

# Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review

## Washington County CIT Program



© Northeast Ohio Medical University 2024



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
COORDINATING CENTER**  
of **EXCELLENCE**  
A NEOMED CCoE



**NAMI**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Ohio**

*The State's Voice on Mental Illness*

## Contents

Participants .....	4
Introduction.....	5
Peer Review Process .....	8
Ohio Core Elements .....	9
Washington County CIT Program Background .....	10
Crisis Response System .....	11
CIT Program Review – Law Enforcement .....	12
1. Policies and Procedures .....	12
2. Patrol Coverage.....	13
3. Officer Selection.....	13
4. CIT Officer Identification .....	14
5. Law Enforcement Coordinator .....	14
6. Information Sharing and Data Collection .....	15
7. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services.....	15
CIT Program Review – Mental Health .....	16
8. Policies and Procedures .....	16
9. Service Linkage and Outreach.....	16
10. Mental Health Coordinator .....	17
11. Program Monitoring and Data Collection .....	17
12. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services.....	18
CIT Program Review – Training .....	18
13. CIT Training Courses.....	18
14. Advanced Training and Refresher Training.....	19
15. The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course is for Experienced Law Enforcement Officers.....	19
16. Training Must be Delivered at Minimal Cost to Law Enforcement Agencies .....	20
17. Training Must be Locally Focused on the Participants' Criminal Justice and Crisis Response System.....	20
18. Training Must Focus on Practical Knowledge and Skills to Respond to a Person in Crisis..	21
19. Training Must be Grounded in Adult Learning Principles .....	21
20. Training Must be Provided by those Prepared to Instruct Law Enforcement and Other Public Safety Personnel.....	22

21. Evaluations of CIT Training Courses .....	22
CIT Program Review – Coordination .....	23
22. Agency Coordinator .....	23
23. Program Coordinators .....	24
24. CIT Steering Committee .....	24
25. Prioritizing Law Enforcement Ownership .....	25
26. Maintaining Partnerships and Sustaining CIT Programs .....	26
27. Ensuring Advocacy Participation .....	26
28. Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion .....	27
29. CIT Program Awareness .....	27
30. Recognition and Honors .....	28
31. Community Expansion and Statewide Contribution .....	28
Next Steps Worksheet .....	29

## Participants

**Officer Jeff Futo (ret.)**

Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence  
Ohio CIT Coordinator - LE  
Facilitator

**Leslie Powlette Stoyer, JD**

Executive Director  
NAMI Summit County  
Peer Reviewer

**Katie Cretella, MBA, MS. Ed, LPCC**

Director of Clinical Services  
CIT Program Coordinator- MH  
Trumbull County MHRB  
Peer Reviewer

**Joe Parkin, BS, MS**

First Responder Liaison  
Crossroads Health, Mentor, OH, Lake County  
CIT Program Coordinator – LE  
Peer Reviewer

**Timothy Hahn**

Assistant Director; Clients Rights Officer, Safety Officer  
Washington County Behavioral Health Board  
CIT Program Coordinator – MH

## Introduction

A Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is an agency or organization that provides a specific service (law enforcement, service provider, etc.) that formally and through written policy has integrated concepts of the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements into their organizational structure. A CIT program is comprised of agency CITs. These CITs are organized to sustain a continuous community partnership between agencies representing law enforcement (LE), mental health (MH), behavioral health providers, local MH and other service boards, the criminal justice system, advocacy (ADV) organizations, families, and those who use behavioral healthcare services. This partnership is designed to facilitate better outcomes when first responders are called to interact with a person in crisis. That person is often in crisis due to unmet mental health needs. However, the person may also be in crisis due to unmet behavioral health needs such as substance use disorders and other life stressors or a combination of issues and needs.

Communities that establish CIT programs do so based on the following goals:

- ✓ Improve the safety of everyone in situations when law enforcement officers interact with persons in crisis.
- ✓ Improve outcomes when law enforcement officers interact with persons in crisis.
- ✓ Increase understanding of, accessibility to, and improve responsiveness by the local crisis response system.
- ✓ Divert persons in crisis from the criminal justice system to treatment alternatives when possible.
- ✓ Transform the local crisis response system to use law enforcement officers as first responders only when there is an immediate or imminent threat to safety or a serious criminal concern.

CIT programs that volunteer to participate in the Ohio CIT Program Peer Review demonstrate a commitment to achieving these goals. The Peer Review focuses on a program's efforts to develop their CIT program based on the Ohio CIT Core Elements. This interdisciplinary and collaborative learning process is coordinated by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence (CJ CCoE) with the support of NAMI Ohio. Through this review, we hope to strengthen community partnerships and deepen our understanding of CIT, which will ultimately positively impact the lives of people in our community experiencing mental health crises.

## Executive Summary

The Washington County CIT Program volunteered to participate in an Ohio CIT Program Peer Review from July to October 2024. Participants included the Washington County CIT Program Coordinator and peer reviewers who are or were CIT program coordinators from other Ohio CIT programs.

