operates a dedicated CIT Investigative Unit with a detective to follow up on mental health calls for service
- Additional Training includes:
 - Crisis Intervention Team for youth: 8-hour academy
 - Autism training: Two 5-hour courses per year
 - Post-traumatic stress disorder specialization and officer wellness 8-hour course
 - Recertification and officer resilience CIT training

2001

CIT

2012

HOST

2016

CCC and CCT

Law Enforcement—Mental Health Learning Sites

Salt Lake City (UT) Police Department

The Salt Lake City Police Department (SLCPD) is the largest municipal police department in Utah and acts as the lead agency within a multi-agency collaboration that serves two-thirds of the state's population. In 2000, department leaders organized a committee to review law enforcement responses across the country to identify the best way to improve the department's responses to people with mental illnesses. Around the same time, the Utah Department of Human Services' Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, which oversees all mental health authorities across the state, made specialized training for officers responding to people with mental illnesses a high priority. After identifying CIT as the model of choice, SLCPD began conducting CIT Academies in April 2001, [hosting officers from across Utah](#).

SLCPD currently subscribes to a multi-agency collaboration called CIT Metro. The mission of CIT Metro is to assist agencies in producing their own CIT program that meets their distinct needs and to share resources to achieve cost savings. Officers that wish to be CIT-certified must attend a 40-hour academy that covers practical information for officers responding to people living with mental illness, along with site visits to local mental health facilities and other opportunities for the officers to interact with people affected by their actions. At the end of the week, those attending the training must pass both a written test and scenario-based testing that demonstrates a level of proficiency required to be CIT certified. In addition to the training collaboration, participating agencies meet regularly to discuss individuals that multiple agencies have repeated contact with and formulate plans of action for those people to reduce criminal justice engagement and costs to taxpayers.

Community Connection Center

In July 2016, SLCPD opened the [Community Connection Center \(CCC\)](#) for people who have behavioral health needs. The CCC houses three teams that coordinate responses to calls for service, follow up, and provide community outreach.

Community Connections Team

A team of case workers and social workers act as liaisons between front-line police officers, people that are experiencing homelessness or are in crisis, community service providers and other stakeholders. The team often provides crisis intervention services, short-term therapeutic interventions, case management and coordination, and resources to police, people with mental illnesses, and their families.

Crisis Intervention Team and Investigative Unit

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) includes [specially trained law enforcement officers](#) who are taught to effectively respond to situations involving a person experiencing a mental health crisis. SLCPD also operates a dedicated unit for these calls that is known as the CIT Investigative Unit. Whenever a case is identified as involving a person with a mental illness, a detective in the CIT Investigative Unit reviews the report and determines if additional follow up is required or would be beneficial for the individual. The CIT Investigative Unit helps to connect them to relevant mental health services.

The Homeless Outreach Service Team

[HOST](#), formed in 2012, is a proactive partnership effort in which police engage homeless service providers to help connect people experiencing homelessness with appropriate community-based social services and supports.

To learn more about the SLCPD and its initiatives, please contact:

Name: Scott Stuck

Title: Police Sergeant

Address: P.O. Box 145497, Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Phone: (801) 799-3314

E-mail: scott.stuck@slcgov.com

Website: www.slcpcd.com/resources/ccc/

Name: Jessica Waters

Title: Therapist

Address: P.O. Box 145497, SLC, UT 84114

Phone: (801) 799-3035

E-mail: jessica.waters@slcgov.com

To learn more about the Law Enforcement-Mental Health Learning Sites, please visit <http://csgjusticecenter.org/law-enforcement/projects/mental-health-learning-sites/> or email the Law Enforcement Program team at le-mh-learningsites@csgjusticecenter.org.