

Police form Crisis Intervention Team

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The Tinley Park Police Department recently formed a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) comprised of 13 officers specially trained to recognize and respond to a variety of mental health issues while on duty.

“Sometimes, situations involving people with mental health issues can escalate quickly because responding officers aren’t aware there is an underlying issue or issues causing the behavior,” Tinley Park Deputy Chief Lawrence Rafferty said. “This helps to correct that by giving officers the tools and training they need to deal with those situations appropriately.”

Orland Park started its own CIT program, and thanks to a grant from Trinity Health Services was able to invite Tinley Park, along with other surrounding communities, to join them. As part of the program, mental health experts from Trinity are available to offer real-time advice and answer questions via iPads that CIT officers carry with them at all times. Trinity also uses data collected via the iPads to better serve those with mental health issues in the future.

Rafferty said that the ultimate goal is to have 50% of the entire police force CIT-trained, with two to three CIT-certified officers on duty during every shift. The class to become CIT-certified consists of 40 hours of training in scenario-based situations.

“With mental health centers closing across the area, many people in need of real help oftentimes don’t get it,” Rafferty said. “This can help.”

People who call the police with emergencies involving people suffering from a mental health crisis or substance abuse issue can now request a CIT officer. For more information, please contact Sgt. Jon Mittelman at (708) 444-5319.

For a comprehensive list of mental health resources, please visit the [Community Organizations page](#) on the Village website.