



**Town of Stow
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

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Michael Sallese
Chief of Police

General Order # 2022-02

SUBJECT: Mental Health Clinician	ISSUE DATE: 8/22/2022
	EFFECTIVE DATE: 8/22/2022
TO: All Department Personnel	REVISION OR EXPIRATION DATE:

Starting in September of 2022, the Stow and Harvard Police Departments will begin utilizing a new program call “The Jail Diversion Program”. The foundation of this new program brings a Masters level educated clinician into the Departments to help evaluate persons experiencing a mental health crisis or a substance abuse crisis as well as their families in the field where they are located. The goal is to help avoid costly hospitalizations, or criminal custodies for minor offenses. Officers should read and be familiar with the Department’s policy on dealing with **Handling The Mentally Ill (Policy 1.16)**.

The clinician may respond with officers to calls for service and assist when the officer believes their expertise will be useful. The clinician should be considered a member of the Department, and a part of our team. Officers should consider the clinician as a valuable resource to utilize, not unlike all the other resources they have available to them which they use on a daily basis.

The clinician can help in many different ways including but not limited to: de-escalation, crisis intervention, suicide evaluations, in custody evaluations, death notifications and helping to secure additional resources for persons in crisis. If the need arises the clinician

can also write a Section 12, help assist in gathering information for a Section 35 or a Section 18.

The program has been tried and has been highly successful in multiple communities. While not required, studies and experience show it works best when officers build a working relationship with the clinician and the clinician is out on patrol with officers. Officers should consider calling for the clinician to respond to calls involving a person experiencing a mental health related issue to help de-escalate the situation and reduce the need for force as required by the guidelines set out by POST as well as the **Stow Police Department Policy 1.01 Use of Force**. It is the officer's responsibility to do their best to ensure the scene is safe for the clinician to enter as they would for any other department or Town employee who is on the scene. The clinician will be provided with a ballistic vest and a radio.

Because this is a joint program between the Stow and Harvard Police Departments, the clinician will divide her time. They will be in Stow for 24 hours a week and Harvard for 16.

Stow and Harvard enjoy a strong working relationship and a mutual aide arrangement. In the event the clinician is needed in one of the communities when they are working in the other, Officers have standing permission to leave Stow to respond and deliver the clinician to the other community where they are needed.

Officers are encouraged to work with the clinician and explore different ways to use this new resource. The clinician will have office space in the station in the Patrol Division Room and will be assigned a radio call sign of JDP in Stow.