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| Interacting with Persons in Mental Health Crisis | | |



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I. Definitions

A. Elopement

A term used by the mental health system to describe when a person has left a mental health facility or general hospital emergency department before being evaluated by a psychiatrist, after being taken there due to a need for emergency hospitalization as documented by a completed Pink Slip, or due to the need for court-ordered treatment of a mentally ill person as documented by a temporary order of detention from the appropriate Probate Court.

B. Mental Illness

A substantial disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation, or memory that grossly impairs judgment, behavior, capacity to recognize reality, or the ability to meet the ordinary demands of life.

C. Mobile Crisis Response (MCR) Unit

A specialized Division unit composed of highly trained sworn personnel and licensed clinicians from Columbus Public Health whose primary mission is to respond to complex calls for service that involve mental health or substance use. The unit seeks to divert persons in crisis from the criminal justice system by referring them to mental health services or transporting them to area hospitals for treatment as appropriate.

D. Pink Slip

A familiar name given to the Application for Emergency Admission, form DMHAS-0025, created by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to document the probable cause for an emergency hospitalization.

E. Rapid Response Emergency Addiction Crisis Team (RREACT)

A team composed of sworn personnel from the Division of Police and Division of Fire and clinicians from the Central Ohio Area on Aging Agency, Southeast Healthcare, and Franklin County Family and Children First Council (FCFCFC). The team's primary mission is to connect with persons who recently experienced an overdose, according to available historical information and individual referrals, and link them to area treatment centers. RREACT also offers training to first responders and provides educational resources to family members and friends of those struggling with substance abuse.

F. Therapy Dog Unit

A specialized Division unit composed of sworn personnel from therapy dog and certified handler teams whose mission is to enhance police responses, provide assistance during interviews and appointments, and serve as ambassadors during public events. The unit also offers emotional support to residents, first responders, and others involved in traumatic events.

II. Policy Statements

A. Probate Court Order

1. Sworn personnel shall take into custody and transport a person with a mental illness whenever there is a probate court order granting authority to do so. When the court order grants that authority to a foreign agency, sworn personnel shall detain the person and contact that foreign agency to request that they respond and take custody. When the foreign agency will not respond or cannot respond in a timely manner, the individual should be transported to the listed mental health facility for admission under emergency hospitalization.
 - a. Probate court orders are only valid for 10 days.
 - b. A patrol or SWAT lieutenant should consider disengagement with a plan to delay contact or custody when it is reasonably believed continued contact with a non-criminal subject may cause an unreasonable risk to the person in crisis, the public, or law enforcement personnel. Refer to the "Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)" directive for additional information.

B. Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 5122.10, Emergency Hospitalization

1. ORC Section 5122.10 grants that law enforcement personnel may take a person with a mental illness into custody to ensure the safety of the person and others. Under this authority and whenever safe and appropriate, sworn personnel shall take into custody and transport to a mental health facility or hospital for a mental health evaluation any person who, due to the person's mental illness:
 - a. Represents a substantial risk of physical harm to self as evidenced by threats of or attempts at suicide or serious self-inflicted bodily harm;
 - b. Represents a substantial risk of physical harm to others as evidenced by recent homicidal or violent behavior, recent threats that place another in fear of serious physical harm, or other evidence of present dangerousness;
 - c. Represents a substantial and immediate risk of serious physical impairment or injury to self due to the individual's inability or failure to provide for basic physical needs which cannot be made immediately available; or

- d. Is in need of treatment in a hospital for the mental illness due to behavior that creates a grave and imminent risk to the rights of others or the individual.
 - (1) Sworn personnel shall not take someone into custody for emergency hospitalization using ORC Section 5122.01(B)(5). That subsection of the statute requires action by the appropriate Probate Court.
 - (2) A patrol or SWAT lieutenant should consider disengagement when it is reasonably believed continued contact with a non-criminal subject may cause an unreasonable risk to the person in crisis, the public, or law enforcement personnel. Refer to the “Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)” directive for additional information.
2. If a third party (for example, a healthcare provider) requests a transport, sworn Division personnel shall complete an independent assessment to determine whether the criteria in ORC Section 5122.10 are met and either:
 - a. Complete and sign a Pink Slip, or
 - b. Ensure that a Pink Slip previously completed by the third party meets the criteria in ORC Section 5122.10 and that the third party works in a profession legally authorized to issue a Pink Slip.
- C. When available, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officers should respond to calls for service involving persons with a mental illness, persons in a mental health crisis, persons who have attempted suicide, or persons who are threatening suicide. MCR Unit personnel may also be requested if needed.
 1. When at the scene, CIT or MCR Unit officers and supervisors should be responsible for handling the call for service involving a person with a mental illness or a person attempting or threatening suicide due to their additional training and experience. Other responding officers or supervisors should defer to the CIT or MCR Unit officer unless there are extenuating circumstances or a need for some other form of expertise, such as a hostage negotiator.
 2. CIT officers should request a supervisor’s approval before responding to calls for service off their assigned precinct unless dispatched or assigned by Communications personnel.
 3. Refer to the “Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)” directive for additional information about barricaded individuals and requesting a hostage negotiator or SWAT response.
- D. Persons with a mental illness or persons in a mental health crisis being charged with an offense should be processed as any other prisoner. The preferred course of action is that the person be taken to jail even if there is an existing probate order of detention.
 1. For a felony offense, ensure investigative personnel are informed as soon as practical of the person’s mental illness or the belief that the

