



King County

Office of Law Enforcement Oversight

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TO: Sheriff John Urquhart

FR: Deborah Jacobs, Director, Office of Law Enforcement Oversight

RE: Recommendation on GOM 5.08.025(6) (Persons in Behavioral Crisis)

GOM 5.08.025(6) is being revised for compliance with the new Washington State law, RCW 71.05.457. The law encourages officers responding to persons who threaten or attempt suicide (but are not involuntarily committed or do not meet criteria for commitment and refuse assistance) to make a referral in writing to the local mental health agency. Because King County is large and has numerous local mental health agencies, the policy revision proposed by KCSO references county-wide resources.

In evaluating the revisions proposed by your office, OLEO sought input from Dave Murphy, Project Manager IV with King County Community and Human Services, regarding what “local mental health agency” should be referenced in the policy. He agreed with listing the Crisis Clinic. However, he also recommended listing the Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) rather than Designated Mental Health Providers (DMHP’s) because the MCT is in a position to actually respond and are trained in ways that make them more successful at persuading persons in behavioral crisis to agree to assistance. For easy reference, I’ve included both your office’s and OLEO’s proposed language.

KCSO proposed:

6. Treatment Refused/No Action: If a deputy contacts a person they believes has a behavioral health disorder or is experiencing a behavioral health crisis, but the person is not exhibiting behaviors that meet commitment criteria and has refused assistance, deputies ~~can~~ are encouraged to contact the DMHP’s or the Crisis Clinic:
 - a. To review the facts of the situation.
 - b. If needed for additional resources to assist the person.
 - c. To make a referral for mental health services.

OLEO proposed:

6. Treatment Refused/No Action: If ~~a~~ deputies ~~contact~~ s a person they believes ~~has~~ has a behavioral health disorder or is experiencing a behavioral health crisis, including threatening or attempting suicide, but the person is not exhibiting behaviors that meet commitment criteria and has refused assistance, deputies are encouraged to make a referral in writing to ~~can contact~~ the Mobile Crisis Team or Crisis Clinic:
 - a. To review the facts of the situation.
 - b. If needed for additional resources to assist the person.