The review is designed to help the Washington County CIT Program determine their current level of development in each core element and provide guidance for the next steps in their growth. While the main objective is to help the Washington County CIT Program achieve the goals of Ohio CIT programs, its ultimate purpose is to positively impact the lives of people experiencing mental health crises in their community.

The Peer Reviewers used a standards rubric based on criteria from each core element in the *Core Elements of Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Programs*. The standards rubric can be found in the *Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review Guide*. The standards are:

### **Not Practicing**

A CIT program, their CITs, and *relevant agencies* within the program area are not achieving the core element based on the criteria and there is no supporting evidence, or it is unknown.

### **Emerging Practice**

A CIT program or *one or more relevant agencies* within the program area are beginning to achieve the core element based on the criteria. "One or more" means one to fifty percent.

### **Practicing**

A CIT program or *most of the relevant agencies* within the program area are achieving the core element based on the criteria. "Most" means more than fifty percent.

### **Exemplary Practice**

A CIT program, its CITs, and *all the relevant agencies* within the program area are achieving the core element based on the criteria. "All" means one hundred percent.

The Core Elements of Ohio CIT Programs and this assessment are organized into four categories:

- Law Enforcement
- Mental Health
- Training
- Coordination

On the next page is a summary describing where the Peer Reviewers believe the Washington County CIT Program is in their development of the Ohio CIT Core Elements. Readers are encouraged to explore this document further to see explanations for the reviewers' assessments and suggestions for the next steps for each core element.

## Standards Rubric Key

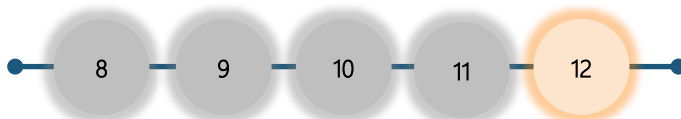


This visual representation shows the Washington County CIT Program's practices compared to each of the 31 core elements for Ohio CIT programs using the standards rubric found in the *Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review Guide*.

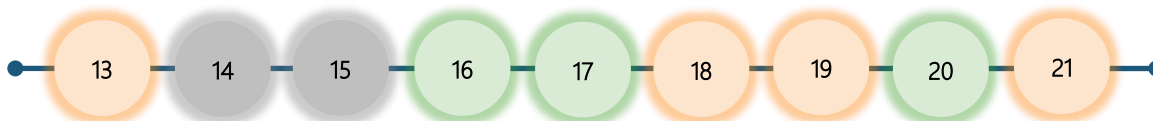
### Law Enforcement



### Mental Health



### Training



### Coordination



The Washington County CIT Program is commended for participating in this peer review to further their understanding of the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements. We hope this process allows community partners to come together to discuss the future of their CIT Program and crisis response system, further build partnerships in their community, and foster greater community ownership.

Documents and materials referenced in this document can be found on the CJ CCoE website at: <https://www.neomed.edu/cjccoe/cit/>

*Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs: A Best Practice Guide For Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis* can be found on the CIT International website at: <https://www.citinternational.org/>

## Peer Review Process

The review was undertaken to assess the program's level of development of the Ohio CIT Core Elements. It consisted of four phases and took around four months to complete.

### Phase 1

Organized program members  
Attended a video conference  
Peer Review Questionnaire  
Provided supporting evidence

In July 2024, the CIT Program organized its members for their participation, learned about the process, completed the Peer Review Questionnaire, and provided documentation.

On August 28, 2024, a video conference was conducted to clarify information and provide reviewers with further background about the program.

### Phase 2

Attended a video conference  
Provided clarifying information

### Phase 3

Reviewers assessed Program  
Created draft report

From August to September 2024, reviewers assessed the CIT Program against the Ohio CIT Core Elements and created a draft report.

In October 2024, the draft report was completed, and the reviewers met for an on-site meeting with CIT Program members on November 4, 2024.

### Phase 4

On-site meeting took place  
Report was finalized

After the on-site meeting, the report was updated to reflect current information, provide further clarification, or resolve discrepancies. Once finalized, the report was released to the CIT Program and published on the CJ CCoE website in the Ohio CIT Program Peer Review section.

## Ohio Core Elements

The Peer Review is derived from the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements. In the *Core Elements of Ohio Crisis Intervention Teams Programs*, thirty-one elements are identified for CIT programs to implement and develop. They are organized into four categories: Law Enforcement, Mental Health Boards and Service Providers, Training, and Coordination. These core elements guide programs to achieve the goals of Ohio CIT programs.

