

RECOMMENDATION TO THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE
FROM THE ALASKA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

Recommendation 6-2018, adopted September 24, 2018:

Expand Crisis Intervention Training Efforts

The Commission recommends increased effort and funding support for: (1) Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training opportunities, (2) enhanced CIT law enforcement response with a mental health co-response element in existing communities with a CIT program, and (3) establishing the co-response model in communities where there is interest and capacity.

Some local law enforcement agencies and their officers (in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, Juneau, and Fairbanks), as well as some officers and units of the Alaska State Troopers, have been trained in the Memphis model of Crisis Intervention Team training. However, increased and enhanced efforts are needed. Crisis Intervention Team training provides law enforcement officers with skills and knowledge to better respond to individuals experiencing a mental health or behavioral health crisis.

The co-response model involves both a law enforcement officer and a mental health practitioner responding to identified calls involving persons in a mental health crisis to divert the individual (when appropriate) to needed services instead of jail. The co-response approach helps find long-term solutions for individuals whose behavioral health needs led them to the point of crisis. It relieves the burden of law enforcement officers to locate appropriate services for the individual in crisis, decreases the number of repeat calls for service for the same individual, and when appropriate, prevents unnecessary incarcerations.