



ACTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

		DEPARTMENT MANUAL; P&P: Operations	
POLICY & PROCEDURE # 1.45		DATE OF ISSUE: 7/14/2023	EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/14/2023
SUBJECT: Clinical Staff Responder		ISSUING AUTHORITY: Chief James Cogan	
REFERENCE(S): Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission: None		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X___NEW ___AMENDS ___RESCINDS	

I. PURPOSE

- A. On January 10, 2022, the Acton Police Department implemented a new position of Clinical Staff Responder to support the ongoing work of the Jail Diversion Program. The foundation of this position brings a Master's level clinician into the Department full-time to help evaluate persons experiencing a mental health crisis in the field where they are located, and hopefully avoid unnecessary and costly hospitalizations and/or criminal involvement for minor offenses related to mental health needs, connecting them to the appropriate supports and services.

II. POLICY

- A. The clinician will respond with officers to calls for service and assist when the officer believes their expertise will be useful. The clinician should be considered a member of the Department, and a part of our team. In addition to providing services to individuals in the community, the clinician serves as a resource to department members, providing training and education on a variety of mental health topics.
- B. The clinician can help in many different ways including but not limited to de-escalation, crisis intervention, suicide evaluations, well-being checks, in-custody evaluations, death notifications, support at large-scale events (fires, traumatic accident scenes, drownings, etc.), overdoses, and incidents involving or affecting children. If the need arises, the clinician can write a Section 12, and help assist in gathering information for a Section 35. The clinician also provides mental health support, referrals, and resources for calls received by the Communication Center for callers requesting mental health services.
- C. This program has been tried and has been highly successful in multiple communities. It works best when officers build a working relationship with the clinician, and the clinician is out on patrol with officers. Officers should call for

the clinician to respond to calls involving a person experiencing a mental health-related issue. It is the officer's responsibility to do their best to ensure the scene is safe for the clinician to enter. The clinician is also available for follow-up on less acute situations after the fact where mental health/ substance abuse is present and referrals may be needed.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Dispatching the Clinician

The clinician can be dispatched to calls for service in a few different ways depending on the need:

1. Communication Center staff may advise the OIC of the potential need for a clinical response based on the nature of the call.
2. The OIC, upon assessment, may request the Communication Center dispatch the clinician during in-progress calls.
3. The clinician may contact the Communication Center while monitoring radio transmissions to consider the need for a clinical response as determined by the OIC.
4. Officers on scene may request a response from the clinician to provide on-scene services and resources.

B. Responding to calls

The clinician can arrive to calls either while riding with an officer, or if it is determined that the clinician will respond to a call already in progress, they will respond in a department-issued vehicle and notify the OIC upon arriving at the scene for further direction.

CLINICAL STAFF RESPONDER INFORMATION

History: None