

MEDIA RELEASE

Mental Health Response Team Expanding in Washington County

June 10, 2021

The Washington County Sheriff's Office [Mental Health Response Team](#) (MHRT) is expanding to provide more specialized mental health services to the community, adding more local police departments to its roster. Until recently, the Sheriff's Office MHRT consists of law enforcement members from the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Sherwood Police Department. Recently, a member from the Hillsboro Police Department joined the team. In addition, plans are currently in the works to add a member from the Beaverton, King City, Tigard, and Tualatin Police Departments - making this team a truly multi-agency effort.

MHRT consists of a deputy or officer and an experienced, masters-level trained mental health clinician who responds to calls for service that may have a mental health or crisis component. Now in its eleventh year, this unique county-wide program is a collaborative approach. It offers optimum care to those in need by having a skilled deputy and trained clinician available for immediate intervention anywhere in the county. The goal of MHRT is to connect people with needed treatment services rather than potentially lodging them in jail or taking them to a nearby hospital.



Recently, a family in Washington County called non-emergency dispatch requesting a welfare check for their 30-year-old son, a veteran, experiencing PTSD and suicidal thoughts. An MHRT deputy contacted the veteran by phone, and the veteran agreed to meet with the MHRT unit at his home. The deputy and clinician confirmed he was safe and spoke with him about his suicidal thoughts. The clinician and deputy worked with the veteran to develop a safety plan, including securing firearms and medication in a locked safe and having a family member hold onto the key temporarily. Together, the deputy and clinician arranged for him to connect with services at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Additionally, MHRT provided check-in calls to the veteran until his scheduled appointment at the VA.

You can learn more about MHRT in this Sheriff's Office [Special Teams Spotlight](#) video.



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