- person has a mental illness due to observed signs and symptoms of mental illness.
2. For a misdemeanor offense, request a summons or file a warrant when the person is being admitted for a mental health evaluation. Refer to the “Summons and Misdemeanor Citations” and “Arrests and Warrants” directives.
- E. Sworn personnel responding to a call for service at a mental health facility or hospital emergency department shall assess the situation and determine the appropriate action as outlined below:
1. Elopement
 - a. Sworn personnel shall contact someone from the mental health facility and verify that a Pink Slip has been completed or that a temporary order of detention is in effect before searching for the person unless there is an immediate threat of harm to that person or others.
 - b. If the provisions in Section II,E,1,a are not met, responding officers will not take a person into custody without making an independent determination that the person fits the criteria for an emergency hospitalization. Personnel can use information from other sources to develop and substantiate probable cause.
 2. Disturbance or some other call involving a breach of the peace
 - a. Sworn personnel shall only maintain the peace and address criminal offenses as applicable and observed or reported.
 - b. Sworn personnel shall not assist facility staff with the use of mechanical restraints, the administration of drugs, or any other form of treatment.
- F. Sworn personnel may transport persons with a mental illness from a mental health facility or hospital emergency department to another mental health facility or hospital emergency department only when all of the following apply:
1. At the time of arrival, the person is exhibiting violent behavior and/or making threats that place others in fear of physical harm, or evidence can be presented to responding officers to show that the person is likely going to exhibit violent behavior to the extent that other persons present will be subjected to physical harm.
 2. The transport is directly from a facility in the City of Columbus to another facility located in the City of Columbus.
 3. Pre-arrangements have been made between the two facilities and the receiving facility will take the person being transported without question.
 4. The requesting facility has no alternative method of safely transporting the individual.
 5. A PTV or two-officer unit completes the transport.
 6. A sworn supervisor approves the request.
- G. Entry-level Division personnel shall receive documented mental health training. All Division personnel shall receive annual documented training.

III. Procedures

- A. For persons with a mental illness or persons in a mental health crisis who do not meet the criteria for emergency hospitalization under Section II,B, do one of the following:
 - 1. Refer a family member or the person to a mental health facility. When the person is a juvenile, contact the facility listed in Section III,F,3.
 - 2. Refer a family member to the crisis center to request assistance from the Probate Pre-Screeners.
 - 3. Request the person's consent to be transported to a mental health center or hospital emergency department for evaluation. If consent is granted, transport the individual following procedures in Section III,F.
- B. When no transport is made of a person with a mental illness or person in mental health crisis, complete the Mental Health Contact form in the electronic reporting system.
- C. For persons with a mental illness or persons in a mental health crisis who meet the criteria for emergency hospitalization under Section II,B, do the following:
 - 1. Explain all of the following to the individual:
 - a. Sworn officer's name, rank, and employment with the Columbus Division of Police;
 - b. That the person is being taken into custody for emergency hospitalization and is not being placed under arrest;
 - c. The name of the facility to which the person is being transported; and
 - d. That the transport is for an examination by mental health professionals.
 - 2. Take the person into custody in the least conspicuous manner possible.
 - 3. Complete a Pink Slip and note it in the electronic reporting system.
 - a. If a third party already completed a Pink Slip, ensure that it meets the criteria in ORC Section 5122.10 and that the third party works in a profession legally authorized to issue a Pink Slip.
 - b. Contact a supervisor or the MCR Unit if the legality of a Pink Slip is in question.
 - 4. Transport the individual following the procedures in Section III,F.
- D. Completing and processing a Pink Slip
 - 1. List the circumstances and reasons that the person was taken into custody in the "Statement of Belief" section. Include the following:
 - a. How sworn personnel came into contact with the person.
 - b. Symptoms of mental illness reported by the person or witnesses.
 - c. Signs of mental illness observed by sworn personnel or reported by witnesses.
 - d. Risk assessment statements, including any of the following:
 - (1) Current intent to harm him or herself or others to include available plans and/or means.

