

**Event 10 – Quality of Life  
Session 20 –Mental Illness  
LD #37 – People with Disabilities**

**Date Revised: 12/4/2019**

**Course Goal:** To recognize behaviors/indicators associated with developmental disabilities, mental illness by demonstrating proficiency in contacting people with simulated disabilities and mental illness and providing the proper referrals/resources.

**Learning Objectives:**

- The student will participate in a facilitated debrief following a series of simulated incidents regarding effective law enforcement intervention techniques with people exhibiting behavior which may be indicative of a physical and developmental disability: **[37.VI.B]** The debrief shall minimally address the following topics as they pertain to the contact: **[37.VI.B.1]** The types of behaviors exhibited by the person contacted, **[37.VI.B.2]**, Possible causes of the behaviors, **[37.VI.B.3]**, Tactical safety measures employed by the responding officer(s), if applicable, **[37.VI.B.4]**, Appropriateness of the resolution, referral, or follow-up strategy, if applicable, **[37.VI.B.5]**, Use of effective verbal/non-verbal communication skills, **[37.VI.B.6]**, Overall effectiveness of the contact.
- The student will participate in one or more learning activities from the POST- developed Instructor’s Guide to Learning Activities for Leadership, Ethics and Community Policing (December 2005) or other comparable sources regarding people with disabilities. At a minimum, each activity, or combination of activities must address the following topics: **[37.VI.C]**
- Responsibility of a peace officer to exercise ethical leadership during contacts with people with disabilities **[37.VI.C.1]**
- Use of effective communication skills (e.g. empathy, respect and honesty) and problem solving to enhance an officer’s efforts to appropriately resolve issues of equal treatment and access to services **[37.VI.C.2]**
- Impact of an officer’s attitude and actions toward people with disabilities on the community, agency and the officer **[37.VI.C.3]**

**Session Time: 4 hours**

<b>Resources:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Group Rotation Weeks 19-22</li> <li>• Classroom with tables</li> <li>• Whiteboard/Dry-erase markers</li> <li>• Scenario Rooms (ARTC-Apartment A, Apartment H, Courtroom, rear parking lot, running track)</li> <li>• Handouts: LD # 37 Mental Illness Reference Documents</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Session Summary:</b> The recruit officer will recognize behaviors/ indicators associated with mental illness by means of facilitation, case studies, learning activities, handouts, and practical application scenario role plays.</li> </ul>	
Outline	Instructor Notes
I. Mental Illness Review	

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A. Opening – Lead a discussion to review the following topics.

1. What are the criteria for detention under the authority of 5150 WIC?
  - a. When an officer has probable cause to believe that because of a mental illness, a person is a danger to self, or a danger to others or gravely disabled.
2. Give an example of a person who, because of a mental illness is a danger to self? Danger to others? Gravely disabled?
3. What is the two-prong test?
  - a. Is the person showing any signs of mental illness? If yes, is the mental illness causing the person to be a danger to self, or a danger to others, or gravely disabled? If yes, detain the person under the authority of 5150 WIC.
    - i. If no, then provide appropriate referral or assistance.
4. Once a decision is made to detain a person under the authority of 5150 WIC, what procedures must be followed?
  - a. handcuff and search (no plastic cuffs)
  - b. complete field interview card
  - c. conducts a want and warrant check?
  - d. check AFS (via NECS)
  - e. check MHFPS (via NECS)
  - f. crime committed?
  - g. prohibited possessor
  - h. obtains incident number from MDC
  - i. give detainment advisement to subject
  - j. complete MH302 form
  - k. contact MEU
5. What information can MEU provide when you contact them?
  - a. approval for detention
  - b. advises what mental health facility to take subject to
  - c. gives appropriate information (shelter, food bank, mental health hospital)
  - d. dispatches a SMART team if available
  - e. referral information for developmental disabled individuals

**Ask: What are the criteria for detention under the authority of 5150 WIC?**

**Ask: Give an example of a person who, because of a mental illness is a danger to self? Danger to others? Gravely disabled?**

