

CO-RESPONSE CLINICIANS

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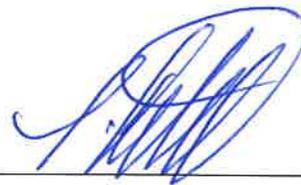
I. Introduction

Past research has revealed alarmingly high numbers of people with serious mental illnesses who are incarcerated in jails and prisons across the country. A commonly accepted recommendation for addressing this crisis and for diverting those with mental health issues out of the criminal justice system, is a strong mental health/police collaboration. Quick access to, and presence on calls, of trained mental health clinicians transforms the way that public safety services are delivered. When individuals with mental illness are diverted from arrest and into community-based treatment, they spend less time in jail, pose a lower risk to society, and have the opportunity for a better quality of life than those who are arrested. This type of Jail Diversion Program (JDP) is founded on the understanding that, by working together, mental health clinicians and police officers can respond more appropriately to the needs of individuals with mental illness in the community and that clinicians (as gatekeepers to the mental health system) can offer an alternative to arrest.

Chief of Police:



Select Board:



In the interest of best serving those who are in crisis and/or who have a mental health diagnosis, the Ashfield Police Department has mental health clinician(s) embedded within the police department. This partnership provides police officers with immediate access to trained in-house clinician(s) for on-scene responses, follow-up care, and case consultation.

Onboarding Process

- Clinicians will be provided with building access and communication ability with staff and dispatch. These items must be returned at the end of an individual's employment, i.e., keys.
- New clinicians will complete the *Mental Health Clinician- Orientation and Training* prior to handling calls for service
- New clinicians will complete a minimum of 16 hours of ride-along/observation time with different officers prior to handling calls for service.
- New clinicians will complete a minimum of 4 hours of observation time with Shelburne Control Safety (Dispatch)

General Duties and Responsibilities

It is the duty of Mental Health Clinicians to:

- Upon hire, complete an initial training program regarding the operation and administration of the Police Department.
- Attend on-going training and education opportunities including those that enhance clinical skills and those that are specific to Department operations.
- Upon arrival to work, review the police log from the former shifts and noting police contact with high utilizers and or people seeking mental health or addiction services and support.
- Respond promptly to calls for service within the Hilltown Regional Response catch area. Calls may include general mental health services, individuals in crisis, addiction services, referrals, outreach to houseless individuals, juvenile behavioral issues, and others. Additionally, clinicians may be directed to respond to scenes where clinical services would be beneficial including abuse or sexual assault matters, accidents, crimes, or events that result in serious injury or death.
- Assist officers with death notifications.
- Notify Dispatch of arrival and clear times from call locations.
- Complete brief call narratives in the IMC Dispatch system prior to the end of shift.

- Complete written narratives if clinicians witness notable activity on a call including crimes or police response to resistance.
- Conduct surveys, evaluations, and assessments as required; prepare and submit required statistical information and reports.
- Work in conjunction with patrol officers.
- Be aware of and make referrals to appropriate social service agencies and organizations.
- Serve as a liaison to other Town departments and service providing agencies.
- Make recommendations regarding training programs and topics that would be valuable for police personnel.
- Attend meetings with the Department's Mental Health Liaison Supervisor and/or Officer to discuss program updates, data and statistics, challenging cases, operational challenges, success stories, community issues and training and resources
- Provide follow-up services to individuals in the community who have had contact with public safety services and who have been identified as in need of follow-up services by police or clinicians. This includes follow-up services for alcohol and drug addiction.
- Collect and maintain data on clinician responses. Provide a Monthly Activity Log to the Chief of Police or his/her designee by the 5th day of the next month.
- Provide an annual report with summary data to the Chief of Police by the 15th day of January each year.

Clothing

The Co-Response Clinician shall report to duty wearing a collared shirt that is clearly marked CLINICIAN on the front and CLINICIAN in large writing on the rear of the shirt. Any outer garments must be marked in a similar way including any jackets/coats or sweaters. The pants must be professional looking but practicable. Footwear must be solid toe and low heeled. The co-responder should be dressed and prepared to respond in all climates and be prepared to be outside. There should be a clear distinction between a civilian clinician and that of a police officer.

Supervision

The Co-responder is an appointed civilian employee of the Town of Ashfield and should follow all rules and regulation set by their employer. However, it should be noted that while under the direction of the police department the clinician will work under the direct supervision of the assigned police officer (Co-Response Officer) during that shift. Clinicians are expected to follow

the reasonable directives of the officer. Concerns with or about clinicians while on duty should be directed to the Ashfield Police Chief.

Addressing Complaints

Any formal complaints that are received on shift shall be directed to the Ashfield Chief of Police.

Injuries

If clinicians are injured while working/providing services for the Hilltown Regional Response (DMH Jail Diversion Grant) it will be reported to the Ashfield Police Chief. The Co-Response Officer will complete an incident report and forward to the Chief of Police. If the clinician was the victim of a crime, an officer shall complete an offense report.