

# Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review

## Summit County CIT Program



**CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
COORDINATING CENTER  
of EXCELLENCE**  
A NEOMED CCoE



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National Alliance on Mental Illness

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## Participants

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## Introduction

A Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is created within an agency or organization that provides a specific service (law enforcement, service provider, etc.) that has formally and through written policy integrated concepts of the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements into their organizational structure. A CIT program is comprised of agency CITs. These CITs are organized to sustain a continuous community partnership between agencies representing law enforcement (LE), mental health (MH), behavioral health providers, local MH and other service boards, the criminal justice system, advocacy (ADV) organizations, families, and those who use behavioral healthcare services. This partnership is designed to facilitate better outcomes when law enforcement is called to interact with a person in crisis. That person is often in crisis due to unmet mental health needs. However, the person may also be in crisis due to unmet behavioral health needs, such as substance use disorders and other life stressors, or a combination of issues and needs.

Communities that establish CIT programs do so based on the following goals:

- ✓ Improve the safety of everyone in situations when law enforcement officers interact with persons in crisis.
- ✓ Improve outcomes when law enforcement officers interact with persons in crisis.
- ✓ Increase understanding of, accessibility to, and improve responsiveness by the local crisis response system.
- ✓ Divert persons in crisis from the criminal justice system to treatment alternatives when possible.
- ✓ Transform the local crisis response system to use law enforcement officers as first responders only when there is an immediate or imminent threat to safety or a serious criminal concern.

CIT programs that volunteer to participate in the Ohio CIT Program Peer Review demonstrate a commitment to achieving these goals. The Peer Review focuses on a program's efforts to develop their CIT program based on the Ohio CIT Core Elements. This interdisciplinary and collaborative learning process is coordinated by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence (CJ CCoE) with the support of NAMI Ohio. Through this review, we hope to strengthen community partnerships and deepen our understanding of CIT, which will ultimately positively impact the lives of people in our community experiencing mental health crises.

## Executive Summary

The Summit County CIT Program volunteered to participate in an Ohio CIT Program Peer Review from November 2025 to February 2026. Participants included CIT Program members and experienced peer reviewers who are or were CIT program coordinators from other Ohio programs.

The review is designed to help the Summit County CIT Program determine their current level of development in each core element and provide guidance for the next steps in their growth. While the main objective is to help the Program achieve the goals of Ohio CIT programs, its ultimate purpose is to positively impact the lives of people experiencing mental health crises in their community.

The Peer Reviewers used a standards rubric based on criteria from each core element in the *Core Elements of Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Programs*. The standards rubric can be found in the *Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review Guide*. The standards are:

### **Not Practicing**

A CIT program, their CITs, and *relevant agencies* within the program area are not achieving the core element based on the criteria and there is no supporting evidence, or it is unknown.

### **Emerging Practice**

A CIT program or *one or more relevant agencies* within the program area are beginning to achieve the core element based on the criteria. "One or more" means one to fifty percent.

### **Practicing**

A CIT program or *most of the relevant agencies* within the program area are achieving the core element based on the criteria. "Most" means more than fifty percent.

### **Exemplary Practice**

A CIT program, its CITs, and *all the relevant agencies* within the program area are achieving the core element based on the criteria. "All" means one hundred percent.

The Core Elements of Ohio CIT Programs and this assessment are organized into four categories:

- Law Enforcement
- Mental Health
- Training
- Coordination

On the next page is a summary describing where the Peer Reviewers believe the CIT Program is in their development of the Ohio CIT Core Elements. Readers are encouraged to explore this document further to see explanations for the reviewers' assessments and suggestions for the next steps for each core element.

## Standards Rubric Key

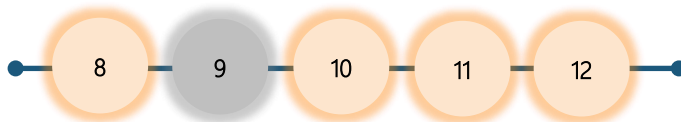


This visual representation shows the Summit County CIT Program's practices compared to each of the 31 core elements for Ohio CIT programs using the standards rubric found in the *Ohio Crisis Intervention Team Program Peer Review Guide*.

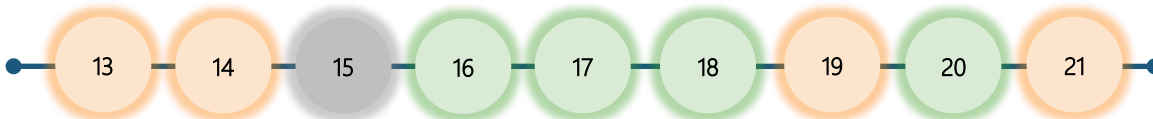
### Law Enforcement



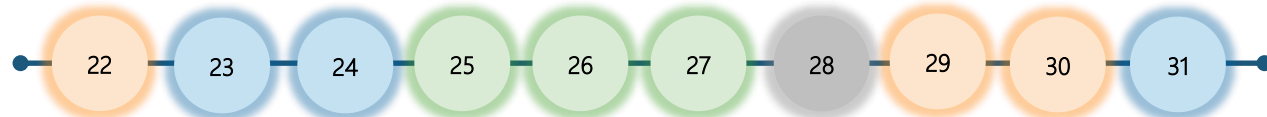
### Mental Health



### Training



### Coordination



The Summit County CIT Program is commended for participating in this peer review to further their understanding of the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements. We hope this process allows community partners to come together to discuss the future of their CIT Program and crisis response system, further build partnerships in their community, and foster greater community ownership.

Documents and materials referenced in this document can be found on the CJ CCoE website at: <https://www.neomed.edu/cjccoe/cit/>

*Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis* can be found on the CIT International website at: <https://www.citinternational.org/>

## Peer Review Process

The review was undertaken to assess the Program's level of development of the Ohio CIT Core Elements. It consisted of four phases and took around four months to complete.

