**For immediate release**

Nov. 27, 2015

**More than 3,000 law enforcement personnel now trained in mental health crisis intervention, says Gov. Nixon**

*St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department to host 40-hour Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training starting Nov. 30*

**JEFFERSON CITY, MO –** Expanded access to mental health crisis intervention training for law enforcement officers is helping to improve public safety across the state, **Gov.  Jay Nixon** said today.  Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, a 40-hour course that helps law enforcement officers learn how to approach and assist individuals who are in mental health crisis, was one of the five components of the Governor’s **Strengthening Missouri’s Mental Health Initiative**.  A total of more than ~~3,000~~ 5,500 law enforcement personnel in Missouri been trained in mental health crisis intervention.

For example, the **St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department** is hosting a 40-hour, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for area law enforcement starting Monday, November 30, 2015.

“Missouri’s law enforcement officers are often on the front lines of the fight against mental illness, and as Governor I’ve been committed to providing them with the tools, training and resources they need to respond,” said **Gov. Nixon**.  “This innovative initiative is bringing law enforcement, mental health providers, families and community leaders together to improve care and enhance public safety.”

In 2013, Gov. Nixon called for a series of fiscally responsible measures to improve the way Missouri cares for individuals whose mental illness is so severe that it makes them a threat to themselves or others. Working with members of the General Assembly, the Governor secured $10 million annually for the Strengthening Mental Health Initiative in the Fiscal Year 2014, Fiscal Year 2015 and Fiscal Year 2016 budgets.

A cornerstone of the initiative was expanding access to Crisis Intervention Team training for local law enforcement. The initiative also included the placement of 31 new **Community Mental Health Liaisons** around the state, an expansion of mental health first-aid training and resources for emergency room intervention teams to work with patients needing coordinated care.

Due to the additional resources available to help support the costs of the training courses and the assistance of the local community mental health liaisons, new CIT councils are in development across the state.

“Missouri officers trained in CIT have done an outstanding job of responding to situations and connecting individuals to the mental health care they need,” said **Mark Stringer, Director of the Department of Mental Health**.  “The partnership between the mental health community and law enforcement has made a tremendous difference for Missourians with mental illness that need treatment, not jail time.”

For more information on the CIT training in St. Louis contact Schron Jackson, Public Information Director for the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department at syjackson@SLMPD.org or 314-444-5603.

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For more information on the CIT training in Kansas City contact Sgt. Sean Hess with the Kansas City Police Department at Sean.Hess@kcpd or 816-581-0696.