### Law Enforcement (LE)

1. Policies and Procedures
2. Patrol Coverage
3. Officer Selection
4. CIT Officer Identification
5. Law Enforcement Coordinator
6. Information Sharing and Data Collection
7. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Mental Health (MH)

8. Policies and Procedures
9. Service Linkage and Outreach
10. Mental Health Coordinator
11. Program Monitoring and Data Collection
12. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Training

13. Agency Coordinator
14. Program Coordinators
15. CIT Steering Committee
16. Prioritizing Law Enforcement Ownership
17. Maintaining Partnerships and Sustaining CIT Programs
18. Ensuring Advocacy Participation
19. Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
20. CIT Program Awareness
21. Recognition and Honors
22. Community Expansion and Statewide Contribution

### Coordination

23. CIT Training Courses
24. Advanced and Refresher Training
25. CIT Patrol Officer Training Course is for Experienced Law Enforcement Officers
26. Training Must be Delivered at Minimal Cost to Law Enforcement Agencies
27. Training Must be Locally Focused on the Participants' Criminal Justice and Crisis Response Systems
28. Training Must Focus on Practical Knowledge and Skills to Respond to a Person in Crisis
29. Training Must be Grounded in Adult Learning Principles
30. Training must be Provided by those Prepared to Instruct Law Enforcement and other Public Safety Personnel
31. Evaluations of CIT Training Courses

## Washington County CIT Program Background

Washington County delivered its first CIT Patrol Officer Training Course in 2015. Since then, their training courses have graduated over 100 team members. They have trained LE officers in almost every agency in the county. They have delivered the following types of training:

- CIT Patrol Officer Training Course

Their current CIT steering committee is comprised of seventeen community partners representing:

- Advocacy
- People with lived experience
- Behavioral Health
- Law Enforcement

The Washington County CIT Program is currently coordinated through the Washington County Behavioral Health Board. The CIT program coordinator(s) are:

- Timothy Hahn, Assistant Director; Client Rights Officer, Safety Officer, Washington County Behavioral Health Board

The Washington County CIT Program is involved with CIT-related initiatives. They include:

- Training
- Regular CIT steering committee meetings

Washington County is involved with other behavioral health initiatives. They include:

- Washington County Crisis Response Team
- Recovery Engagement Teams
- Stepping Up
- Strengthening Families Program
- Ohio Handle with Care (youth trauma-sensitive strategies program)

## Crisis Response System

Washington County offers crisis services in their community to alleviate immediate psychological distress and engage people in treatment. These services include, but are not limited to:

### **Someone to talk to**

988 crisis phone line (24/7)

Emergency communications centers (1)

- Washington County Sherriff's Office (WCSO)

### **Someone to respond**

LE agencies (7) - Agencies participating in CIT (6):

- Belpre Police Department
- Beverly Police Department
- Marietta College Police Department
- Marietta Police Department
- New Matamoras Police Department
- Washington County Sheriff's Office

### **Somewhere to go**

Receiving centers (1)

- Marietta Memorial Hospital (24/7)

Washington County also provides an array of ancillary services and programs to support people living with mental illness and their families. These services and programs include:

### **Behavioral Health**

Food programs  
Housing programs  
Peer support programs  
Veteran programs  
Youth programs

### **Criminal Justice**

Court specialty dockets  
Jail reentry programs

## CIT Program Review – Law Enforcement

### 1. Policies and Procedures

#### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies have CIT-specific crisis intervention policies



No proof was presented showing that any law enforcement (LE) agency has adopted CIT-specific crisis intervention policies. The policies provided were focused on general crisis response, with no mention of CIT or participation in the Washington County CIT Program. However, reviewers acknowledge the Ohio State Highway Patrol's crisis response policy, its emphasis on CIT, and their efforts within Washington County. Reviewers also recognize the Marietta College Police Department's crisis response policy and their efforts to develop a more robust and comprehensive policy.

#### Next Steps:

Participating LE agencies should adopt CIT-specific policies. These policies will guide officers and public safety telecommunicators (PSTs), clarify agency expectations, support decision-making, and ensure long-term sustainability. Agencies should tailor vendor-provided policies to their specific needs, particularly those related to crisis response and CIT operations. CIT-specific policies should address topics such as:

- A statement that the agency is committed to sustaining a CIT and ongoing collaboration with community partners
- CIT role-based training for select patrol officers and all PSTs
- CIT officers will be dispatched to calls involving persons experiencing a crisis when available and appropriate
- The identification of a CIT coordinator to manage the operations of the CIT and act as the liaison with community partners, including those in the applicable CIT program
- The assignment of identifiable CIT officers within the agency so that they are available to be the primary responders to people experiencing a crisis at any time
- Use of a Crisis Intervention Contact Sheet or similar document/process to document interactions with persons in crisis
- Requirements that the agency continually evaluate the CIT and make changes in response to collected data to improve outcomes and mitigate safety risks to agency personnel and the public

The *Crisis Intervention Law Enforcement Policy Guide* can assist with policy development. It can be found on the CJ CCoE website.

## 2. Patrol Coverage

### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies have a process to distribute CIT officers



No proof was presented that any LE agencies studied their service call data to distribute their CIT officers. LE agencies have not designated specific officers as primary responders to people experiencing a crisis. None of the provided policies reference practices specific to this core element.

#### Next Steps:

LE agencies that actively participate in training should adopt policies that address how their agencies equitably distribute select CIT officers. If an agency has a “train all officers” philosophy, it should designate specific officers to serve as specialists and place language about the “train all” philosophy into policy. Designating all patrol officers as primary responders to persons in crisis is counterproductive to using specialists and is not encouraged.