### Phase 1

Organized program members  
Attended a video conference  
Peer Review Questionnaire  
Provided supporting evidence

In November 2025, the CIT Program organized its members for their participation, learned about the process, completed the Peer Review Questionnaire, and provided documentation.

On December 16th, 2025, a video conference was conducted to clarify information and provide reviewers with further background about the program.

### Phase 2

Attended a video conference  
Provided clarifying information

### Phase 3

Reviewers assessed Program  
Created draft report

From December 2025 to January 2026, reviewers assessed the CIT Program against the Ohio CIT Core Elements and created a draft report.

In February 2026, the draft report was completed, and the reviewers met for an on-site meeting with CIT Program members on February 18, 2026.

### Phase 4

On-site meeting took place  
Report was finalized

After the on-site meeting, the report was updated to reflect current information, provide further clarification, or resolve discrepancies. Once finalized, the report was released to the CIT Program and published on the CJ CCoE website in the Ohio CIT Program Peer Review section.

## Ohio Core Elements

The Peer Review is derived from the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements. In the *Core Elements of Ohio Crisis Intervention Teams Programs*, thirty-one elements are identified for CIT programs to implement and develop. They are organized into four categories: Law Enforcement, Mental Health Boards and Service Providers, Training, and Coordination. These core elements guide programs to achieve the goals of Ohio CIT programs.

### Law Enforcement (LE)

1. Policies and Procedures
2. Patrol Coverage
3. Officer Selection
4. CIT Officer Identification
5. Law Enforcement Coordinator
6. Information Sharing and Data Collection
7. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Mental Health (MH)

8. Policies and Procedures
9. Service Linkage and Outreach
10. Mental Health Coordinator
11. Program Monitoring and Data Collection
12. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Training

13. CIT Training Courses
14. Advanced and Refresher Training
15. CIT Patrol Officer Training Course is for Experienced Law Enforcement Officers
16. Training Must be Delivered at Minimal Cost to Law Enforcement Agencies
17. Training Must be Locally Focused on the Participants' Criminal Justice and Crisis Response Systems
18. Training Must Focus on Practical Knowledge and Skills to Respond to a Person in Crisis
19. Training Must be Grounded in Adult Learning Principles
20. Training must be Provided by those Prepared to Instruct Law Enforcement and other Public Safety Personnel
21. Evaluations of CIT Training Courses

### Coordination

22. Agency Coordinator
23. Program Coordinators
24. CIT Steering Committee
25. Prioritizing Law Enforcement Ownership
26. Maintaining Partnerships and Sustaining CIT Programs
27. Ensuring Advocacy Participation
28. Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
29. CIT Program Awareness
30. Recognition and Honors
31. Community Expansion and Statewide Contribution

## Summit County CIT Program Background

The CIT Program delivered its first CIT Patrol Officer Training Course in January 2000, marking the first CIT training course in Ohio. For many years, they trained both their own team members and visiting participants, who then helped expand CIT throughout the state. Since then, the 40-hour course has graduated more than 1,000 of their members and over 1,600 participants in total. Summit County encompasses 31 law enforcement agencies, all of which have participated in CIT training. They have delivered the following types of training:

- CIT Patrol Officer Training Course
- Advanced and refresher training

Their current CIT steering committee is comprised of:

- Law Enforcement
- Mental Health
- Advocacy

The CIT Program is currently coordinated through the County of Summit ADM Board. The CIT program coordinator(s) are:

- Doug Smith, MD, DLFAPA, Medical Director/COO, County of Summit ADM Board
- Ralph Stover, Sergeant, Tallmadge Police Department
- Jamie Messenger MSW, LSW, LICDC, OCPSA, Executive Director, NAMI Summit County

The CIT Program is involved with CIT-related initiatives. They include:

- LE CIT-focused crisis response policies
- LE-focused MH crisis response procedures
- Information sharing and data collection
- Training
- Recognition and honors

Summit County is involved with other behavioral health initiatives. They include:

- Quick Response Team (QRT), including expansion pilot with the City of Green QRT
- Implementation of CaseWorx software in the probate court for the AOT program
- Implementation of software platform for 911-988 interoperability to support CIT and SCOUT (the Summit County Outreach Team)
- Construction of the Dr. Fred Frese Residential Center (Spring 2026)
- Design of the new Community Behavioral Health Wellness Center
- Stepping Up/Mental Health-Criminal Justice forum
- Local and statewide trainings (e.g., Leadership Akron, peer support, Annual Integrated Care Conference)
- Enhancement of MH and substance use treatment within the Summit County Jail

## Crisis Response System

Summit County offers crisis services in their communities to alleviate immediate psychological distress and engage people in treatment. These services include, but are not limited to:

### **Someone to contact**

988 (call and text), Addiction Helpline, Mental Health Hotline

Emergency communications centers (7):

- Summit Emergency Communications Center (SECC)
- Southwest Summit Communications (SWSCOM)
- Hudson ECC
- Twinsburg ECC
- Macedonia ECC
- Bath TWP ECC
- Akron PD ECC

### **Someone to respond**

Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) – Coleman Health Services

SCOUT – Akron

LE agencies (31) - Agencies participating with CIT (31):

- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Akron Children's Hospital PD    | • Northfield Village PD      |
| • Akron PD                        | • Norton PD                  |
| • Barberton PD                    | • Peninsula PD               |
| • Bath Township PD                | • Reminderville PD           |
| • Boston Heights PD               | • Richfield PD               |
| • Copley Township PD              | • Sagamore Hills Township PD |
| • Cuyahoga Falls PD               | • Silver Lake PD             |
| • Fairlawn PD                     | • Springfield Township PD    |
| • Hudson PD                       | • Stow PD                    |
| • Lakemore PD                     | • Summa Health PD            |
| • Macedonia PD                    | • Summit County SO           |
| • Metro Transit PD                | • Summit Park District       |
| • Mogadore PD                     | • Tallmadge PD               |
| • Munroe Falls PD                 | • Twinsburg PD               |
| • New Franklin PD                 | • University of Akron PD     |
| • Northcoast Behavioral Health PD |                              |

