



Village of Northbrook

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Northbrook Police Launch Crisis Intervention Team

September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, and the Northbrook Police Department has launched a new program in the hope of aiding in both prevention and raising awareness in the long term.

Police in Northbrook have seen a steady increase in mental health-related calls in recent years. In 2017, at least 74 calls for service resulted in either a voluntary or involuntary hospital evaluation for mental health. By 2019, that number had increased by 33%. Completed suicides and suicide attempts have seen similar increases, and national statistics indicate that Northbrook Police likely respond to more than 200 calls a year involving mental illness.

In response to these increases, the Northbrook Police Department has introduced a new Crisis Intervention Team (CIT). The mission of the CIT Unit will be to respond to and follow up after situations that involve a person in crisis or a suicidal person. They have each received specialized training in mental health, special needs, and de-escalation and they will continue to attend ongoing training to hone their skills. Wherever possible, these officers will respond to calls that seem to involve a mental health component to assist in de-escalation and in finding the most appropriate outcome. After the call, CIT Officers work closely with the social workers of the department's Counseling Services Unit as they follow up, provide resources and support, arrange for services, and check in as needed. CIT Officers and Counseling Services (whose services are free of charge to all Village residents) can also be contacted before a mental health problem becomes a crisis that would require emergency intervention.

The Crisis Intervention Team will also be reaching out to community mental health service providers and organizations to plan for the best police response and create a network of resources that will benefit all Northbrook residents. Residents who need emergency services for a mental health crisis can request a CIT Officer when they call 911 and police dispatch will make every attempt to assign one depending on availability.

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