



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**



POLICY NUMBER	
OPR: 62	
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SUBJECT: STATE POLICE CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to establish standards and procedures for the application and selection process for membership into the New Mexico State Police Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and guidelines for deployment and utilization of the team, to include its Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) component.

2.0 POLICY

It is the policy of the New Mexico Department of Public Safety (DPS) to maintain a Crisis Negotiation Team comprised of officers that possess the skills of: situational response involving individuals who are reasonably believed to be affected by mental illness or are in crisis; difficult decision making about the mental state of the individual; and necessitates the use of special police skills to effectively and appropriately resolve the situation. Negotiation Officers and Crisis Intervention Team Officers, will be trained to de-escalate a situation safely for all individuals involved. The goal is to enable a collaboration between law enforcement, behavioral health agencies, families of persons with mental health concerns, and advocates to minimize the use of force and complaints of police misconduct.

3.0 APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all commissioned New Mexico State Police personnel of the New Mexico Department of Public Safety.

4.0 REFERENCES

- A. OPR 47 – Interaction with Persons Suspected of Suffering from Mental Illness**

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- A. Behavioral Health Call** – A call for service to law enforcement that requires a response as soon as possible to ensure the safety of people involved who may be suffering from a mental health crisis. Characteristics of a mentally ill person are listed in *OPR 47: Interaction with Persons Suspected of Suffering from Mental Illness*.
- B. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)** – A team comprised of Crisis Intervention Team Officers (CITOs) with at least forty (40) hours of Crisis Intervention Training, who respond to behavioral health calls for service to de-escalate, assess for the possibility of a mental health evaluation, locate resources, and conduct follow ups for people experiencing a mental health crisis. CIT does not respond to tactical deployments because Negotiation Team Members will be present, but may already be on scene as initial responders. A goal of 40% of the New Mexico State Police Uniform Bureau will be trained as CITOs.

C. Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT) – A team comprised of sergeants and officers who serve in an additional duty capacity and respond with the Tactical Team. The objective of the Negotiators is to attempt to de-escalate and defuse dangerous, life threatening situations using communication techniques. Negotiators will have at least forty (40) hours of Basic CNT training.

6.0 PROCEDURE

A. Activation

1. Negotiators will be under the direct supervision of the CNT commander and under the overall command of the Special Operations Bureau commander. Negotiators may be activated by making a request through the appropriate chain of command to the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee.
2. CITO's will be under the direct supervision of their district commander and may be activated by a call for service received through dispatch indicating a person is experiencing a mental health crisis and/or by the CNT commander.

B. Response

1. Negotiators
 - a. Negotiators have the capability of responding to a critical incident on very short notice.
 - b. The Negotiators will respond as soon as possible to the location designated by the CNT commander, when notified of team activation.
2. Crisis Intervention Team Officers (CITOs)
 - a. CITOs, when on duty or at the direction of the district commander, will respond to any calls for service related to mental health issues.
 - b. CITOs may respond by telephone, as the situation requires, to avoid an escalation in use of force.
 - c. CITOs may determine to disengage contact with a mentally ill person when the continued contact may result in an undue safety risk to the mentally ill person, the public, and/or the officers. Disengaging can allow the officer to plan to make contact at a different time and under different circumstances.
 - d. CITOs responding to a situation involving a DPS employee, will notify POST who will work in conjunction with CIT.
 - e. CITOs can be called upon to stand by on scene or during an investigative interview with a person suspected of having a mental illness to help minimize any use of force while in DPS custody as well as assist with facilitating a mental health evaluation.
 - f. CITOs will write a report for each call for service they respond to in a CIT capacity.
 - g. When taking a person in for an Emergency Mental Health Evaluation and Care, the CITOs will complete *Attachment A. Warrantless Emergency Detention Notification Form* attached to this policy indicating the reason for the evaluation. Copies will go to the admitting facility and attached to the offense incident report.