### **A safe place for help**

Receiving centers (5):

- Akron Children's Hospital
- Cleveland Clinic Akron General
- Portage Path Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES)
- Summa Health Akron Campus
- Western Reserve Hospital

## CIT Program Review – Law Enforcement

### 1. Policies and Procedures

#### Emerging Practice

- One or more law enforcement agencies have CIT-specific policies or procedures

Of the 31 participating law enforcement agencies in Summit County, several have provided the CIT Program with a crisis response policy that includes CIT-focused language. Agencies such as the Akron PD, Stow PD, Bath Township PD, and Talmadge PD have policies that not only recognize their involvement in the CIT Program, but also include operational practices such as dispatching a CIT officer to mental health-related service calls. Other agency policies may mention CIT, but lack sufficient detail and do not include clear operational practices. It is clear that the CIT Program has consistently and intentionally encouraged agencies to develop and adopt CIT-focused policies. At the time of review, no documentation was provided indicating that any emergency communications centers (ECCs) have adopted CIT-focused policies. The CIT Program Coordinator – LE is also acknowledged for his ongoing efforts to engage law enforcement agencies in policy implementation.

#### Next Steps:

The CIT Program should continue to engage their LE agencies to adopt CIT-focused policies. These policies will guide officers and public safety telecommunicators (PSTs), clarify agency expectations, support decision-making, and ensure long-term sustainability. CIT-focused crisis response policies should address topics such as:

- A statement that the agency is committed to sustaining a CIT and ongoing collaboration with community partners
- CIT role-based training for patrol officers and PSTs
- Select CIT officers will be dispatched to calls involving persons experiencing a crisis when available and appropriate
- The identification of a CIT coordinator to manage the operations of the CIT and act as the liaison with community partners
- The assignment of selected and identifiable CIT officers so that they are available to be the primary responders to people experiencing a crisis at any time
- Use of a form or process to document interactions with persons in crisis
- Requirements that the agency continually evaluates the CIT and makes changes in response to collected data to improve outcomes and mitigate safety risks to agency personnel and the public

The *Crisis Intervention Law Enforcement Policy Guide* can assist with policy development. It can be found on the CJ CCoE website.

## 2. Patrol Coverage

### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies have a published policy equitably distributing CIT officers

No information was presented that any LE agencies study their service call data to distribute their CIT officers. LE agencies have not designated specific officers as primary responders to people experiencing a crisis. None of the provided policies references practices specific to this core element.

### Next Steps:

Participating LE agencies should adopt policies addressing how they equitably distribute select CIT officers. If they have a “train all officers” philosophy, they should designate specific officers to serve as specialists, with their roles outlined in policy. Designating all patrol officers as primary responders to persons in crisis is counterproductive to using specialists and is not encouraged.

## 3. Officer Selection

### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agency has a review, selection, and recommendation process to identify potential CIT officers as specialists

No information or documentation was provided to show that any LE agency has a review, selection, and recommendation process to identify CIT officers as specialists. No provided policies reference any practices specific to this core element.

### Next Steps:

LE agencies that actively participate in training should adopt policies that address how their agencies determine when an officer is ready to attend training. If an agency has a “train all officers” philosophy, it should designate specific officers to serve as specialists, with their roles outlined in policy. Designating all patrol officers as primary responders to people in crisis, simply because they have completed CIT training, is problematic and counterproductive to using specialists.

#### 4. CIT Officer Identification

##### Not Practicing

- No law enforcement agencies require CIT officers in a specialized team to wear an obvious CIT pin or emblem

Since no law enforcement agency policies address the identification of CIT officers, there is no documentation indicating that members of specialized teams are required to wear a visible CIT pin or emblem.

##### Next Steps:

LE agencies that actively participate in training are encouraged to adopt policies that address CIT officers wearing a visible CIT pin or emblem. When combined with a marketing strategy informing the public of the pin or emblem's meaning, community members and other public safety personnel can easily recognize that a responding officer has specific skills and training for responding to people in crisis. If program-specific pins are not available, generic Ohio CIT pins are available to all CIT programs by request through NAMI Ohio.

#### 5. Law Enforcement Coordinator

##### Emerging Practice

- One or more LE agencies have a designated person within the agency to coordinate its CIT and liaise with other agencies and partners

The CIT Program provided a document listing law enforcement contacts and coordinators for participating agencies. While not every agency had an individual listed, most agencies identified a person, typically including a name and email address. During further discussion with Program Coordinators, it appeared to reviewers that many agencies had designated contact persons rather than officers serving as CIT coordinators. However, several agencies, such as Akron PD, Stow PD, and Tallmadge PD, appear to have installed CIT coordinators. Those coordinators have defined responsibilities and participate regularly in the CIT Program. Sergeant James Donohue (Akron PD), Chief Heather Prusha (Stow PD), and Sergeant Ralph Stover (Tallmadge PD) have received numerous local and state-level recognitions for their CIT-related efforts.

##### Next Steps:

LE agencies should elevate their involvement in CIT by developing policies that formalize the roles and responsibilities of their members. Formally designating a CIT coordinator within a LE agency is essential in developing a CIT's organizational structure. Coordinators help align the agency's efforts to achieve the goals for Ohio CIT programs and ensure that each member understands how their contributions enhance the larger mission. CIT coordinators can assist with policy development and implementation, communication with community partners, and goal alignment.

