

To: House Health

Senate Health and Welfare

From: Kristin J. Chandler, J.D.

Coordinator, Team Two

Re: Mental Health Training for Police in Vermont

Date: February, 2023

Required for law enforcement certification: 8 HOURS of Interacting with Persons with Mental Illness

Taught at the Vermont Police Academy for both full time and part time officers during basic training. An officer, a mental health clinician and a lawyer with experience in Vermont's mental health law instruct this class. It's a combination of lecture and video presentations.

Optional: Team Two

Team Two is offered in 5 regions in Vermont every year since 2013. It is a one day, scenario-based training with 36 instructors who facilitate small group discussions among their first responder peers. Team Two is funded through a collaboration between the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Public Safety. It is Vermont's answer to Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), which is a 40 hour training designed for major metropolitan areas. In 2018 or 2019, Vermont State Police made Team Two mandatory for all troopers.

CIT Pilot Program in Washington County

First responders in Washington County can take a 40 hour CIT course, being offered in March on 5 different days over a 2 week period. It is a combination of lecture, role playing scenarios and site visits.

Vermont State Police (VSP): Vermont State Police offer their recruits a pre-basic training that includes 3 hours with a mental health clinician or an attorney instructing on the basic structure of our mental health system in Vermont.

VSP also provides a post-basic training for 4 hours where recruits are run through at least one scenario with actors and a mental health clinician providing feedback.

There is no required follow up or refresher mental health training in Vermont.

Other states require de-escalation/mental health related training:

California: 2 hours every 2 years

Connecticut: 3 hours every 3 years - 3 hours of human relations (including serious mental illness) training as well

Georgia: 1 hour every year - Encouraged (but not required) mental disorder training as well

Maine: 2 hours every year

Massachusetts: 4 hours every year

Michigan: Set advisory standards for mental disorder training

Missouri: 2 hours every year - Mental health training requirement: 2 hours every year

New Mexico: 2 hours every 2 years

Ohio: 2 hours every year

Oklahoma: 2 hours every year

Washington: 2 hours every year