



LAGRANGE
GEORGIA

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 6, 2018

LaGrange Police Department Hosting Georgia Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training Program

LaGrange, Ga. February 6, 2018 – Nearly two dozen law enforcement officers and deputies from the region are participating in Georgia Crisis Intervention Team, or CIT, training in LaGrange this week.



LPD hosts CIT Training this week

Law enforcement from LaGrange Police and the Troup County Sheriff's Office, as well as officers from Fairburn and Marietta are participating in the week-long training at the LPD Training Center.

The objectives of the program include training law enforcement officers to safely respond to persons in a behavioral health crisis, protect the rights of the people with behavioral health disorders, and ensure people with behavioral health disorders receive treatment in lieu of being put in jail, when appropriate.

The objectives also include improving the quality and quantity of behavioral health services as well as promoting the training for criminal justice system personnel on mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease, and addictive disease.



An LPD Officer participates in the Georgia Crisis Intervention Team Training Program

“If there is any way you can work around putting a person with a mental disorder in jail, that’s what we want you to do,” said LPD Officer Natalie Belcher.

Belcher works as the social service case worker in the department.

“We always want to strive to have a peaceful resolution,” she said.

LPD began CIT training for its officers in 2006.

All officers within the department are CIT certified.

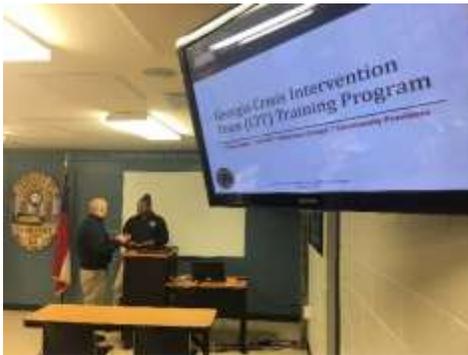
The Georgia CIT Program is a collaboration of professionals committed to assisting persons with behavioral health disorders (mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer’s disease and addictive disease).

This collaboration includes local members of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), mental health service providers, individuals in mental health recovery, family members, law enforcement officers, and members of the judicial system.

Since the LaGrange Police Department started CIT training, its use of force incidents have dramatically decreased.

In 2010, out of 5,488 arrests there were 105 use of force incidents.

Last year in 2017, out of 4,208 arrests there were 37 use of force incidents, a 65% decrease.



LPD hosts CIT Training this week

“There is a direct correlation in the reduction of use of force incidents and the ongoing training our officers receive,” said Lt. Eric Lohr.

“This training more effectively helps us deal with citizens with mental illness.”

The training continues through Friday.

For more information on CIT Training go to www.ganet.org/gbi/cit

Media Contact: Lt. Eric Lohr, ELohr@lagrangega.org or (706) 883-2684
Officer Natalie Belcher, nblackstock@lagrangega.org or (706) 883-2632

To keep up with the latest news involving the City of LaGrange, go to www.lagrangega.org or follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/lagrangegagov, Twitter at [@lagrangegagov](https://twitter.com/lagrangegagov), & Instagram at instagram.com/cityoflagrangega

###