## 6. Information Sharing and Data Collection

### Emerging Practice

- One or more law enforcement agencies are extracting data from contacts to monitor and assess its CITs and interactions with persons in crisis

The CIT Program shared documentation and other information indicating that information sharing and data collection practices are occurring within some law enforcement agencies and within the Program itself. However, these efforts appear to be limited and inconsistent. While some agencies may be using Crisis Intervention Contact Sheets, the extent and consistency of their use are unclear, and documentation demonstrating analysis or reporting of collected data is lacking. As a result, reviewers were left uncertain about what data collection and information sharing activities were actually occurring at both the agency and program levels. It is clear, however, that efforts are underway, though they may lack formality, consistency, and sufficient documentation. Stow PD is commended explicitly for its data collection and reporting efforts. Its annual report on crisis-related incidents is insightful and provides a strong example for other agencies to consider following.

### Next Steps:

During interviews, the program identified plans to implement a new software platform to strengthen information sharing and data collection across participating agencies. This development is expected to increase agency participation, strengthen communication among program partners, and significantly enhance the program's ability to evaluate its effectiveness. As the system is implemented, law enforcement agencies are encouraged to use it to share information with program partners regarding contacts with persons in crisis. Sharing this information will help service providers engage individuals in available behavioral health services. The Program and individual agencies are also encouraged to extract and analyze data to monitor and assess interactions with persons in crisis and evaluate overall effectiveness. Regular review of this information can support program development and accountability by identifying trends, highlighting areas for improvement, guiding training needs, and demonstrating the impact of CIT efforts to community partners.

## 7. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Emerging Practice

- Documentation or data shows one or more law enforcement agencies' use of receiving centers and community resources

Several reports and documents were provided that include data related to multiple law enforcement agencies' use of receiving centers and emergency crisis services. Data and reports submitted by law enforcement agencies, along with admissions data provided by PES, demonstrate a deliberate effort to collect information related to transporting people in crisis to receiving centers. While this information offers some insight into current practices within Summit County, the overall picture remains vague and incomplete. Nevertheless, the program is commended for its efforts and for collecting and sharing the information available to date.

### Next Steps:

Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to consistently track and analyze officers' use of the emergency hospitalization process (ORC § 5122.10) to evaluate the appropriateness of transports and identify areas for improvement. As the new program software platform is implemented, agencies should use this system to support more comprehensive, consistent, and efficient data collection related to the use of receiving centers and emergency crisis services. There should be a deliberate and coordinated effort to analyze data across agencies and translate findings into actionable improvements. Findings should be shared with community partners in a clear and accessible format that highlights outcomes and supports collaborative decision-making.

## CIT Program Review – Mental Health

### 8. Policies and Procedures

### Emerging Practice

- One or more service providers have published CIT-specific policies and procedures

No information was provided to indicate that the service board, service providers, or other mental health partners have formal policies regarding their involvement in CIT. Documentation was provided showing the PES drop-off form for law enforcement and the procedures followed when law enforcement transfers custody of a person in crisis. PES is commended for formalizing this process to facilitate these transfers. In doing so, they have also been able to collect data on their practices, providing information for ongoing program evaluation and improvement.

**Next Steps:**

The CIT Program, the ADM Board, and their service providers are encouraged to develop formal agreements and policies focused on CIT and their participation in the CIT Program. Their policies should focus on their involvement in CIT, interactions with LE, and monitoring related activity. The CIT Steering Committee is encouraged to develop a formal agreement between program partners to outline the terms and details of their program. The agreement should be designed so that Program partners can express a genuine commitment to their collaboration and lay the groundwork for agency policies and crisis response procedures. Their receiving centers should develop procedures specific to LE transfers of people in crisis to them for care. For those agencies providing service linkage and outreach from LE agencies, their processes should be formalized in writing and provided to the Program. The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course should cover all mental health policies and crisis response procedures.

**9. Service Linkage and Outreach****Not Practicing**

- No relevant service providers have policies and procedures to prioritize service linkage and follow-up to persons in crisis that have had contact with law enforcement

No information or documentation was provided to show that service providers have policies specific to service linkage or outreach to persons in crisis who have had contact with LE. While there appears to be some informal coordination between service providers and law enforcement, these processes are not formally documented, and no data or outcome reports are available to assess their effectiveness.

**Next Steps:**

Service providers that provide linkage and outreach to persons in crisis are encouraged to develop policies and procedures that prioritize linkage and follow-up to persons who have had contact with LE, specifically where potential continued criminal behavior is involved. Establishing formal policies and consistent documentation will help make coordination systematic and measurable. The Steering Committee should monitor these efforts to ensure coordination, identify gaps, and support improved outcomes.

## 10. Mental Health Coordinator

### Emerging Practice

- One or more service providers have a designated person within their agency to coordinate and liaise with other agencies and partners

Community Support Services (CSS) has identified a CIT coordinator who appears to be actively involved with the Steering Committee and Program operations. No further information was provided to show that other service providers have a designated person to coordinate their activities within the CIT Program.

### Next Steps:

Service providers should elevate their involvement in CIT by developing policies that formalize the roles and responsibilities of its members. Formally designating a CIT coordinator within a mental health agency is an important step in developing a CIT program's organizational structure. Coordinators help align the agency's efforts to achieve program goals and ensure that each member understands how their contributions enhance the larger mission. The coordinator's responsibilities include policy and procedure implementation, data collection, and receiving center coordination with LE agencies. They should maintain contact with other community partners to help coordinate LE's role within the crisis response system, contribute to accurate program evaluation, and assist with training.

## 11. Program Monitoring and Data Collection

### Emerging Practice

- One or more service providers collect and analyze data relevant to their interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred to them by a law enforcement agency

Documentation was provided indicating that PES collects data relevant to their interactions with persons in crisis who are transferred to them by a law enforcement agency. No information was provided to show that other service providers collect or track similar data.

