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**Department General Order 5.21  
“The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)  
Response to Person in Crisis Calls for Service”  
Update Packet #55**

The purpose of this directive is to announce Department General Order 5.21, The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Response to Person in Crisis Calls for Service, adopted by the Police Commission on December 21, 2016.

Members shall review this DGO and maintain working knowledge of the policy and procedures related to The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Response to Person in Crisis Calls for Service. (DGO 3.01, B.1)

Department General Order update packet #55 is attached to this bulletin and is available to members on the SFPD Network Intranet site.

The following bulletins on this subject are rescinded:  
DB 16-097 Response by Crisis Intervention Trained Officers  
DB 15-155 Response to Mental Health Calls with Armed Suspects

  
TONEY D. CHAPLIN  
Interim Chief of Police

*Per DB 15-141, both sworn and non-sworn members are required to electronically acknowledge this Department Bulletin in HRMS.*

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**THE CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT) RESPONSE TO  
PERSON IN CRISIS CALLS FOR SERVICE**

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The San Francisco Police Department's highest priority is safeguarding the life, dignity and liberty of all persons. Officers shall demonstrate this commitment in their daily interactions with the community they are sworn to protect and serve. The Department is committed to accomplishing this mission by using rapport-building communication, crisis intervention, and de-escalation principles, whenever feasible, before resorting to force.

The Department is dedicated to providing the highest level of service to all communities, including individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses or other disabilities, as well as those suffering from the adverse consequences of substance abuse and personal behavioral crises.

The Department has adopted the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program to address persons in crisis incidents. CIT members shall use tactics consistent with CIT training to address persons in crisis incidents, with the safety of all of persons being considered.

This order establishes the Department's policy and procedures for the Crisis Intervention Team Response to Person in Crisis Calls for Service.

**I. POLICY**

It is the Department's policy to develop, implement and incorporate the CIT program within the district stations daily operations in a manner that prepares members to respond to persons in crisis incidents and, as a team, formulate a plan, establish rapport, and use de-escalation tactics (including tactical repositioning and creating time and distance), whenever possible. The goal of this order is to safely resolve person in crisis incidents without the use of force, whenever possible, and to refer persons in crisis to community mental health service providers or other resources, as appropriate.

**II. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

- A. CIT Mental Health Working Group: A group consisting of mental health service providers, advocates, community members, consumers of mental health services, their families, and representatives from City departments and agencies who work in partnership with and provide advice to the Police Department, through the CIT Coordinator, on crisis intervention training and policies.
- B. Person in Crisis: A person who is experiencing mental and/or emotional distress, including people suffering from the adverse effects of substance abuse, who is in need of assistance and/or poses a danger to the community or themselves.
- C. Crisis Intervention Training: 40 Hour California Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) certified course of instruction which includes, but is not limited to, crisis de-escalation, signs and symptoms of mental illnesses and substance abuse, and recognizing persons in behavioral crisis.

