



Enhancing De-Escalation and Mental Health Response with Individuals in Crisis

May 11–13 • August 3–5

8:00am – 5:00pm

Powhatan County Huguenot Fire Station
1959 Urbine Rd Powhatan, VA 23139

April 13–15 • September 21–23 • October 19–21 • November 16–18

8:00am – 5:00pm

Crater Criminal Justice Training Academy
6130 County Drive Disputanta, VA 23842

This comprehensive, three-day training program provides criminal justice practitioners with the knowledge, skills, and practical experience required to safely and effectively manage encounters involving individuals experiencing mental health crises. Designed for sworn officers, supervisors, and academy recruits, the course blends evidence-based communication strategies, tactical de-escalation, legal standards, and scenario-based skill application.

Grounded in best practices from federal and state-level requirements, the course emphasizes officer safety, public safety, preparing officers to slow encounters, stabilize subjects, and make sound, legally defensible decisions when faced with complex crisis situations. Through guided instruction, case studies, demonstrations, and immersive scenario work, participants will learn to recognize signs of mental illness, understand stress physiology, apply trauma-informed communication, coordinate team tactics, and collaborate effectively with mental-health and emergency-service partners. Participants also learn critical articulation and documentation skills that protect both the officer and their agency.

By the conclusion of the course, officers will be able to:

- Recognize and interpret behavioral indicators of mental illness, substance-related impairment, and crisis escalation.
- Apply proven verbal and nonverbal de-escalation techniques rooted in empathy, communication discipline, and officer self-regulation.
- Integrate tactical principles such as time, distance, and shielding to create safer, more controlled interactions.
- Conduct rapid risk and threat assessments to guide decision-making during dynamic crisis encounters.
- Utilize modern crisis-intervention models, including CIT, de-escalation continuums, and trauma-informed policing.
- Work effectively within a team-based crisis response framework, including dispatch coordination and mobile-crisis collaboration.
- Perform and demonstrate skills during realistic, graded scenarios involving a variety of mental-health presentations.
- Document crisis encounters clearly, accurately, and in a legally sound manner.

Please contact Emily Kasky, CCJTA In-Service Training Coordinator, with any questions.

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