### Next Steps:

The Steering Committee is encouraged to develop strategies that support service providers in using the new software platform to collect data on interactions with people in crisis, whether transferred or referred by a law enforcement agency. Consistently collected and analyzed data can help identify trends and patterns, improve accountability and transparency, and provide a clearer understanding of LE's interactions with people in crisis.

## 12. Receiving Centers: Emergency Services

### Emerging Practice

- Individually or collectively, a receiving center(s) is operating all the time in the service area

The CIT Program has five (5) receiving centers that are open 24/7 and available to accept people in crisis. The documentation provided shows that PES has an established procedure for transferring custody of people in crisis from law enforcement. PES is commended for having a written procedure and standardized form in place to facilitate an effective transfer to treatment and care. This process supports consistent data collection, promotes program sustainability, and prioritizes interactions involving people who have had contact with law enforcement.

### Next Steps:

Other receiving centers in Summit County are encouraged to develop procedures for receiving people in crisis from LE officers and safely, efficiently, and quickly transitioning them to assessment and care.

## CIT Program Review – Training

### 13. CIT Training Courses

### Emerging Practice

- Regularly provides the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course

The CIT Program offers the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course four (4) times per year. Since the first course offering in 2000, the 40-hour course has graduated more than 1,000 Program members and over 1,600 participants in total. Summit County has 31 law enforcement agencies, all of which have participated in training.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to develop and maintain a multi-year training plan that documents all CIT training, including a course for public safety telecommunicators and advanced and refresher training courses. The plan should be reviewed annually and updated as needed. The program should retain records of past training sessions and course content to support continuity, evaluation, and public or legal records requests.

Support for role-specific training design, course goals, and performance objectives is available through the CJ CCoE and its publications.

## 14. Advanced Training and Refresher Training

### Emerging Practice

- Has provided advanced training but not regularly, or
- Has provided refresher training but not regularly

Documentation and other information indicate that the CIT Program has provided training beyond the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course; however, no information was provided to demonstrate that this training occurs on a regular, deliberate, or planned basis. It is unclear whether the program has established goals for maintaining ongoing training while also advancing participants' knowledge and skills.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to design a multi-year training plan incorporating advanced and refresher training. The plan should increase the training complexity over a select number of years. Training should be based on a needs assessment from collected data and other relevant community factors.

## 15. The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course is for Experienced Law Enforcement Officers

### Not Practicing

- The CIT Program does not have a selection process to determine eligibility for officers to attend

In Summit County, participating LE agencies prefer to send all their officers to the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. The LE agencies and the Program do not use a selection process.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program and participating LE agencies should adopt policies that address when officers will attend the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. Selected officers should be experienced volunteers primarily assigned to the patrol function. When policies identifying readiness are adopted, the learning experience is enhanced, active engagement is increased, and the impact of the training on participants' skill development and performance in real-world contexts is maximized.

## 16. Training Must be Delivered at Minimal Cost to Law Enforcement Agencies

### Practicing

- No training fees are charged to attend CIT training courses

No training fees are charged to attend CIT training courses. Funding for these courses does not come from instructional fees.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program should explore whether funding constraints hinder LE agencies' participation in training and other program functions. If attendance costs are found to prevent participation, the Program should explore available funding sources to reimburse LE agencies for the costs of sending staff to training and related activities. The Program could also assess whether increased flexibility in training schedules or formats could increase participation by resource-limited agencies.

## 17. Training Must be Locally Focused on the Participants' Criminal Justice and Crisis Response System

### Practicing

- Team members attend CIT training courses related to their criminal justice and crisis response systems, and
- Locally sourced instructors instruct team members

The CIT Program instructs their members on their criminal justice and crisis response systems. Instructors are locally sourced and have experience with the local conventions and methods within their crisis response system.

### Next Steps:

Participating agencies should develop policies and procedures that are CIT-focused. Once policies and procedures are implemented, the CIT Program should incorporate them into their training courses. The CIT Program is encouraged to strengthen their roster of instructors to prevent burnout, account for potential turnover, and provide more training. The Steering Committee should develop strategies to build and sustain instructor development and involvement.

## 18. Training Must Focus on Practical Knowledge and Skills to Respond to a Person in Crisis

### Practicing

- Most training courses include role-specific instruction on interacting with persons in crisis
- Most training courses include role-specific crisis scenarios and practicum ("role plays")

The CIT Patrol Officer Training Course provides instruction on interacting with a person in crisis, and officers are given the opportunity to practice these skills. Instruction on assessing a person's mental state, emergency hospitalization, relevant legal issues, and processes is also provided.

### Next Steps:

While the CIT Program provides role-specific instruction and scenarios for interacting with people in crisis, it was not evident that the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course includes instruction on determining fact-based probable cause for emergency hospitalization. The CIT Program is encouraged to highlight this aspect in training to prepare CIT officers better to make informed decisions when assessing people in crisis who may require emergency hospitalization.

## 19. Training Must be Grounded in Adult Learning Principles

### Emerging Practice

- One or more role-specific training courses have their topics sequenced in a carefully considered manner, or
- One or more role-specific training courses have goals and learning/performance objectives

A review of the training schedule indicates that the sequencing of topics within the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course has been considered. Most topics are delivered in a manner that facilitates effective learning. However, overarching training goals and specific learning/performance objectives for individual topics do not appear to be used.

### Next Steps:

The Steering Committee should continue to evaluate the sequencing of training topics to ensure they are organized for maximum impact. The reviewed course did not include clearly stated goals or performance objectives. The Program is encouraged to establish and clearly communicate course goals and objectives at the outset of training and at the beginning of each topic when appropriate. These elements should be used to guide instruction and drive participant performance throughout the course. The Program is also encouraged to utilize the *CIT Patrol Officer Training Course: Goals and Performance Objectives* resource, provided by the CJ CCoE.

