

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for law enforcement officers slated for Greensburg in March

Week-long training provides techniques to defuse interactions with individuals with mental illness

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Southwest Regional Crisis Intervention Team is now accepting applications for the March 2-6, 2015, 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training **at no cost** to police departments in Greensburg. Upon completion of the five day training, participating departments will receive a **\$500 reimbursement** through funding from PCCD. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, commonly known as the "Memphis Model", is an innovative program for police with the goal of pre-arrest diversion from jail for those in a mental illness crisis. CIT training will be held from 8:00 to 5:00 pm each day at the WCSI training room, 770 E Pittsburgh St #4, Greensburg, PA 15601. Free parking is available and lunch and refreshments will be provided.

CIT's goals are two-fold:

1. to enhance officers' ability to bring crisis situations to safe and successful conclusions; and
2. to divert individuals experiencing mental health or substance abuse crises away from the criminal justice system and into appropriate intervention.

Training is coordinated by Southwest Regional CIT team volunteers and presented by professionals in law enforcement, behavioral health, county officials, the VA, and others. Participants will participate in site visits during the training to enhance the scenarios discussed in class. A certificate of completion will be awarded on the last day.

CIT trained Officer Jim Schaffer of the Westmoreland County Park Police uses the skills he honed at CIT training last year on a weekly basis. He described a recent visitor to the Courthouse who was disruptive in the courtroom. Lt. Logan was called to defuse the situation. Using standard de-escalation tactics along with knowledge gained in CIT training on mental health and personality disorders, Shafer engaged the woman and diverted her to the appropriate mental health professionals. What could have become a dangerous situation was safely resolved. CIT officers who take the training in March will learn and practice techniques applicable to similar situations.

Research has shown CIT to be effective in:

- developing positive perceptions and increased confidence among police officers;
- providing very efficient crisis response times;
- increasing jail diversion among those with mental illness;
- improving the likelihood of treatment continuity with community based providers;
- **significantly decreasing police officer injury rates.**

Funding for this CIT training was provided by a grant to Westmoreland County from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. For more information on the Southwest Regional CIT team or the March 2-6 training in Greensburg, contact Lt. Logan at (724) 850-4285 klogan@co.westmoreland.pa.us .

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