



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 41.25.1

TITLE: CRISIS INTERVENTION – MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE SERVICES

EFFECTIVE: 8/27/2023

REVISED: New Policy

PURPOSE

1. Calls for service regarding persons experiencing mental health emergencies should receive service that is aligned with best practices while not elevating risks to first responders, the subject of the emergency, and the public. The goal is to provide the most appropriate care.
2. The New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) shall support the City of New Orleans in providing mobile crisis response services to residents and visitors experiencing a mental health emergency. Through a professional services contract managed by the New Orleans Health Department, Resources for Human Development (RHD) will provide 24/7 mobile crisis triage and response to calls for service that meet the established contract criteria.
3. During all encounters, NOPD members will consider whether the individual may be in crisis. The ideal resolution for a person in crisis incident is that the individual is diverted from the criminal justice system and connected with resources that can provide long-term stabilizing support. (See: **Chapter 41.25 – Crisis Intervention**)

DEFINITIONS

Crisis—An incident in which someone is experiencing intense feelings of personal distress (e.g., anxiety, depression, fear, anger, panic, hopelessness), obvious changes in functioning (e.g., neglect of personal hygiene, unusual behavior), or catastrophic life events (e.g., disruptions in personal relationships, support systems, or living arrangements; loss of autonomy or parental rights; victimization; natural disasters), which may, but not necessarily, result in an upward trajectory or intensity culminating in thoughts or acts that are possibly dangerous to his or herself and/or others.

Crisis intervention—The attempt by a member to de-escalate an encounter with an individual in crisis and return the individual to a pre-crisis level or divert the person to other services when appropriate.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)—The Crisis Intervention Team is composed of certified officers who respond to persons in crisis, with the objective of diverting them from the criminal

justice system and connecting them to appropriate mental health and substance use treatment services.

CIT officer—A commissioned member of the NOPD who has volunteered, been selected, received 40 hours of specialized training for crisis-related calls for service, and been certified as a Crisis Intervention Team officer. In addition to their regular duties, CIT officers are specifically assigned as primary responders to crisis disturbance calls. CIT officers are assigned to each NOPD district and maintain their standard patrol duties except when called to respond to potential crisis events. CIT officers work in cooperation with community partner mental health facilities and organizations.

Dangerous to others—The condition of a person whose behavior or significant threats supports a reasonable expectation that there is a substantial risk that he or she will inflict physical harm upon another person in the near future (La. R.S. 28:2(3), ChC. Art 1404(3)).

Dangerous to self—The condition of a person whose behavior, significant threats, or inaction supports a reasonable expectation that there is a substantial risk that he or she will inflict physical or severe emotional harm upon his or her own person (La. R.S. 28:2(4), ChC. Art 1404(4)).

Individual in crisis—An individual in a state of crisis (see **Crisis** under **Definitions**). The individual in crisis is referred to as the “consumer” on the Crisis Intervention Form.

Mental Illness—A mental illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking, feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. Refer to La.R.S. 28:2(20) and ChC. Art 1404(17) for state definitions.

MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT (MCRU) - a team of mental health care professionals employed by Resources for Human Development (RHD) working under contract for the City of New Orleans who are tasked with responding to calls involving persons suffering from a mental health crisis. This unit is authorized to provide mental health services to citizens in need of care under an existing contract with the City of New Orleans Health Department.

Receiving facility—For the purposes of this Chapter, receiving facility refers to any screening and treatment facility that can provide a mental health examination.

GUIDELINES FOR MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE UNIT (MCRU)

4. The mobile crisis response program is administered using the following guidelines:
 - a) All calls for service shall be created and managed in the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system by OPCD.
 - b) Resources for Human Development (RHD) shall have access to the computer-aided dispatch system to receive pertinent information about the call for service.
 - c) To ensure responder safety, OPCD and RHD staff shall ensure the movement and status of their responding units is documented in the computer-aided dispatch system.
 - d) OPCD shall make the data related to calls for service available to the management team of all stakeholder agencies.