## 20. Training Must be Provided by those Prepared to Instruct Law Enforcement and Other Public Safety Personnel

### Practicing

- Instructors' materials and content are reviewed, and
- Pre-class meetings take place with instructors to ensure they are effective at content instruction

The CIT Program Coordinator – MH stated that instructors' materials and content are reviewed before training and that instructors are met with beforehand to ensure they are effective in delivering content.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Steering Committee is encouraged to establish a training subcommittee to support implementation of the program's multi-year training plan. This subcommittee can review instructor materials and assess instructors' ability to deliver content to role-specific audiences. The Program should also formalize, in writing, its practices for coordinating, preparing, and supporting instructors. Documenting these practices will help future program coordinators learn how the training program operates and assist with sustaining and advancing current training practices.

## 21. Evaluations of CIT Training Courses

### Emerging Practice

- Training course evaluations are conducted (level 1), or
- Training course topic evaluations are conducted (level 1)

The Summit County CIT Program uses survey instruments to obtain Kirkpatrick Level One (Reaction) feedback from training participants. Evidence was provided for two sessions of the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course delivered February 6-10, 2023, and August 25-29, 2025. Evidence was also provided for an advanced training course offered on August 13, 2025, titled CIT Youth. The evidence provided consisted of survey response summaries. The original questions were not provided. They were obtained by scanning a Quick Response (QR) code embedded on the page with the training schedule for the August 25-29, 2025, Patrol Officer Training Course. This schedule was part of a document titled "CIT Welcome Packet\_August 2025." The QR code led to a survey instrument hosted on SurveyMonkey.com.

The SurveyMonkey survey instruments were mostly similar. A single question was asked about each topic within the respective course offering. Respondents were asked to rate the training block and the instructor of that block using a Likert-type scale and responses of poor, fair, good, excellent, or no response. It appears that course participants were allowed to check the box if they did not want to provide a rating for the block. In addition to the single Likert-type scaled

rating, each topic included a single open-field comment box for participants to type in miscellaneous comments.

For the overall course evaluation of the CIT Patrol Officer Course, respondents were asked a single question about the materials received, using the same Likert scale as previous questions, along with an open-ended comment box for additional comments. Respondents were asked if the following learning objectives were met: "Background Information about Mental Illness and Substance Abuse," "Services/Resources for referrals," and "Legal Issues concerning mental health and treatment." Respondents first used the same Likert-scale responses as before, and also had a single open-field comment box for miscellaneous comments. Finally, respondents had three open-field comment boxes to identify what they considered most effective about the training course, what they considered least effective, and to provide any overall comments and suggestions about the training course. The "CIT-Youth" advanced training course survey form used the same design and structure as the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course. It included three "met learning objective" items for "Youth System of Care Overview," "Background Information on Youth Behavioral Health," and "Available Resources and Supports." The final three open-field comment boxes asked for the same feedback as the survey for the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course, in the same manner.

### **Next Steps:**

The CIT Program should add items to their reaction-level surveys. Questions should be added to the topic evaluations to gather information about each presenter independently of the topic presented. Items about the presenter can include topic knowledge, ability to relate the material to the workplace, participant engagement, and encouraging participation. Items about the topic can include content usefulness, material readability, usefulness of the training delivery method, and relevance to the job. Open-field comment boxes should still be used to gather additional information, but they will not capture as much helpful information because participants often skip them. Additional survey items should be added about the entire course, including responses on the usability and accessibility of the training locations, the training environment, and any perks provided. The survey response report from the training course held February 6-10, 2023, indicates that questions were asked about the overall course training locations, the materials provided, the audiovisuals used, the use of interactive learning blocks as a training method, and the provided lunches. Those items were omitted in the 2025 survey response reports that were uploaded.

The Program should continue to store survey responses for easy access and ensure that useful reports can be generated and shared with presenters/instructors, steering committee members, and other pertinent stakeholders. Reports allow Program partners to determine if any part of the training needs additional review.

Another recommendation is to rewrite the current "objectives" on the survey instrument with a concentration on providing at least one learning/performance objective for each topic or training block. The "objectives" observed read as summaries of what will be provided in the entire training course and are not written in the appropriate format to measure future performance. Performance objectives for each training block begin with a measurable verb followed by

language that identifies the training participant's desired performance once that participant returns to the regular work environment. Performance objectives will guide presenters in helping participants perform as identified by creating appropriate instructional materials and presenting them so that participants can perform as desired. A single yes/no survey item can ask if the objective was met.

The CIT Program should also consider conducting Kirkpatrick Level Two (Learning) evaluations for the role-play scenarios as a learning check or practicum. Skills checklists can be created and used to determine if participants apply their training objectively. The checklist should include all elements and behaviors from the training and be rated as "pass" or "fail." Kirkpatrick Level Two evaluations could also come from pre-tests and post-tests with the same questions to determine if knowledge or confidence increased. Pre-tests and post-tests can then be compared to determine whether Likert-scaled responses had higher averages and whether open-ended responses were more complete. No or low increases on some questions may identify materials that need revision or replacement. A lack of increases may also help a CIT Program identify presenters and/or curricula that need additional review, amendment, or replacement.

## CIT Program Review – Coordination

### 22. Agency Coordinator

#### Emerging Practice

- There are one or more designated agency coordinators in the program

Several law enforcement agencies and one mental health agency have designated individuals to coordinate CIT activities and serve as liaisons with other agencies and partners. The CIT Program is commended for identifying and working with CIT coordinators who function beyond serving solely as points of contact. It is evident that, through its law enforcement CIT coordinator, the Program is making a concerted effort to actively engage LE agencies and move them beyond participation limited to training alone.

#### Next Steps:

Participating agencies should establish CIT-focused policies that clearly define the coordinator role. Each agency should designate a coordinator responsible for managing CIT activities and facilitating collaboration with other agencies and partners within the Program. The Steering Committee should educate agency leadership on the CIT Model and Ohio CIT Core Elements, strengthening their commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities within the CIT framework.