## 3. Officer Selection

### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies have a review, selection, and recommendation process to identify potential CIT officers



No information was provided to show that any LE agency has a review, selection, and recommendation process to identify CIT officers as specialists. No provided policies reference any practices specific to this core element.

#### Next Steps:

LE agencies that actively participate in training should adopt policies that address how their agency selects when an officer is ready to attend training. If an agency has a “train all officers” philosophy, it should designate specific officers to serve as specialists. Designating all patrol officers as primary responders to persons in crisis because they attended CIT training is problematic, counterproductive to using specialists, and does not promote proficiency through repetition.

#### 4. CIT Officer Identification

##### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies require CIT officers in a specialized team to wear an obvious CIT pin or emblem



Since no provided LE agency policies address the identification of CIT officers, there is no information to show that CIT officers in a specialized team are required to wear an obvious CIT pin or emblem. Other types of proof were not provided. CIT pins are provided to officers after graduating from the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course.

##### Next Steps:

LE agencies that actively participate in training are encouraged to adopt policies that address CIT officers wearing a visible CIT pin or emblem. When combined with a marketing strategy informing the public of the pin or emblem's meaning, community members can easily recognize that a responding officer has specific skills and training for responding to people in crisis.

#### 5. Law Enforcement Coordinator

##### Emerging Practice

- 3 of 7 law enforcement agencies have a designated person within the agency to coordinate its CIT and liaise with other agencies and partners



Marietta PD, Lowell PD, and WCSO have designated points of contact for CIT. Although not formalized in policy, these designated representatives are valuable to developing a CIT program's organizational structure. The CIT Program and these agencies are commended for building pathways where coordination can begin and communication with community partners is enhanced.

##### Next Steps:

LE agencies should elevate their involvement in CIT by developing policies that formalize the roles and responsibilities of its members. Formally designating a CIT coordinator within a LE agency is essential in developing a CIT's organizational structure. Coordinators help align the agency's efforts to achieve the goals for Ohio CIT programs and ensure that each member understands how their contributions enhance the larger mission. CIT coordinators can assist with policy development and implementation, communication with community partners, and goal alignment.

## 6. Information Sharing and Data Collection

### Not Practicing



- No law enforcement agencies share information with program partners about contact with a person in crisis to engage available behavioral health services, and
- No law enforcement agencies are extracting data from contacts to monitor and assess its CITs and interactions with persons in crisis

No information was provided to show that any LE agency shares information with program partners about contact with a person in crisis to engage available behavioral health services. Additionally, no information was provided that any LE agency is extracting data from contacts to monitor and assess its CIT and interactions with persons in crisis.

### Next Steps:

LE agencies are encouraged to begin sharing information with program partners about contacts with persons in crisis. Sharing will allow service providers to engage persons in crisis in available behavioral health services. Information should be provided in a format (e.g., Crisis Intervention Contact Sheets) where data can be easily extracted to monitor and assess a CIT's interactions with persons in crisis and evaluate the Program's overall crisis response.

## 7. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Not Practicing



- No documentation or data showing the use of receiving centers and community resources by law enforcement agencies

Since no LE agencies are extracting data from contacts to monitor and assess their CITs and interactions with persons in crisis, no documentation or data shows the use of receiving centers and community resources by LE agencies. The provided policies did not reference any practices specific to this core element.

### Next Steps:

LE agencies are encouraged to begin collecting and analyzing information about officers' use of the emergency hospitalization process (AKA "pink slipping"). By including information about when officers are taking persons in crisis into custody (ORC §5122.10), the LE agency and the CIT Program can better determine if transports to receiving centers are necessary or improvement strategies are needed. This information should be distributed to the appropriate community partners in a format that describes outcomes and is easily understood.

## CIT Program Review – Mental Health

### 8. Policies and Procedures

#### Not Practicing

- No service providers have published CIT-specific policies and procedures



No information was provided to indicate that the Behavioral Health Board, service providers, or other behavioral health partners have policies or procedures related to their involvement in CIT or their interactions with LE agencies.

#### Next Steps:

The Washington County Behavioral Health Board, service providers, and other behavioral health partners are encouraged to develop policies specific to CIT and how they participate in their CIT program. Their policies should focus on their involvement in CIT, interactions with LE, and monitoring related activity. The CIT Steering Committee is encouraged to develop a formal agreement between program partners to outline the terms and details of the Washington County CIT Program. A Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement (MOU/MOA) should be designed for program partners to express a genuine commitment to their collaboration and set the groundwork for agency policies and procedures. Their receiving center should develop policies and procedures specific to LE transfers of people in crisis to them for care. For those agencies providing service linkage and outreach from LE agencies, their processes should be formalized in writing and provided to the CIT Program. The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course should cover all MH policies and procedures.

### 9. Service Linkage and Outreach

#### Not Practicing

- No relevant service providers have policies and procedures to prioritize service linkage and follow-up to persons in crisis that have had contact with law enforcement



No information was provided to show that service providers have policies specific to service linkage and outreach to persons in crisis who have had contact with LE.

#### Next Steps:

Service providers that provide linkage and outreach to persons in crisis are encouraged to develop policies and procedures that prioritize linkage and follow-up to persons who have had contact with LE, specifically where potential continued criminal behavior is involved.