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- D. CIT Coordinator: A sworn member, designated by the Chief of Police, to oversee the CIT program and CIT administrator.
- E. CIT Administrator: A sworn member assigned to complete the administrative tasks of the CIT program, such as, scheduling training, data collection, program evaluations, officer applications, reports and webpage development.
- F. CIT Liaison Officers: District Station Captains shall designate, at a minimum, a sergeant and an officer to serve as the CIT Liaison Officers who will network with the CIT Administrator and Coordinator. The CIT Liaison Officers shall provide CIT roll-call training, provide members information on CIT resources, participate in debriefings on CIT-related incidents, and attend other meetings as indicated by the CIT Coordinator.
- G. CIT Member: CIT POST certified officer who responds to person in crisis incidents as a contact officer, lethal, less-lethal or resource officer in an effort to resolve the incident.
- H. Crisis Intervention Team: CIT team members are officers who respond to a person in crisis incident utilizing CIT team concepts in an effort to resolve the incident. All members who attend the POST 40 hour Crisis Intervention Training and the 10 hour CIT Field Tactics training will be designated as a Crisis Intervention Team member and may be assigned to CIT team responsibilities outlined in this order.
- I. Contact Officer: The CIT trained officer who contacts a person in crisis (utilizing the T.A.C.T. approach: Tone, Atmosphere, Communication, and Time) to establish rapport with that individual in an effort to resolve crisis incidents and refer the individual to services, as appropriate.
- J. Lethal Cover Officer: An Officer designated to protect the Contact and Less-Lethal Cover Officer and to have ready to deploy, if necessary, lethal force options.
- K. Less-Lethal Cover Officer: An officer designated to have ready and deploy, if necessary, the Extended Range Impact Weapon or other less-lethal force options.
- L. Resource Officer: Officer assigned to brief the supervisor and other arriving units at the scene. As directed by a sergeant or superior officer, the Resource Officer will coordinate traffic control, crowd control, etc. and request additional resources, (i.e., Hostage/Crisis Negotiations Team, Tactical Units, additional officers).

**III. PROCEDURES**

- A. The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) will identify calls for service that involve a person in crisis and will request a CIT member respond to such calls for service.
- B. Response:
  - 1. CIT officers are expected to perform their regularly assigned duties and respond to person in crisis related calls as soon as practical. CIT members

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shall, if feasible, respond immediately to CIT calls for service and assume the roles of Contact Officer, Lethal Cover Officer, Less-Lethal Cover Officer, or Resource Officer.

2. When non-CIT officers are dispatched to or on-view a person in crisis incident, the non-CIT officer shall request a CIT officer, as soon as possible. If no CIT member is available in the district of the occurrence, officers shall have the DEM dispatcher broadcast a city-wide request for CIT members. Under no circumstance will the absence of a CIT member delay the assignment or response to a call regarding a person in crisis.
- C. Engagement: CIT officer shall, when practical, utilize tactics consistent with CIT training, such as, the T.A.C.T. approach: Tone, Atmosphere, Communication, and Time to address persons in crisis incidents with the safety of all of persons being considered.
- D. Detention/Transport: When detaining an individual for a psychiatric evaluation and no criminal charges are pending, officers shall, when feasible, explain to the person in crisis they are not under arrest, but only being transported to a medical or mental health facility for evaluation. Officer should also explain that it is necessary to search and temporarily handcuff them for their safety while being transported to the facility.
- E. Referral: Individuals who are in mental health distress but do not meet the criteria for a 5150 W&I detention should be referred to available mental health resources.
- F. DEM: DEM will designate any call for service that involves a person in crisis with the added "CR" Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) designation to identify Crisis Intervention Team Response calls for service.
- G. CAD Disposition: Members shall use the most appropriate CAD disposition code whenever they clear a dispatched or on-view call for service involving a person in crisis. When a member determines an incident involves a person in crisis, the officer should notify dispatch so that CAD can be updated to reflect the "CR" designation in the call for service (i.e., 219CR, 245CR, 217CR, 800CR).
- H. Supervisory Response: Supervisors shall immediately respond to any person in crisis incident involving a weapon and assume command. The supervisor should consider, where appropriate, developing arrest, crowd control and traffic control teams and evaluate the need for additional resources, such as, H/CNT, Tactical Company, additional officers. Supervisors should consider and evaluate the need to contact and consult with the person's mental health professionals, family members or other individuals, if this may assist in resolving the incident.
- I. Documentation: At the direction of a supervisor, the following documentation shall be completed:
- a. Incident Report: The initial unit at the scene is responsible for completing the incident report, if required, or another officer may do so at the direction of a supervisor.

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- b. CIT Database: The initial unit assigned to the call for service, or any member designated by a supervisor, shall enter the required incident information into the CIT database through the Department smartphone, MDT, or desktop computer.

