

# Department of Correction Annual Report on Use of Trauma Informed Care April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## TRAINING DATA

### Academy Recruit Training

- ❖ 384 recruits trained in calendar year 2019

The recruit training, which has been provided to all new recruits since 2016, is specifically developed to be trauma informed and culturally competent.

### Mental Health First Aid Training

- ❖ 8,792 staff members trained since 2014 (both uniformed and non-uniformed)
- ❖ 1,188 incarcerated individuals trained since 2016

Mental Health First Aide (MHFA) training is a collaboration between the Department of Correction's Health Affairs Division and Correction Academy, with assistance from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH). Together, the instructors provide MHFA training to recruits, officers, and incarcerated individuals, with the goal of providing information on how to recognize the signs of distress among incarcerated individuals who may be mentally ill. The Department initially focused on only training uniformed staff working in areas where they would encounter individuals with mental health issues, but has since expanded the training to non-uniformed staff and incarcerated individuals.

### Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training<sup>1</sup>

- ❖ 1,100 individuals trained between 2015 and 2019 (both DOC and H+H staff)
  - 131 trained in calendar year 2015
  - 246 trained in calendar year 2016
  - 193 trained in calendar year 2017
  - 302 trained in calendar year 2018
  - 228 trained in calendar year 2019

Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) training is designed to teach uniform and non-uniform staff members the common signs and symptoms of mental illness, and to recognize those signs and symptoms during a crisis situation. The goal of CITs are to improve the safety of both uniform and mental health staff and individuals with mental illness who come in contact with them. Instead of dispatching a tactical team to a crisis situation, an interagency (DOC & CHS) CIT would respond and utilize verbal de-escalation skills to defuse a situation where an individual is experiencing a mental health crisis, ideally averting the need for use of force.

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<sup>1</sup> The Department previously reported slightly different numbers of individuals trained from 2015 to 2018, but after an audit and recount was conducted by the Department's Training Division, new numbers are reflected in this report.

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## Safe Crisis Management Training

- ❖ 9,114 staff members trained since 2014<sup>2</sup>

Safe Crisis Management (SCM) provides a common framework to prevent, support and/or manage disruptive and aggressive behaviors. This approach utilizes the principle of the “Least Restrictive Alternative (LRA)”, which means using the least amount of restriction necessary to manage the individual’s behavior. SCM stresses the importance of creating a culture that recognizes and promotes an incarcerated individual’s strengths, and is trauma informed and culturally sensitive.

## DOC’S TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE GUIDELINES

The Department of Correction has worked extensively to incorporate mental health awareness training and to provide information on the impact of trauma on individuals across the Department. Trauma informed care is defined as an approach that acknowledges the impact of trauma on individuals. The steps for implementing a trauma informed approach are:

1. Realizing the widespread impact of trauma and understanding the potential paths to recovery;
2. Recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma;
3. Responding by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into Department policies, procedures, and practices, and;
4. Seeking to prevent re-traumatization.<sup>3</sup>

## PROGRAMS THAT INCORPORATE TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

The Department recognizes that overcoming trauma is a key component to rehabilitation and a positive future. To that end, we are proud to offer trauma-informed programming to individuals in custody in partnership with contracted program providers. Trauma-informed programming is offered through the facilitation of group counseling sessions in multiple facilities and uses evidence-based curricula such as Seeking Safety, Beyond Trauma, and SELF. These curricula focus on topics such as attaining safety from trauma or substance abuse, recovering from past trauma, and empowering an individual’s future.

The Department is cognizant of specific populations in custody that would especially benefit from this type of programming. For example, we understand that veterans in custody are at a higher risk for PTSD and long-term trauma, and in turn, we offer psycho-educational group curriculum that addresses issues that arise from trauma. In addition, we offer content specific to our female population, such as Beyond Trauma, through the facilitation of group sessions.

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<sup>2</sup> This number incorporates the total number of uniformed staff members trained including those who are currently active, and those who are no longer active within the Department.

<sup>3</sup> SAMHSA. (2018). Trauma-Informed Approach and Trauma-Specific Interventions. Retrieved from: <https://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/trauma-interventions>

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The Department's Programs Division is also in the process of restructuring its overall jail-based programming and is developing a core menu of evidence-based curricula to include trauma-informed services. This restructuring will incorporate an individualized approach to programming, which in turn will maximize the benefit of trauma-informed programming for those who need it the most.

**NEW INITIATIVES**

The Department recognizes that trauma does not only impact individuals in custody, but staff as well. We are committed to supporting all who are impacted by trauma, and are creating a support system to address those affected.

The Department's Training Division plans to rollout a new "Recognizing Trauma" workshop for uniform and non-uniform personnel with the goal of establishing a shared departmental understanding of trauma, how trauma develops within the body, and how to identify signs indicating that someone might be experiencing stress or trauma.

The Department's Training Division and CARE Unit are also developing an overall approach to supporting employee health and wellness aligned with core correctional best practices. These practices focus on mental, physical, financial, and other areas of health and wellness.

Due to the current public health emergency, the rollout of these initiatives have been postponed, but we look forward to implementing when it is safe and appropriate to do so.