## 10. Mental Health Coordinator

### Not Practicing

- No service providers have a designated person within their agency to coordinate and liaise with other agencies and partners



No information was provided to show that service providers have a designated person or persons to coordinate their activities within their CIT or CIT program.

### Next Steps:

Service providers should elevate their involvement in CIT by developing policies that formalize the roles and responsibilities of its members. Formally designating a CIT coordinator within a behavioral health agency is an important step in developing a CIT's organizational structure. Coordinators help align the agency's efforts to achieve the goals for Ohio CIT programs and ensure that each member understands how their contributions enhance the larger mission. The coordinator's responsibilities include policy and procedure development, data collection, program implementation and monitoring, and receiving center coordination with LE agencies. They should sustain contact with other CIT community partners to help coordinate LE's role within the crisis response system, contribute to accurate program evaluation, and assist with training.

## 11. Program Monitoring and Data Collection

### Not Practicing

- No data is collected and analyzed relevant to service providers' interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred to them by a law enforcement agency



No information was provided that shows data is collected and analyzed relevant to service providers' interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred to them by a LE agency.

### Next Steps:

The Steering Committee is encouraged to begin developing strategies that encourage service providers to begin collecting data relevant to interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred by a LE agency. Collected and analyzed data can help identify trends and patterns, improve accountability and transparency, and provide a clearer understanding of LE's interactions with people in crisis.

## 12. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Emerging Practice



- 1 receiving center is operating all the time in the service area

Marietta Memorial Hospital is the only receiving center serving Washington County's LE agencies and is open 24/7. The hospital does not have policies specific to transferring a person in a behavioral health crisis from LE officers.

#### **Next Steps:**

Marietta Memorial Hospital is encouraged to develop procedures to receive people in crisis from LE officers and then safely, efficiently, and quickly transition those in crisis to care and assessment.

## CIT Program Review – Training

### 13. CIT Training Courses

### Emerging Practice



- Regularly provides the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course

The CIT Program regularly provides the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. Since their initial training in 2015, they have trained over 100 full-time sworn officers in almost every LE agency. They have also opened the training to corrections officers, court personnel, and PSTs. It is a 40-hour course and is delivered on successive days.

#### **Next Steps:**

The CIT Program is encouraged to broaden the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course based on their training needs. The Program is encouraged to develop a multi-year training plan to provide comprehensive CIT role-based training. This plan should be reviewed annually and include advanced and refresher training.

## 14. Advanced Training and Refresher Training

### Not Practicing

- The CIT Program does not provide advanced and refresher training



No information was provided that the CIT Program has provided advanced or refresher training in the past.

#### **Next Steps:**

The CIT Program is encouraged to design a multi-year training plan incorporating advanced and refresher training. The plan should increase the training complexity over a select number of years. Training should be based on a needs assessment from collected data and other relevant community factors.

## 15. The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course is for Experienced Law Enforcement Officers

### Not Practicing

- The CIT Program does not have a selection process for officers to attend the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course



In Washington County, participating LE agencies prefer to send all their officers to the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. The LE agencies and the Program do not use a selection process.

#### **Next Steps:**

The CIT Program and participating LE agencies should adopt policies that address when officers will attend the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. Selected officers should be experienced volunteers primarily assigned to the patrol function. When policies identifying readiness are adopted, the learning experience is enhanced, active engagement increases, and the impact of the training on participants' skill development and application in real-world contexts is maximized.

## 16. Training Must be Delivered at Minimal Cost to Law Enforcement Agencies

### Practicing

- No training fees are charged to attend CIT training courses



No training fees are charged to attend CIT training courses. Funding for these courses does not come from instructional fees.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program should explore whether funding concerns hinder participating LE agencies from participating in CIT role-based training courses and other program functions. If attending costs are found to prevent participation, the Program should explore available funding sources to reimburse LE agencies for sending staff to CIT role-based training and related activities.

## 17. Training Must be Locally Focused on the Participants' Criminal Justice and Crisis Response System

### Practicing

- Team members attend CIT training courses related to their criminal justice and crisis response systems, and
- Locally sourced instructors instruct team members



The CIT Program instructs their members on their criminal justice and crisis response systems. Instructors are locally sourced and are experienced in the local conventions and methods within their crisis response system.

### Next Steps:

Participating agencies should develop policies and procedures specific to CIT. Once policies and procedures are implemented, the CIT Program should incorporate them into their training courses. The program is encouraged to strengthen their roster of instructors to prevent burnout, account for potential turnover, and provide more training. The CIT Steering Committee should develop strategies to build and sustain instructor development and involvement.

## 18. Training Must Focus on Practical Knowledge and Skills to Respond to a Person in Crisis

### Emerging Practice

- One or more training courses include role-specific instruction on interacting with persons in crisis
- No training courses include role-specific crisis scenarios and practicum ("role plays")



The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course covers interaction with individuals in crisis but does not include practical crisis scenarios and hands-on training.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course currently provides valuable information on interacting with individuals in crisis; however, it lacks practical application through scenarios and practice sessions. To enhance the effectiveness of the training, it is essential to include a "Crisis Scenarios and Practicum," as this is a required topic in the *Core Elements of Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Programs*. This addition would allow participants to apply de-escalation techniques and other learned skills in realistic situations, reinforcing their understanding and building confidence in their ability to respond effectively in real-life crises.