### 23. Program Coordinators

#### Exemplary Practice

- The program has a coordinator in all three disciplines

The Program is commended for identifying and operating with program coordinators from law enforcement, mental health, and advocacy. Having designated coordinators from these disciplines brings diverse perspectives to planning and decision-making, strengthens cross-system communication, and improves coordination among partners.

#### Next Steps:

With coordinators from law enforcement, mental health, and advocacy in place, the Program's next step should focus on mentorship and succession planning. Coordinators can serve as mentors to emerging leaders within their disciplines, sharing expertise and guiding new staff in the CIT Program's practices. Formalizing succession strategies will help sustain the program, ensure continuity, and maintain cross-system collaboration over time.

### 24. CIT Steering Committee

#### Exemplary Practice

- A CIT steering committee is identified, and
- All three disciplines have representatives, and
- A chairperson is identified for the CIT steering committee, and
- The CIT steering committee has scheduled meetings, and
- The CIT steering committee meetings have an agenda and activity records, and
- A person with lived experience or a family member is a committee member

By adhering to these exemplary practices, a CIT Steering Committee fosters collaboration, inclusivity, leadership, and structured decision-making. This approach increases the likelihood of developing and implementing effective CIT programs that meet community needs while supporting individuals and families affected by the issues being addressed.

The Summit County CIT Program demonstrates excellence through the composition and practices of its steering committee. Representation from law enforcement, mental health, and advocacy brings diverse perspectives that enhance decision-making and program outcomes. The Program has also established a strong framework for ongoing development and sustainability, creating a solid foundation for continued growth and success in the years ahead.

**Next Steps:**

The Steering Committee is encouraged to establish short and long-term objectives and develop strategies to actively engage community partners. The Committee should also create written guidelines that clearly identify:

- Its goals or purpose
- Required persons and positions, including the disciplines they represent
- Regular and special meeting schedules
- A chairperson to coordinate and facilitate meetings and activities
- A process for overseeing meetings, agendas, and records

The Steering Committee should enhance documentation of initiatives and activities, ensuring meeting minutes are thorough and easily accessible. Consideration should also be given to forming subcommittees focused on training, crisis response system navigation, and program evaluation.

A well-structured, task-oriented steering committee fosters collaboration, inclusivity, leadership, and structured decision-making, strengthening the overall effectiveness of a CIT program.

## 25. Prioritizing Law Enforcement Ownership

### Practicing

- CIT Program actively engages most participating law enforcement agencies about their CIT strategies

The CIT Program is commended for actively engaging with participating law enforcement agencies to advance CIT strategies. Evidence of this engagement includes designated CIT coordinators, CIT-focused policy development, and information sharing & data collection practices.

**Next Steps:**

To strengthen coordination and collaboration, the Steering Committee is encouraged to meet regularly and develop a process to identify CIT coordinators within each participating LE agency. Establishing these roles and holding regular meetings with the coordinators would promote consistent communication and help align efforts to advance CIT strategies across all agencies. The CIT Program is also encouraged to document these activities in meeting minutes or other records.

## 26. Maintaining Partnerships and Sustaining CIT Programs

### Practicing

- Assessments and improvement Strategies are used, and
- Record keeping practices are in place

At a basic level, the Program demonstrates the use of improvement strategies and record-keeping practices. The documentation provided included an identified Steering Committee, records of the committee's activities, LE agencies' crisis response policies, and participation in this peer review process.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to allocate time to further developing assessment, improvement, and sustainability strategies. These strategies could include formalizing the operational practices of the Steering Committee, leadership succession planning, and enhanced record-keeping practices. To prevent the Program from regressing, successful strategies, lessons learned, and knowledge gained should be managed and passed on. Regression avoidance can come from mentoring, workload distribution, robust documentation methods, and knowledge management plans.

## 27. Ensuring Advocacy Participation

### Practicing

- People living with mental illness and their family members participate in training, and
- Advocacy leaders participate in training and program coordination

The CIT Program is commended for its strong leadership rooted in advocacy and its efforts to include advocacy participation further. Advocacy leaders, alongside people living with mental illness and their family members, play an integral role not only in training CIT members but also in coordinating efforts and actively participating in the program. This collaborative approach strengthens the program's foundation, ensuring effective communication, meaningful partnerships, and a shared commitment to its success.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to allocate time to ensuring advocacy participation through succession planning. The Program is encouraged to identify critical positions and individuals and create a learning and development process that can be repeated and evaluated.

## 28. Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

### Not Practicing

- There are no strategies in place to recruit, include, and empower team members who bring different perspectives and backgrounds to the program

The CIT Program does not utilize formal strategies to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) for team members who bring different perspectives and backgrounds to the program.

### Next Steps:

CIT programs should ensure that they accurately reflect the populations they serve. The Program should consider dedicating the efforts of particular Steering Committee members or establishing a subcommittee to explore ways to measure their success and strategies to sustain and advance DEI efforts within their program. CIT programs rich in DEI practices can experience a better understanding of community needs, increase trust and engagement, and develop better ways to target and allocate resources more effectively.

## 29. CIT Program Awareness

### Emerging Practice

- Strategies are in development about how to request and identify CIT officers

Limited information was provided demonstrating that strategies are in place to request and identify CIT officers. While the ADM Board promotes CIT training on its website, the information appears to be directed toward professional development. CSS explicitly encourages the public to request a CIT officer when contacting law enforcement through its website.

### Next Steps:

The CIT Program is encouraged to further develop and implement awareness strategies for community members to identify and request CIT officers and inform them about CIT, its benefits, and how they can interact with CIT members. CIT programs are more impactful when community members know how to identify and access to CIT officers and other services within their crisis response system. Trust plays a vital role in cultivating effective relationships between the community and members of the crisis response system, and the Program is encouraged to enhance and fortify this bond.

