

Require Crisis training on a par with shooting training!

The Bethlehem Gadfly City government, Police December 5, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on City Government* 

610-252-9060

In the event that you are experiencing a mental health crisis, Northampton County Information, Referral and Emergency Services Department is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Crisis department can be reached at 610-252-9060

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ref: [What are the alternatives to calling the police?](#)

Good ideas here from the good Councilwoman.

- require Crisis training on a par with shooting training!
- publicize County CRISIS contact info!

Gadfly would just mention again a list/flyer/poster of all the various phone numbers for help (like CRISIS) of various kinds like the [Minneapolis example](#) cited previously.

Tuesday, December 1, 2020 10:50 AM

To: Donchez, Robert J <RDonchez@bethlehem-pa.gov>; Kott, Michelle L <mkott@bethlehem-pa.gov>

Good morning!

Last week I had a great conversation with Sue the director of Northampton County Human Services. They have been doing training for first responders across the county called Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and here is the flyer of what it covers. They offered the training 3 times per year and it's a 6 hours training which includes de-escalation with individuals with a mental health crisis. I know the chief mentioned training with the county but it sounded to me as something informal. That's why I reached out to learn more about it. I would like to know how often our officers are getting this training? Can it be set that it's required training every so often? Just like it's mandated to have officers practice in the shooting range twice per year, day and night time, which I understand it's extremely important, we should also make the CIT a required training and not just once and done!

They also have a direct line for CRISIS (610-829-HELP) which I was familiar with and I know that members of our community that are receiving mental health or drug and alcohol treatment are very familiar with this number as well as their close family members but those in our community not in that loop (not receiving treatment with county) don't know about the number or the service. The 829-HELP number is answered 24-7!

Even though this is a county service, I'm wondering if we can share the number and service on our city's website, perhaps on the police and

health bureau pages? Perhaps is a number that members of the Service Center should also be familiar with (maybe they are, I don't know) and sharing it with callers as appropriate? It could also be included in the new City App? Lehigh County does have a CRISIS number as well 610-782-3127.

In my mind there is no need to re-invent the wheel but we need to do whatever we can for our constituents to know about services available to them.

Councilwoman Olga Negrón

The Bethlehem Gadfly