**Ask: What information can MEU provide when you contact them?**

II. DEPARTMENT 95

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A. Introduction

1. In Los Angeles, Department 95 is designated as the superior court that deals exclusively with mental illness issues.
2. Officers will not generally be involved with this department, but awareness of the responsibilities is appropriate

B. Some responsibilities of Department 95

1. Issues conservatorships to guardians
  - a. Like a power of attorney-gives the guardian the power to make decisions regarding the person with a mental illness
  - b. If officers respond to a call and are informed by the PR that they are the subjects conservator, they should request to see documentation stating such, which should be signed by a Department 95 judge
2. Gives approval to extend a 5150 hold
  - a. The mental health facility will contact Department 95 for approval to extend a 72 hour 5150 WIC hold to a 14-day hold.
3. Gives approval for return of weapons
  - a. If officers detain a person on a 5150 hold and a weapon is seized and booked, a court order is required to release the firearm regardless of who owns the weapon, and a petition will need to file with Department 95.

III. WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE 5150.05

A. Introduction

1. When in the presence of an officer who is considering a 5150 detention it is not uncommon for a person with mental illness to “present well”
  - a. e.g., rational, lucid, plans for self-care, answering appropriately
2. Prior to the addition of this Welfare and Institution code section, an officer was only able to consider the person’s presentation “at that moment in time”
  - a. e.g., was the person “imminently” dangerous or gravely disabled
3. Without reasonable consideration of the psychiatric history, a person may not be

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appropriately placed and/or may be prematurely released without the proper treatment

B. 5150.05 WIC became effective January 1, 2002 and modifies the LPS Act (Lanterman, Petris, Short Act), which governs involuntary treatment for people with mental illness.

1. Modifies and clarifies the LPS Act to ensure that families are a part of the system response and subject to the rules of evidence and court procedures
  - a. Mandates that anyone authorized to take a person into custody under 5150 WIC SHALL consider available relevant information about the historical course of the person's mental illness.
  - b. Mandates that the historical course SHALL be considered at all steps of the mental health process
  - c. Allows mental illness history to be used to determine probable cause for a 5150 detention
  - d. Requires that hearing officers, judges, and juries who consider whether the person is to be certified for additional periods of involuntary treatment beyond the initial 72 hours consider the historical course
  - e. Formerly, consideration of psychiatric history was generally considered an option.
2. The following should be considered in determining historical course:
  - a. Evidence presented by people who have provided or are providing mental health or related support services, or anyone who observed behavior prior to the arrival of law enforcement \*
  - b. Medical records
  - c. Evidence voluntarily presented by family members and the patient
3. If probable cause for detention is based on a statement other than that of someone authorized to take the person into custody for a 72-hour hold, the person making the statement shall be liable in a civil action for intentionally giving a false statement.

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<p>C. What are your options if an unknown witness refuses to give their personal information to you?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Is there another witness that is available and willing to give you their personal information?</li><li>2. If an officer is using information from an unknown witness to determine probable cause to detain, attempt to gather as much corroborative evidence as possible, including calling family members, MEU, or questioning other witnesses.</li></ol> <p>D. Are witnesses bound by law to give officers their personal information?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No. There is no legal requirement that compels a witness to cooperate with law enforcement. If a witness refuses to give officers any personal information, (i.e., to complete an F.I.), it will ultimately come down to the officer's judgment regarding the totality of the circumstances. A 5150 detention is not an arrest, and any information obtained from the witness is for liability purposes only.</li></ol> <p>E. What is your goal for the person experiencing a mental illness crisis?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The officer's goal is protection and proper treatment of the individual. The totality of the circumstances must be considered.</li><li>2. Asking yourself the simple question, "Do I feel comfortable leaving this person in this situation?" may help in the decision-making process.</li><li>3. Information obtained from the caregiver/family member needs to be thoroughly articulated in the narrative portion of the MH 302 detention form.</li></ol> <p>IV. TARASOFF WARNING-INTRODUCTION</p> <p>A. Tatiana Tarasoff was a student at UC Berkeley. Tatiana's boyfriend confided to his therapist that he intended to kill her. The therapist did not warn Tatiana of the threat. After her murder, Tatiana's parents initiated a wrongful death action. The complaint alleged that no one warned Tatiana or her parents of the impending danger.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) This led to the Tarasoff Decision that held when a therapist determines that their patient presents a danger of violence to a named victim, he/she incurs an obligation to</li></ol>	<p><b>ASK: What are your options if an unknown witness refuses to give their personal information to you?</b></p> <p><b>ASK: Are witnesses bound by law to give officers their personal information?</b></p> <p><b>ASK: What is your goal for the person experiencing a mental illness crisis?</b></p>
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use reasonable care to protect the intended victim.