C. Operations

1. Negotiators
 - a. The Negotiators function as an element of communication for the Tactical Team.
 - b. The Negotiators may also support outside agency's Tactical Team with the authorization of the Special Operations Bureau commander or designee.
 - c. Negotiators will not respond to a call for service, separate from, or without the Tactical Team.
2. Crisis Intervention Team Officers (CITOs)
 - a. In order to facilitate a more specialized response, CITOs, in addition to their normal duties, will respond to calls for service involving persons with mental health issues or persons experiencing a behavioral health crisis.
 - b. CITOs will conduct follow up visits with persons frequently requiring assistance from law enforcement officers to provide ongoing assessment and referrals to resources.
 - c. CITOs coordinate collaborative partnerships with community stakeholders.

D. Selection, Qualification, Training, and Dismissal

1. Negotiator Selection
 - a. Applicants must have a minimum of two (2) years patrol experience and have successfully completed the department FTO program. Patrol experience may include time spent in patrol with other agencies prior to becoming a commissioned State Police officer. Applicants also must hold the rank of sergeant or below to be considered.
 - b. Applicants must have a satisfactory work record in their current assignment. Appointment to the CNT, with past or present disciplinary action, is at the discretion of the selection board, Special Operations Bureau commander, and Chief.
 - c. Special criteria for selection include experience as a law enforcement officer in a field assignment, CIT certification, good verbal skills, and problem-solving abilities.
 - d. Applicants must have a letter of recommendation from their current district commander.
 - e. Applicants must be willing to sign a release of information form for an Internal Affairs background check.
 - f. Applicants will be required to appear before an oral board comprised of the CNT commander and member(s) of the Special Operations Bureau.
 - g. Applicants must be available to respond to calls for service and be willing to travel long distances on very short notice.
 - h. Upon completion of the selection process, the CNT commander will prepare a list in ranking order of the top candidates and submit it to the Special Operations Bureau commander for review and submittal to the Chief.
 - i. Must provide his/her last two (2) completed annual evaluations, if applicable.

2. CIT Selection

Criteria for selection is by the district commander and should include:

- a. Good verbal communication skills;
- b. Ability to strategize the interventions; and
- c. Not be reactive.

3. Qualification

- a. All Negotiators must be available to respond to calls for service and travel long distances on very short notice.
- b. CITO must be willing to respond to initial calls for service with people that have a mental illness, provide referrals, assist with obtaining psychological evaluations, conduct follow ups, and proactively outreach within their districts.
- c. CITO must be allowed a minimum of eight (8) hours per calendar month to participate in community outreach programs within their districts and conduct follow up visits.

4. Training

- a. Negotiators must have a minimum of forty (40) hours of Basic CNT training.
- b. Negotiators will participate in mandatory training every three (3) months with individual exceptions preapproved prior to training, by the team commander. This training will be outlined at the beginning of the calendar year and will consist of sixteen (16) hours per training session. Makeup training must be completed within thirty (30) days of each training session.
- d. CITO must have a minimum of forty (40) hours of Basic CIT Training.
- e. CITO will participate in additional training at the direction of the CNT Commander.

5. Dismissal

Membership and participation as a Negotiator is considered a privilege not a promotion. To maintain team integrity and the highest level of standards, all members are subject to disciplinary action, and may be removed from the team, without cause, by the Chief of the State Police. Reasons for removal or suspension from the team include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Failing or refusing to respond to calls for service;
- b. Failing or refusing to maintain training requirements; and
- c. Failing or refusing to maintain District responsibilities

E. Duties and Responsibilities

CNT commander will:

STATE POLICE CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

1. Assign Negotiators to respond to calls for service as directed by the Tactical Team commander.
2. Assign members of CIT to respond to crisis intervention calls for service to include follow up visits.
3. Ensure all team members are trained per this policy.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS

A. Warrantless Emergency Detention Notification

8.0 APPROVAL

APPROVED BY: s/Scott Weaver
DPS Cabinet Secretary

DATE: November 29, 2017