

Mental and Behavioral Health Response

Some of the most complicated encounters facing peace officers involve encounters with individuals experiencing mental and behavioral health issues. The Phoenix Police Department has invested a great deal of time and resources to enhance its response in this area.

- **2015** – Revised policy outlining responsibilities and resources available when responding a call involving Individuals with mental or physical disabilities.
- **2015** – Eight hours of mental health training was added to the annual officer training curriculum.
- **2015** – Creation of first dedicated Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) squad:
 - Comprised of CIT trained officers who respond exclusively to calls involving mental and/or behavioral health.
 - CIT relies on healthcare partnerships in the community.
 - As of November 2023, 521 Phoenix Police officers are trained in CIT.
- **2017** – All recruits began receiving 40-hours of mental health training in the Phoenix Regional Police Academy:
 - 40 hours exceeds the required level of mental health training set by AZPOST, the Arizona standard setting entity.
- **2019** – 911 dispatchers trained on CIT, mental health 101, call diversion to mental health providers and mental health pickup orders.
- **2020** – Placed mental health clinician within the Communications Bureau to assist and advise in 911 operators in diverting calls to the behavioral health system.
- **2021** – Phoenix City Council approved funding for creation of the Community Assistance Program (CAP):
 - CAP, run by the Phoenix Fire Department, sends licensed case workers to scenes as soon as it is safe.
 - CAP has since expanded, and now responds city-wide.
- **2022** – Creation of the Crisis Intervention Review Committee:
 - Periodically meets to discuss best practices and potential updates to CIT.

- **2022** – Updated and continued training to employees regarding CIT:
 - Instruction on talking to suicidal subjects and callers with mental health concerns.
 - Policy updated to provide four additional questions for dispatchers to ask callers.
- **2022** – Training Bureau utilized virtual reality technology to create scenarios involving mental and behavioral health issues for recruits and in-service employees.
- **2023** – ICAT training (see Use of Force page) is relevant to dealing with individuals experiencing mental and behavioral health issues.