## 19. Training Must be Grounded in Adult Learning Principles

### Emerging Practice

- Training courses have learning/performance objectives
- Training course topics lack sequencing in a carefully considered manner



The agenda for the "Washington County Crisis Intervention Training Course" outlines behavioral objectives for each topic, but a review of the schedule raises concerns about the sequence of sessions. For example, the "Introduction to Mental Illness and Persons in Crisis" is scheduled after the sessions on community resources and de-escalation on the first day. This order may not be the most effective for learning, as understanding mental illness and crisis should ideally come before covering resources and de-escalation techniques.

### Next Steps:

Proper sequencing of training topics is essential in adult learning as it improves comprehension and retention. Adults benefit from a structured approach that builds on prior knowledge, helping them connect new concepts with what they already understand. The steering committee should review the order of topics in their training courses to ensure the most effective sequence for impactful learning. Additionally, when creating performance objectives, using clear action verbs is important as they define expected outcomes and offer measurable ways to assess learning. The Steering Committee should also assess these action verbs and consider developing complete learning objectives that include condition, behavior, and criterion elements.

## 20. Training Must be Provided by those Prepared to Instruct Law Enforcement and Other Public Safety Personnel

### Practicing

- Instructors' materials and content are reviewed, and
- Pre-class meetings take place with instructors to ensure they are effective at content instruction



The CIT Program Coordinator – MH identified in the peer review questionnaire that instructors' materials and content are reviewed before training and that instructors are met with before training to ensure they are effective at content instruction. No other information was provided to review evidence specific to this core element.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to develop a training subcommittee. This subcommittee can review instructors' materials and their ability to deliver them to a role-specific audience. The subcommittee can also work with instructors to enhance other areas of their training and abilities, including understanding the roles and culture of those attending the training course. The Program should put their practices in writing related to how they coordinate, prepare, and support their instructors. Formalizing these practices will help future program coordinators learn how the training program operates and assist with sustaining and advancing current training practices.

## 21. Evaluations of CIT Training Courses

### Emerging Practice

- Training course evaluations are conducted (level 1), or
- Training course topic evaluations are conducted (level 1)



The CIT Program uses surveys to obtain Kirkpatrick Level One (Reaction) feedback from training participants. Evidence was provided for the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course delivered from April 29 to May 3, 2024. Completed course surveys were submitted for review. A summary form of evaluations that provided ratings for topics and their instructors was provided, but no individual or blank evaluation forms for those ratings were provided. In the course evaluation instrument, participants were asked to identify five topics that most impacted them. They were asked to rate the facilities, food, training structure, and if they valued the training. They were also asked to rate their knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) before and after the training was delivered. Finally, the participants were given four open-ended fields about training value, need for change, additional training desired, and any other comments.

**Next Steps:**

The CIT Program should add items to their reaction-level surveys to gather information about the instructor independently of the topic presented. Based on the singular ratings in the summary document, the current instrument appears to ask about the topic and the instructor in a single question, which can lead to confusion about what has been evaluated. This confusion may be detrimental if training designers and managers must determine if the material or instructor needs additional review. Open-field feedback can provide information about poor instructors or material, but it must be extracted. The pre-training and post-training ratings are interesting, but it is unclear if the attendees completed them at the same time. If use continues, the attendees should provide the first rating at the beginning of the course and the second at its conclusion to obtain better pre-training/post-training feedback. Attendee feedback and ratings should be shared with instructors if not already done. Evaluation summaries should continue to be shared with all Program partners, agency leaders, and steering committee members.

The Program should add role-play scenarios to the training course and consider conducting Kirkpatrick Level Two (Learning) evaluations for those scenarios as a learning check or practicum. Skills checklists can be used during scenarios to determine if attendees apply their training. The checklist should contain all the elements and desired behaviors for a successful interaction with a person in crisis and should be rated as either "pass" or "fail." These evaluations could also come from pre-tests/post-tests to determine if the desired knowledge increased. Questions should be used instead of ratings on tests to obtain that data. Items can be created to gauge attitude changes and determine if attendees have learned to interact differently with people in crisis in the future.

## CIT Program Review – Coordination

### 22. Agency Coordinator

#### Emerging Practice

- There are one or more designated agency coordinators in the program



In LE, three agencies—WCSO, Marietta PD, and Lowell PD—have designated coordinators. However, none of the participating MH service providers have identified agency coordinators.

**Next Steps:**

LE and MH agencies should continue to develop policies specific to CIT and define the coordinator position. Participating agencies should designate a coordinator to oversee and manage their CIT activities, including liaising with other agencies and partners within the CIT Program. CIT Program coordinators should continue to educate LE and MH agency leadership on the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements and commit to their role within the CIT framework.

