

Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response

SOLICITATION FOR APPLICATIONS



APPLICATIONS DUE NO LATER THAN April 2, 2021

PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS AND RETURN APPLICATIONS VIA E-MAIL TO: hazzan@theiacp.org



BJA
Bureau of Justice Assistance
U.S. Department of Justice

University of
UC
CINCINNATI



IACP
International Association of
Chiefs of Police

Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response

The Opportunity:

U.S. law enforcement agencies are invited to apply to participate in the **Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response**. This training program is part of a larger initiative supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) *Academic Training to Inform Police Responses: A National Curriculum to Enhance Police Engagement with People with Behavioral Health Issues and Developmental Disabilities*. This initiative is designed to enhance, implement, and evaluate crisis response training for law enforcement and first responders. Additionally, this initiative seeks to assist communities in their development of collaborative crisis response programs, with a specific focus in addressing the needs of individuals with behavioral health disorders and developmental disabilities.

The *Academic Training to Inform Police Responses* is managed by the University of Cincinnati (UC) School of Criminal Justice with its partners: Policy Research Associates, The Arc of the United States' National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. For additional information on the Academic Training, please visit the [Academic Training webpage](#).

This solicitation seeks applications from law enforcement agencies to pilot the *Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response* and participate in strategic planning for the development and delivery of a comprehensive crisis response program. Two (2) agencies will be selected and will work directly with UC and its partners to implement this training as part of the agency's crisis response program. Agencies will receive assistance with planning, delivering, and evaluating this training between May through December 2021. Additionally, agencies will be supported in their planning for the development and delivery of a collaborative crisis response program for their community. Participation in this initiative will:

1. **Assist agencies in creating and adopting a collaborative crisis response program tailored to the needs and resources of their community;**
2. **Assist agencies in planning and delivering training on collaborative crisis response;**
3. **Enhance knowledge and skills in responding to community members with mental health disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities;**
4. **Enhance civilian and officer safety;**
5. **Build positive community relations and trust;**
6. **Enhance officer knowledge of mental health and disability resources and diversion opportunities; and**
7. **Increase agency capacity to create safer communities.**

While the selected agencies **will not receive funding**, they will receive intensive technical assistance, training, and resources from a national pool of subject matter experts to adopt and operationalize a collaborative crisis response program. Agencies will engage in comprehensive strategic planning, including program design, implementation, and partnership-building, to promote effective and safer responses to persons experiencing a mental health and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities-related crisis.

For more information on this solicitation, please join us for a Q&A session hosted by the project team on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 from 1:30PM to 2:30PM ET. Follow this [link](#) for registration for this event.

The Issue:

For law enforcement (LE), responding to situations involving individuals with mental health disorders and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities in a safe, effective manner can often present a significant challenge. Among their responsibilities, law enforcement officers have been increasingly tasked with responding to crisis or emergency situations, including those incidents involving people with mental illness (MI) and/or intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Approximately 10% of calls in medium to large police departments involve a person with a mental illness.¹ Estimates involving police interactions with people with IDD, though unavailable, are believed to be increasing. The lack of resources and knowledge regarding the effective responses to these individuals enhances potential risks to both officers and civilians during these interactions. A 2015 report highlighted in *Time Magazine* estimated that roughly 1 in 4 fatal police encounters results in the death of a person with severe MI.²

Crisis situations present significant challenges for community members and officers, highlighting the need for clear policy direction and training in the law enforcement community to serve these populations. There is a need to build upon existing crisis response training to improve LE responses to people with MI, to expand curriculum content to include information pertaining to legal obligations in officer encounters with people with MI and IDD, and to provide guidance on best practice for LE interaction with persons with IDD. The development, enhancement, and implementation of a crisis response training, combined with strategic planning for police-mental health/disability collaboration in crisis response, can raise awareness in the policing community about the nature and needs of persons with MI and IDD and introduce evidence-based and promising practices to inform police responses.

Project Overview:

This project is designed to deliver the 40-hour Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response to two (2) law enforcement agencies within the United States and its territories. Those agencies will receive:

1. Comprehensive virtual strategic planning for the development and delivery of a comprehensive crisis response program;
2. A plan for, and the execution of, a consecutive 5-day, 40-hour, in-person training on crisis response covering 26 modules of varying lengths with a variety of learning styles; and
3. A guided process and impact evaluation of the planning and delivery of the training.