## IV. CIT ADMINISTRATION

- A. The Chief of Police shall designate a member of the Department, at the rank of lieutenant, to serve as the CIT coordinator. The CIT coordinator's responsibilities include but are not limited to:
  1. Implement and evaluate the CIT program.
  2. Develop and/or coordinate CIT (introductory, advanced, and in-service) related training.
  3. Supervise the CIT administrator.
  4. Collaborate with and provide the District Station CIT Liaison Officers with CIT roll call training, information on emerging issues, and provide briefings on recent CIT related incidents.
  5. Attend CIT Mental Health Working Group meetings and maintain partnerships with mental health providers, mental health consumers, and mental health advocates and engage in community outreach.
  6. Collaborate with other agencies (DEM, DPH, etc.) to identify and recommend best practices for inter-agency responses to person in crisis calls.
  7. Establish CIT screening criteria.
  8. Coordinate, review and analyze CIT data.
  9. Coordinate/Update the CIT website.
  10. Provide reports and recommendations, in consultation with the Mental Health Working Group, to the Chief of Police, the Command Staff, and the Police Commission on the Departments response to person in crisis incidents on a quarterly basis.
  11. The CIT coordinator will meet with stakeholders, subject matter experts and the CIT Mental Health Working Group to identify best practices for interacting with persons in crisis incidents and make recommendations to the Chief and the Command Staff.
  12. The Department shall make reasonable efforts to ensure a minimum of 20-25% of the Patrol Divisions are CIT trained.
- B. A CIT Administrator shall be assigned to assist the CIT Coordinator with the administrative tasks of the CIT program, such as, training and scheduling, data collection, webpage management, program evaluations, incident debriefings and report review and any other duties as designated by the CIT coordinator.
- C. CIT trained members shall be identified in the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) special skills report under CIT.
- D. CIT trained members will be identified by a CIT pin worn above their uniform nameplate.
- E. A CIT awards ceremony will be held annually to recognize officers who demonstrate excellence in the use of CIT principles.

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- F. CIT OFFICER SELECTION CRITERIA: Officers must have completed Department probation and have a positive work history as reflected by supervisory recommendations, personnel records, complaint and lawsuit history and Department Accident Board of Review records.

## V. CIT DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

The Department shall develop a data collection system to allow officer to input information on person in crisis incidents and allow for the review and analysis of CIT data.

- A. The Department CIT Data collection program includes, but is not limited to, the type and location of person in crisis call for service (PIC calls), whether or not the responding officer(s) are CIT trained, the disposition of the call (arrest, 5150 detention, no police action, referral to services), if force was used, any injuries sustained (officer, detainee, other), presence of weapons on the part of individual, including type of weapon, complaints, commendations and/or legal action arising from the incident.
- B. The CIT Coordinator shall develop and provide a yearly report to the Police Commission on the status of the CIT training program, analysis of data reviewed (including, but not limited to the data listed in section A above), and make any recommendations that enhance the Department response to person in crisis calls. This report shall be provided to the Office of Citizen Complaints two weeks prior to release, made public and posted on the CIT and Police Commission webpage.

## VI. TRAINING

The Department will provide ongoing Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) certified courses on Crisis Intervention or other similar training on crisis de-escalation, signs and symptoms of mental illnesses, recognizing persons in crisis, and team response concepts for all officers.

The CIT Coordinator will develop and assist the Training Division in facilitating the CIT training curriculum in the following courses: Introductory, Advanced, roll call, Advanced Officer/Continuing Professional Training and Field Training Officer (FTO) programs.

### References:

Department General Order 5.01 (Use of Force)

Department General Order 6.14 (Psychological Evaluation of Adults)

Department General Order 7.02 (Psychological Evaluation of Juveniles)

Penal Code section 13515.26 (Identification of Areas Where Additional Training is needed to Effectively Address Incidents Involving Mentally Disabled Persons).

Penal Code section 13515.27 (Establishment of Classroom-based Continuing Course Relating to Interaction with Persons with Mental Illness, Intellectual Disability, and Substance Use Disorders).