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES RESPONSIBILITIES

5. Calls for service relative to mental health emergencies may be received from various mechanisms to include 9-1-1 calls, non-emergency calls, and requests from first responders in the field.
6. **Responders on scene** from the New Orleans Police Department, New Orleans Fire Department or New Orleans Emergency Medical Services **may request the Mobile Crisis Response Unit (MCRU) to their location** should they determine

- that is the more appropriate care on scene. MCRU shall make the final assessment on the appropriateness or suitability of their response.
7. NOPD members requesting a mobile crisis team response shall do so using their mobile radio to OPCD on the primary dispatch channel of the District in which they are operating.
 8. Upon receiving a call for service from OPCD or a request from NOPD unit(s) on the scene, the Mobile Crisis Response Unit will conduct a more detailed assessment to determine if they are the appropriate entity to respond. If it is determined by MCRU that the call for service does not meet the criteria for their response, or there is a more immediate threat and the most appropriate response is to dispatch NOPD, NOEMS and/or NOFD, they will notify OPCD immediately and the appropriate incidents shall be created in the computer-aided dispatch system.
 9. The quality of information gathered by officers on the scene can affect the way MCRU responds to and resolves a request from field units to respond. Gathering information is critical at all stages in assessing the situation but is particularly critical at the beginning.
 10. The Table below provides guidance and information on how OPCD and MCRU classifies response responsibilities by agency for dispatch.

**Incident Types in Computer Aided Dispatch System
(Who will be dispatched by OPCD)**

Incident Type	Description	NOPD	NOEMS	NOFD	RHD/MCRU
SUIA (29SA)	Suicide Attempt	X	X	X	
SUIT (29ST)	Suicide Threat	X			
MENTAL	Violent Mental Person	X			
CIT	Non-Violent Mental Person	X			
MCR	Mobile Crisis Response Unit				X

11. Prior to requesting MCRU for an on-scene “hand-off” and to properly address the situation, officers will attempt to determine:
 - a) The severity of the behavior;
 - b) The potential for rapid change in behavior;
 - c) The potential for physical danger presented by the person in distress to himself/herself or others;
 - d) Harmless behavior which appears to be related to an illness, disorder, or disability; and
 - e) Indication of urgent mental health needs.
12. Once the on-scene assessment is done and officers have determined that the individual is not an immediate threat to themselves or others and relatively stable, they may request MCRU for an on-scene “hand-off” if they are available. This will be done through the OPCD Dispatcher on the District talk group.
13. MCRU will only accept “hand-offs” from NOPD officers on the scene in those cases where it is safe for them to do so. The MCRU is the final determinant of the viability for an on-scene “hand-off”.

14. If the “hand-off” is accepted by MCRU, NOPD officers can clear from the scene and mark their efforts as REF (“Referred to other agency”) with the OPCD Dispatcher and provide the MCR Unit number (i.e., REF with MCU11). No documentation (CIT Form, FIC, EPR, etc.) needs to be completed by NOPD for calls handed off to MCRU.

CRISIS INTERVENTION FORM AND INCIDENT DOCUMENTATION

15. Upon completion of a crisis intervention incident involving a 103M, 29ST or 29SA, or any other signal in which a CIT officer is specifically dispatched for crisis intervention purposes, the CIT officer or responding officer shall complete and submit the electronic Crisis Intervention Form (Form #348). Officers do not need to complete a Crisis intervention Form on gone on arrival (GOA) calls. An FIC is only required if the CIT encounter stems from a self-initiated stop or other presumptive criminal investigation. (See: **Chapter 41.12 – Field Interview Cards**).
16. Protected Health Information (PHI) contained on CIT Forms and databases are restricted to the CIT Program Coordinator. PHI shall not be shared internally or externally except as authorized by law or a court order.

CALL DISPOSITIONS

17. Classifications of calls for service involving 103M, 29ST, 29SA, or any other signal in which a CIT officer is specifically dispatched for crisis intervention purposes must be marked up according to the guidelines of **Chapter 82.4 – Complaint Signals – Changing of Item Signals and Dispositions** when they cannot be referred to MCRU.

BODY WORN CAMERA

18. Officers shall utilize body worn cameras in accordance with **Chapter 41.3.10 – Body Worn Cameras** to document the entirety of the event, from arrival up to and including the transfer of the individual to Central Lock-Up or a receiving facility.

TRAINING

19. The Captain of the Education and Training Division or his/her designee shall develop a plan for training officers who respond to crisis intervention calls which are handled by MCRU in accordance with this Chapter and Department policy. Training will reflect changes in policy, law, and developments in best practices over time.