### 23. Program Coordinators

#### Practicing

- 2 of 3 disciplines have a designated program coordinator



The CIT Program has designated Program Coordinators in the MH and LE disciplines. The program is commended for establishing a CIT LE Coordinator.

#### Next Steps:

To ensure the participation of people living with mental illness and their family members and the inclusion of their unique perspectives, the CIT Program is encouraged to build strategies to obtain and develop advocacy leaders and sustain their participation. When feasible, the Program should identify and install a qualified person as a coordinator for advocacy.

### 24. CIT Steering Committee

#### Emerging Practice

- A CIT steering committee is identified, and
- Most of the disciplines have representatives, and
- A chairperson is identified for the CIT steering committee, and
- The CIT steering committee has regularly scheduled meetings, and
- The CIT steering committee meetings have an agenda and activity records



The CIT Program is commended for the composition of its steering committee. By ensuring representation from all three disciplines, the program benefits from diverse perspectives that greatly enhance the quality of its outcomes. The program is also commended for regularly scheduling meetings to facilitate open communication and community partner collaboration. This proactive approach ensures that all involved parties stay informed, exchange valuable insights, and collectively contribute to the ongoing success and refinement of the program. This consistency not only enhances coordination but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility and commitment to the program's overarching goals. However, a chairperson has not yet been formally designated, and activity records are incomplete. The only documentation provided to reviewers were notes written on the agenda, with no additional evidence that activities are being consistently recorded and maintained.

#### Next Steps:

The Steering Committee is strongly encouraged to establish and formalize their operational practices. Beyond regular meetings about training, the committee should establish long-term objectives and develop strategies that actively engage community partners. The Steering Committee should develop written guidelines outlining:

- Their goal or purpose
- Persons and positions needed, along with the disciplines they represent
- Regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings, if needed
- A chairperson to coordinate and facilitate meetings, activities, etc.
- A process to determine who will oversee meetings, agendas, and discussion items
- A process to capture meeting minutes to record discussions and actions taken

While doing so, they are strongly encouraged to enhance their documentation of initiatives and activities, ensuring that meeting minutes are thorough and easily accessible. Creating well-defined agendas, establishing action plans and goals, and diligently tracking progress toward those objectives are important. Consideration should be given to forming subcommittees dedicated to training, crisis response system navigation, and program evaluation.

A well-structured CIT steering committee provides an environment of collaboration, inclusivity, leadership, and structured decision-making. This approach enhances the likelihood of developing and implementing successful CIT strategies that address the community's needs while empowering and supporting individuals and families affected by the issues being addressed.

## 25. Prioritizing Law Enforcement Ownership

### Emerging Practice

- CIT Program actively engages one or more law enforcement agencies about CIT



Most LE agencies in Washington County participate in the CIT Program through training. In the recent past, the Program engaged participating LE agencies about policy and information sharing and data collection with the assistance of the CJ CCoE. No other information was provided to show that the program is currently engaging in CIT strategies beyond training.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to continue to find ways to get investment and participation from LE leadership or other influential community leaders. Getting this investment can also be enhanced by recruiting a prominent person in the community who influences leaders and decision-makers. Strategies can be found in Chapter 2 of *Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis*. The Program is encouraged to document these activities in meeting minutes or other records.

## 26. Maintaining Partnerships and Sustaining CIT Programs

### Not Practicing

- Assessment and improvement strategies are not used



No information was provided that shows that Program leadership continually assesses their strategies against the CIT Model and Ohio CIT Core Elements or implements and improves initiatives using ongoing positive communication with other partners.

#### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to allocate time to developing assessment, improvement, and sustainability strategies. These strategies could include formalizing the operational practices of the Steering Committee, leadership succession planning, and enhanced record-keeping practices. So that the Program does not regress, successful strategies, lessons learned, and knowledge gained should be managed and passed on. Regression avoidance can come from mentoring, workload distribution, robust documentation methods, and knowledge management plans.

## 27. Ensuring Advocacy Participation

### Practicing

- People living with mental illness and their family members participate in training, and
- Advocacy leaders participate in training and program coordination



The CIT Program is commended for its efforts to include advocacy participation. Advocacy leaders, along with individuals living with mental illness and their family members, play an active role in training CIT members for their responsibilities within the program.

#### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to allocate time to ensuring advocacy participation through succession planning. The Program is encouraged to identify critical positions and individuals and create a learning and development process that can be repeated and evaluated.

## 28. Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

### Not Practicing

- There are no strategies in place to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion for team members who bring different perspectives and backgrounds to the program



The CIT Program does not utilize formal strategies to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) for team members who bring different perspectives and backgrounds to the program.

### Next Steps:

CIT programs should ensure that they accurately reflect the populations they serve. The Program should consider dedicating Steering Committee Members or establishing a subcommittee to explore ways to measure their DEI success and strategies to sustain and advance efforts within their program. CIT programs rich in DEI practices can experience a better understanding of community needs, increase trust and engagement, and develop better ways to target and allocate resources more effectively.