Further program awareness strategies can be found in Chapter 6 of *Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs: A Best Practice Guide for Transforming Community Responses to Mental Health Crisis*.

### 30. Recognition and Honors

#### Emerging Practice

- The program regularly recognizes and honors their CIT members

The CIT Program is commended for regularly recognizing outstanding contributions through the Program's CIT Officer of the Year award. The Program has also honored its members by nominating individuals for, and receiving, state-level awards, such as CIT Coordinator of the Year. This recognition demonstrates a strong commitment to acknowledging excellence within the program. No information was provided to indicate that individual law enforcement agencies similarly recognize and honor their CIT members for their efforts and dedication.

#### Next Steps:

LE agencies should establish both formal and informal practices to recognize officers and PSTs who engage positively with people in crisis and share these examples with the CIT Program. Regular recognition of their challenging and honorable work reinforces commitment and fosters a culture of care within the agency. Expanding recognition to include PSTs, coordinators, mental health professionals, individuals with lived experience, and administrators can further boost morale, encourage program growth, and raise awareness of the CIT Program. Additionally, good record-keeping of past award winners and the program's history ensures a consistent and transparent approach to recognizing contributions and maintaining the program's legacy.

### 31. Community Expansion and Statewide Contribution

#### Exemplary Practice

- Non-participating agencies are engaged, and
- Members of the program attend activities at the state level, and
- Members of the program assist with the support and expansion of CIT in Ohio

The Summit County CIT Program has been a leading contributor to the expansion of CIT both across Ohio and nationally. As one of the earliest adopters, the Program has played a pivotal role in helping other communities understand and implement CIT through both training and proactive outreach. It actively engages all participating agencies, prioritizes law enforcement involvement, and fosters constructive partnerships. The Program is commended for its sustained participation in state-level activities and planning, including contributing insights to CJ CCoE event planning committees, serving as speakers at technical assistance sessions, acting as peer reviewers, presenting at CIT events, and participating on other state-level committees. Its ongoing involvement has greatly advanced the understanding and development of CIT throughout Ohio.

**Next Steps:**

The CIT Program is encouraged to continue assisting law enforcement agencies with developing and implementing CIT-focused policies and to strengthen internal processes by consistently documenting efforts and strategies through steering committee meeting minutes, reports, and other relevant records. The Program should also consider preserving its history and accomplishments, including capturing and passing on its unique role as a pioneer in Ohio's CIT development so that future participants can understand its legacy and contributions. These practices will enhance transparency, accountability, and long-term sustainability. Additionally, the Program should focus on educating steering committee members on the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements. With greater knowledge and understanding, members can provide stronger guidance to newer participants and play a more active role in enhancing CIT efforts and supporting overall program growth.

## Next Steps Worksheet

### Law Enforcement

- LE agencies to adopt CIT-focused policies (1,2,3,4,17)
- LE agencies to designate CIT coordinators (5,22,25)
- LE agencies to share information with service providers about contacts with people in crisis (6)
- LE agencies to analyze data from crisis contacts to monitor and assess the effectiveness of their efforts (6,7)
- LE agencies to establish formal and informal practices to recognize officers and PSTs who positively engage with people in crisis and share these examples with the CIT Program (30)

### Mental Health

- MH providers to develop policies related to their involvement in CIT (8,9,17)
- The CIT Steering Committee to develop a formal agreement between program partners to outline the terms and details of the CIT Program (8)
- MH providers to designate CIT coordinators (10,22,25)
- Receiving centers to collect data relevant to their interactions with a person in crisis, either transferred or referred to them by a LE agency (11)
- Receiving centers to develop procedures to receive people in crisis from LE (12)

### Training

- Develop a multi-year training plan that includes advanced and refresher training (13,14)
- Develop a training course specifically for public safety telecommunicators (13)
- Develop a method to maintain detailed records of past training sessions (13)
- CIT Program and LE agencies to adopt policies that address which officers will attend the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course (15)
- Determine if monetary reasons contribute to a lack of participation by LE agencies in CIT initiatives and seek alternative funding if needed and possible (16)
- Develop a strategy to build and sustain instructor involvement (17)
- Increase/highlight instruction on emergency hospitalization (18)

- Develop goals for their training courses (19)
- Develop and use complete learning/performance objectives for each topic (19)
- Develop a training subcommittee (20)
- Record practices in writing related to coordinating, preparing, and supporting instructors (20)
- Update the evaluation instruments used for the CIT Patrol Officer Training Course per the recommendations provided in 'Evaluation of CIT Training Courses' (21)

### **Coordination**

- CIT Program to educate LE and agency leadership on the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements (22)
  - CIT Steering Committee to identify mentorship and succession planning strategies for Program Coordinators (23)
  - CIT Steering Committee to organize their practices per the recommendations provided in 'CIT Steering Committee' (24)
  - CIT Steering Committee to support LE in identifying agency coordinators (25)
  - The CIT Program should develop a process to document CIT-related activities and efforts, along with a system to store and organize this information for easy retrieval (24,26)
  - Identify strategies for advocacy participation and succession planning (27)
  - Identify strategies to bring different perspectives and backgrounds to the Program (28)
  - Explore funding opportunities for awareness campaigns (29)
  - Promote CIT and other crisis services that do not involve LE or the criminal justice system (29)
  - Develop practices to honor and recognize CIT members regularly (30)
  - The CIT Program to engage law enforcement agencies in participation beyond training (31)
  - Steering Committee members to receive ongoing education on the CIT Model and the Ohio CIT Core Elements (31)
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This report was completed by the Ohio CIT Coordinator & Law Enforcement Liaison for the Ohio Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence in cooperation with the staff of the CJ CCoE, consultants, peer reviewers, and CIT program community partners. For more information or to make inquiries, please contact:

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