

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
CONTACT: Sergeant Scott Waite 623 930-3076
Officer Tiffany Smith 623 930-3276

Date: November 13, 2017

Crisis Intervention Training

GLENDALE, Ariz. – Beginning in April 2016, several police departments in the West Valley joined together to enhance efforts to serve citizens experiencing a mental health crisis.

Due to the increasing number of contacts between law enforcement personnel and citizens in mental crises, west valley agencies created the West Valley Crisis Intervention Team Coalition (WVCIT). Currently, the WVCIT is made up of partnering agencies including the Glendale Police Department, the Surprise Police Department, the Goodyear Police Department, the Peoria Police Department, the Avondale Police Department, the Tolleson Police Department, the El Mirage Police Department, and the Buckeye Police Department.

“This training provides our officers with resources and tools that can better serve the public. Our ability to meet their needs and improve the service we provide is our focus. The last thing we want is for any contact with a citizen to take a negative turn. We want, open, productive communication and assistance” says Chief Rick St. John.

On January 23, 2017, the WVCIT hosted the first forty-hour CIT training class. This training was conducted by utilizing local CIT models, national models from CIT International, the National Alliance on Mental Illness models, and other CIT training guides. Since then, additional training has been done and will continue to proceed. At this point, 131 officers have been trained.

During the training, the attendees actively participated in comprehensive, hands-on-training covering aspects of mental health issues regularly faced by law enforcement personnel. Also, members of Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care, who currently serve as the Maricopa Regional Behavioral Health Authority, were present and provided additional technical support and resources.

###

**Spanish translation available*

*“The Glendale Police Department’s mission
is to protect the lives and property of the people we serve.”*

*Glendale Police Department
a proud recipient of CALEA National Accreditation since 2000*