## 29. CIT Program Awareness

### Not Practicing

- There are no strategies in place about how to request and identify CIT officers



No information was provided that strategies are in place to request and identify CIT officers.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to develop and implement awareness strategies for community members to request and identify CIT officers and inform them about CIT, its benefits, and how they can interact with members. CIT programs are more impactful when community members know how to identify and gain access to CIT officers and other services encompassing their crisis response system. Trust plays a vital role in cultivating effective relationships between the community and members of the crisis response system, and the Program is encouraged to enhance and fortify this bond.

Further program awareness strategies can be found in Chapter 6 of *Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis*.

### 30. Recognition and Honors

#### Not Practicing



- The program does not regularly recognize and honor their CIT members

In August 2024, the CIT Program recognized its members during an appreciation dinner. However, there are no records of prior recognitions for CIT members. No information or evidence was provided to show that LE agencies consistently recognize and honor their CIT members.

#### Next Steps:

LE agencies should establish formal and informal practices to recognize officers and PSTs who positively engage with people in crisis. Regular recognition of their challenging and honorable work reinforces commitment and promotes a culture of care within the agency. The CIT Program is commended for recently honoring its members and encouraged to do so annually. Expanding recognition to include PSTs, coordinators, MH professionals, individuals with lived experience, and administrators can boost morale, encourage program growth, and raise awareness of the Program.

### 31. Community Expansion and Statewide Contribution

#### Emerging Practice



- Members of the program attend activities at the state level

Through the CIT Program Coordinator – MH, the Program is commended for attending state-level activities, contributing their knowledge and experiences, and helping further the collective understanding of CIT in Ohio.

#### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to engage non-participating LE agencies, find ways to prioritize LE's involvement, and foster positive partnerships. The Program should document efforts and strategies in steering committee meeting minutes and other records. Other members of the CIT Program are encouraged to participate in state-level activities. With further exposure to the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements, members will increase their understanding of CIT and provide valuable guidance to newer members while enhancing their CITs and CIT program.

## Next Steps Worksheet

### Law Enforcement

- Participating LE agencies to adopt CIT-specific policies (1,2,3,4)
- Participating LE agencies to designate CIT coordinators (5,22)
- Participating LE agencies to share information with program partners about contacts with persons in crisis (6,7)
- Participating LE agencies to use Crisis Intervention Contact Sheets (6,7)

### Mental Health

- Washington County Behavioral Health Board to develop policies related to their involvement in CIT (8,9)
- Behavioral Health Board and CIT Steering Committee to develop a formal agreement between program partners to outline the terms and details of the Washington County CIT Program (8)
- Marietta Memorial Hospital to designate a staff member to act as a CIT coordinator (10,22)
- Marietta Memorial Hospital to collect data relevant to their interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred to them by a LE agency (11)
- Marietta Memorial Hospital to develop procedures to receive people in crisis from LE (12)

### Training

- Develop a multi-year training plan that includes advanced and refresher training (13,14)
- CIT Program and LE agencies to adopt policies that address which officers will attend the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course (15)
- Determine if monetary reasons contribute to a lack of participation by LE agencies in CIT initiatives (16)
- Develop strategies to build and sustain instructor involvement (17)
- Add the Crisis Scenarios and Practicum training block to the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course (18)
- CIT Steering Committee to evaluate adding field visits (19)

- Evaluate the sequencing of topics within their CIT Patrol Officer Training Course (19)
- Develop goals for their training courses (19)
- Develop complete learning/performance objectives for each topic (19)
- Review action verbs in current learning objectives (19)
- Develop a training subcommittee (20)
- Record practices in writing related to coordinating, preparing, and supporting instructors (20)
- Evaluation of training courses - Add questions to gather information about instructors (21)

### Coordination

- LE and MH agencies to develop CIT-specific policies and define the coordinator position (22)
- CIT Program to educate LE and agency leadership on the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements (22)
- Build strategies to obtain and develop advocacy leaders and sustain their participation (23)
- CIT Steering Committee to enhance their documentation of CIT initiatives and activities (24)
- Develop strategies to get investment and participation from LE leadership or other influential community leaders (25)
- Develop sustainability strategies (26)
  - Leadership succession planning
  - Enhancing record-keeping practices
  - Workload distribution
- Ensuring advocacy participation through succession planning by developing a learning and development process (27)
- Dedicate CIT Steering Committee members or establish a subcommittee to explore ways to measure their DEI success and strategies (28)
- Explore funding opportunities for continued awareness campaigns (29)
- Promote CIT and other crisis services that do not involve LE or the criminal justice system (29)

- Develop practices to regularly honor and recognize CIT members (30)
- Engage non-participating LE agencies and document their efforts and strategies in their steering committee meeting minutes and program records (31)

---

This report was completed by the Ohio CIT Coordinator & Law Enforcement Liaison for the Ohio Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence in cooperation with the staff of the CJ CCoE, consultants, peer reviewers, and CIT program community partners. For more information or to make inquiries, please contact:

[cjccoe@neomed.edu](mailto:cjccoe@neomed.edu)  
330.325.6861



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
COORDINATING CENTER  
of EXCELLENCE**  
A NEOMED CCoE