



**LAGRANGE**  
GEORGIA

**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 6, 2018**

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

***LaGrange, Ga. November 6, 2018*** – Nearly two dozen law enforcement officers and deputies from the region participated in Georgia Crisis Intervention Team, or CIT, training in LaGrange.



*LPD hosting CIT Training*

Law enforcement from LaGrange Police and the Troup County Sheriff's Office, as well as officers from West Point, Newnan, Troup County, Troup County 911, as well as the University of West Georgia participated 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.



*CIT Training*

“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.

“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.”

For more information on CIT Training go to [www.ganet.org/gbi/cit](http://www.ganet.org/gbi/cit)

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

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