The training was built upon the Memphis Model Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) approach, with the capability to be customized to local community resources and special topic areas. CIT is a law enforcement-based model of specialized response to people experiencing a mental health crisis in the community. CIT programs are comprised of officers who have opted in and completed a 40-hour training on recognizing the signs and symptoms of psychiatric disability, identifying a mental health crisis, and

¹ Canada, K. E., Angell, B., & Watson, A. C. (2012). Intervening at the entry point: differences in how CIT trained and non-CIT trained officers describe responding to mental health-related calls. *Community mental health journal*, 48(6), 746–755. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-011-9430-9>

² Sifferlin, A. (2015, December 10). Mentally Ill 16 Times More Likely to Be Killed By Police. Retrieved December 09, 2020, from <https://time.com/4144276/mentally-ill-police-killings-study/>

managing and resolving difficult encounters. CIT programs form community partnerships among local law enforcement agencies, local mental health agencies, individuals with mental health conditions, their families, and mental health advocacy groups. Training is one component of CIT programs designed to complement the development and delivery of a comprehensive crisis response planned by law enforcement and mental health/disability service providers in the community.

The Law Enforcement Training in Collaborative Crisis Response will help responding officers build community and partnerships with mental health and disability organizations, gain a better understanding of the types of challenges persons with MI and/or IDD face, and manage situations involving people with MI and/or IDD in crisis to include redirecting them from the justice system to a health care setting.

Demonstration Site Eligibility and Selection:

Applicants must be a United States-based municipal, county, or tribal law enforcement agency.

UC and partners seek agencies that demonstrate strong commitment and capacity to meet, or exceed, the project requirements. Selected agencies will be expected to actively work towards the development of an organizational infrastructure – both within their own agency and with community-based partners – to support the delivery and sustainability of a collaborative crisis response program. Applicants must demonstrate their capacity to allocate resources to the crisis response program, as well as discuss their plans for implementation following participation in the Academic Training Initiative.

UC and its partners will base agency selection on several factors, including data-driven analysis of need and agency agreement to full participation and commitment.

Application and Participation Requirements:

It is required that each agency submitting an application identify leaders in their organization and in the community that can support the implementation and training responsibilities of the crisis response program (**see attached *Site Application form***). Similarly, these leaders must be dedicated to allocating ample staff time to participate in the program implementation and training. This will include the identification of a dedicated on-site agency coordinator who will identify and bring together all necessary collaborating partners and stakeholders.

Each application must include letters of support and commitment from the applying agency (Chief, Sheriff, etc.) and be able to identify potential service providers and advocacy partners in the community that can support the implementation of a crisis response program and, as part of this work, share responsibility for the delivery of the training. These partners may include but are not limited to: the local mental health authority and advocacy and/or community organizations representing people with MI and IDD and their families.

In addition, agencies selected must be able to implement a collaborative crisis response program in totality. Specifically, participating agencies must:

- Engage in comprehensive, virtual strategic planning (estimated dates May 2021–Jul 2021). This process will include:
 - A pre-training, kick-off video conference;

- Preparation and strategic planning to design, develop, and implement a comprehensive crisis response program (identifying partners, creating jurisdiction-specific content, helping to identify local trainers, building deployment strategies, etc.); and
- A review of existing policies and procedures to inform program activities.
- Hold one 40-hour, in-person training event (estimated dates Aug 2021–Oct 2021) to include:
 - Committing between 20-25 sworn patrol officers from within the agency to participate in the 40-hour, in-person training;
 - Supporting the implementation of an officer application process for participation in the training; and
 - Providing a training space that comfortably accommodates 40-45 people, including 20-25 officers, stakeholder participants, agency trainers, training instructors, and other critical staff (e.g., 911 call-takers, dispatchers) with possible breakout rooms needed for role plays/teach-backs.
- Work with the UC project team to plan for program deployment and sustainability.
- Participate in process and impact evaluations of the planning and delivery program to include:
 - Meeting with the UC research team to discuss evaluation needs and coordinating with the UC team in the development and approval of a memorandum of understanding to guide collaboration;
 - Participating in the administration of surveys to training participants; and
 - Collecting and transferring agency records related to calls for service, use of force, disposition of mental health and IDD-related incidents (if available), and training participants' professional and demographic information.

Written support of commitment must be provided by the agency executive. Further details will be provided to agencies selected to participate. To be considered, all applications must be received by April 2, 2021. It is anticipated that selected agencies will be notified approximately on or before May 3, 2021.

Estimated Timeline of Events:

April 2, 2021 – Applications due

May 3, 2021 – Site Selection Complete

May – Site Kick-off Call

June – July 2021 – Virtual Strategic Planning

August – October 2021 – In-Person Training events

May – December 2021 - Process and Impact Evaluation

For any additional questions about this solicitation, please contact the IACP team at hazzan@theiacp.org or (703) 647-6844