

STATE CAPITOL POLICE  
**OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE**  
CONNECTICUT

STATE CAPITOL POLICE DEPARTMENT

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**Release Date:** March 28, 2007

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(Hartford, Connecticut)---The State Capitol Police Department announces the formation of a Crisis Intervention Team.

Law enforcement officers on the front line in the community are often the first social services provider that the mentally ill or persons in crisis come in contact with. The encounter in these situations has oftentimes been unpredictable, at times violent, and on occasion deadly. Historically, officers have not had the training and resources available to them to effectively deal with such persons and have resulted to physical force, arrest or temporary committals at a local emergency room as ways to deal with a situation. The end result has been patrol down time, personal injury, civil liability, and public outcry for a more effective response by the police.

Chief Michael J. Fallon announced on Wednesday, March 28, 2007, that the State Capitol Police Department will join a statewide initiative to provide Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to create patrol specialists at the State Capitol capable of responding to assist such individuals. The CIT will consist of specially trained SCPD officers and mental health professionals working side by side to achieve the common goal of safety, understanding, and service to the mentally ill, persons in crisis and their families. This statewide initiative is funded by the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and training is delivered by the Connecticut Alliance to Benefit Law Enforcement, Inc. (CABLE) and endorsed by the Connecticut Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

The State Capitol Police Department is unique in that it is one of the first State agencies of its kind in the country to deploy Crisis Intervention Teams within the boundaries of a state capitol's campus. Chief Fallon commented, "The CIT is an excellent addition to the State Capitol Police Department and I am confident that it will prove itself to be a valuable resource in dealing with the mentally ill and persons in crisis."

State Capitol Police CIT members will perform their regular duties on their assigned shifts. Should a situation at the Capitol present itself they will be able to respond at a heightened level to assist those who are involved and in need. In addition to what has been noted the possibilities of utilizing this training are endless; death notifications, victim assistance of all types, or police personnel related traumas. Essentially the officers will be able to ask and say the right things and be able to access the appropriate resources. Louise Pyers of CABLE commented, "The State Capitol is a vibrant place that is accessible to a diverse assembly of people...it is wonderful and reassuring to have the State Capitol Police Department participating in the CIT program."

The training consists of an intensive one week course. During the training officers will learn about various mental disorders, grief, post incident traumatic stress, field interview/de-escalation techniques and resources that police officers can access to better serve persons in crisis. There are no training fees.

The State Capitol Police Department will have access to crisis clinicians from the Capitol Region Mental Health Center who will be available to respond to State Capitol Police Department's requests for assistance.[end]