- (2) Any history of suicidal or homicidal tendencies or previous actions to include the method and outcome.
 - (3) Prior treatment for mental illness and outcome.
 - e. A conclusion supporting the need for the person to be evaluated at a mental health facility.
 - 2. Ensure that all blocks on the form are completed to include the signature on the second page.
 - 3. Present the Pink Slip when submitting the person for admission to the mental health facility or hospital emergency department.
- E. Elopement
- 1. Locate the individual who eloped from the mental health facility and determine along with mental health facility staff the appropriate course of action for the individual.
 - 2. If directed, transport the individual to a hospital emergency department and determine if a second Pink Slip is needed.
 - 3. Complete an Aid and Transport incident report.
- F. Transporting Persons with a Mental Illness or Persons in a Mental Health Crisis
- 1. Transport adults to one of the following locations:
 - a. Crisis care or crisis facility (if available). Refer to the "Crisis Care/Crisis Facilities" document available on the "CIT (Crisis Intervention)" page of the Division's intranet.
 - b. Any area hospital. Any person who needs medical attention must be transported to an emergency department.
 - 2. Transport military veterans to Riverside Methodist Hospital Emergency Department. If charges are filed against a military veteran, refer the case to mental health court by making a notation at the bottom of the narrative on the Arrest Information, form U-10.100.
 - 3. Transport juveniles to one of the following locations. Call the Nationwide Children's Emergency Communication Center line at (614) 722-6868 prior to transport. The number is always monitored.
 - a. Nationwide Children's Hospital Emergency Department when the person is 17 years of age or younger and needs medical attention.
 - b. Nationwide Children's Hospital Behavioral Health Center when the person is 17 years of age or younger and only needs behavioral health services. Enter the sally port at the rear of the building from 431 Metzel Road.
 - 4. Complete an electronic Aid and Transport incident report. If requested, contact the Records Unit to have a copy of the report faxed or emailed to the facility.
 - 5. ***Advise the receiving facility if the individual has property that could potentially harm facility personnel or that resembles a***

weapon. If the facility refuses to accept the property, turn it in for safekeeping as outlined in the “Property and Evidence Handling” directive.

6. Remain at the facility until:
 - a. The facility receives a copy of the Aid and Transport incident report (if requested),
 - b. Any paperwork needed from sworn personnel to admit the person is completed and submitted, and
 - c. The facility accepts custody or responsibility for the person.
- G. Responding to Information Received from a Mental Health Professional of an Immediate Threat Made by a Person with a Mental Illness to Kill or Cause Serious Physical Harm to a Known Individual
 1. Communications Personnel
 - a. When the threat is not within the City of Columbus, notify the appropriate foreign agency.
 - b. When the threat is within the City of Columbus:
 - (1) Dispatch sworn personnel to the potential victim’s location.
 - (2) Dispatch sworn personnel to the reporting mental health professional’s location to complete the appropriate electronic incident report.
 - (3) Notify the affected precinct sergeant.
 - (4) Create a premise file for the address of the potential victim.
 - c. When contacted by the potential victim regarding the threat, dispatch sworn personnel as appropriate.
 2. Sworn Personnel Responding to a Potential Victim’s Location
 - a. Attempt to locate the potential victim and determine his or her well-being.
 - b. If located, notify the victim of the threat and provide the incident report number.
 - c. If not located, leave a message for the victim to contact the Emergency Communications Center and include the phone number and incident report number.
 - d. Contact personnel completing the incident report and inform them of the notification disposition.
 3. Sworn Personnel Dispatched to the Mental Health Professional’s Location
 - a. Complete the appropriate electronic incident report and include the notification disposition in the report narrative.
 - b. Notify other sworn personnel of any pertinent information as appropriate.
 4. Precinct Supervisor
 - a. Notify the zone lieutenant of the threat.
 - b. Monitor the situation.

- c. Set up guard duty or a house watch as necessary.
 - d. Relay the information to the oncoming watch.
- H. Processing a Probate Court Order from Franklin County
- 1. Sworn Personnel
 - a. Upon notification of a probate court order, contact the Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) Records at (614) 525-3364 to verify the validity of the probate court order and determine if any officer safety and/or other additional information is contained in the probate court order.
 - b. If the probate court order is active, contact a sworn supervisor.
 - c. If serving the probate court order or completing the transport, complete an Aid and Transport incident report, and include the FCSO supervisor's name and contact information in the report.
 - 2. Sworn Supervisor
 - a. Contact the FCSO Communications Center at (614) 525-2511 upon notification by sworn personnel of an active probate court order.
 - b. Determine if FCSO is going to serve the probate court order.
 - c. If FCSO is unable to serve the probate court order, contact an on-duty FCSO supervisor and:
 - (1) Determine if FCSO wants the Division's assistance in serving the probate court order.
 - (2) Determine where the person should be transported based on the probate court order.
 - (3) Ensure a copy of the probate court order is faxed to the receiving facility.
 - (4) Provide the FCSO supervisor's name and contact information to the transporting officers and ensure it is included in the Aid and Transport report.
- I. Disengagement
- 1. Sworn Personnel
 - a. If a patrol or SWAT lieutenant authorizes disengagement, document the following information in the appropriate incident report:
 - (1) Attempts by sworn personnel to encourage the person to surrender peacefully (for example, requesting CIT or MCR Unit personnel)
 - (2) Any actions taken by the person that led to the disengagement
 - 2. Patrol or SWAT Lieutenant
 - a. Assess the situation in accordance with the criteria outlined in Sections II,A,1,b and II,B,1,d,(2).
 - b. Authorize disengagement when appropriate and determine any necessary follow-up actions.