2) In 2004, California Civil Code section 43.92 was expanded to include family members. The expanded duty to therapists now applies to credible threats received from the patient, or the patient's family. However, the courts made it clear that its decision does not go beyond family members. (Ewing v. Goldstein)

- a. There is an obligation by psychiatrists, psychologists, Marriage and Family Therapists and Licensed Clinical Social Workers to notify law enforcement if a threat has been made against a named victim.
- b. MEU will mail documentation regarding the threat to the DOJ. If the suspect attempts to purchase a weapon, his name will be flagged.
- c. Patrol officers only involvement may be to take a criminal threat report and/or attempt to obtain an EPO.

**V. LEARNING ACTIVITY-TABLE TOP EXERCISES  
[37.VI.B.1-6]**

- A. Purpose: To provide the student with the opportunity to identify effective assessment and communication strategies and identify appropriate resolution options. The emphasis is de-escalation through communication skills, decreased use of force incidents, and resolution options other than a 5150 detention or jail when applicable.
- B. **Procedure:**
- C. **BREAK** the class into small groups.
- D. **DISTRIBUTE** different scenarios to each group.
- E. **INSTRUCT** students to pick one spokesperson from their group.
- F. **INSTRUCT** students to read their scenario and answer each question. Do this in a "brain storming" fashion.
- G. **GIVE** the groups 10 minutes to work through the debrief questions.
- H. **DEBRIEF** by soliciting responses from each spokesperson. Be sure to reinforce the points at end of each scenario if not brought out by the class.

**VI. Scenario #1**

- A. You and your partner receive a call of a burglary investigation. You contact your PR, Mrs. Becker, a

**NOTE: The table top activities can also be used as role plays.**

**Learning Activity 1: TABLE TOP EXERCISES**

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woman in her early 50's. Mrs. Becker reports to you that she needs to discuss the details of her burglary on the sidewalk outside her home. You follow Mrs. Becker to the curb where she tells you that she knows that the FBI has broken into her home and placed listening devices and cameras throughout. Mrs. Becker states that she has been followed by various international intelligence agencies from all over the world for most of her life because of her involvement in the Warren Commission investigation that probed the Kennedy assassination.

- B. Recognize behavioral indicator that may be generally associated with people affected by mental illness
1. List the behavior(s) that may be signs of mental illness.
    - a. Delusions
    - b. Paranoia
    - c. Anxiety
  2. Recognize appropriate tactical actions when responding to a call involving a person with a mental illness
  3. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
    - a. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
    - b. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene
  4. Recognize the potential effects of negative nonverbal signals
  5. Give examples of effective communication techniques for
    - a) Active listening
    - b) Establishing effective lines of communication
    - c) Overcoming barriers to communication
- VII. Discuss the communication techniques that can be used for obtaining voluntary compliance
- A. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
1. Remain calm
  2. Avoid overreacting
  3. Treat the person with respect
  4. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
  5. Identify self
  6. Reassure that you are there to help
  7. Ask simple questions
  8. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time,

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and place (e.g. name, date, year)

- a. Understand that you may not have a rational discussion
- b. Be friendly, patient and truthful
- c. Remain professional

B. How will you resolve this situation?

1. Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
2. Attempt to find family, neighbors, or friends who can give history regarding the person
3. Determine if the person is a danger to self, others, or gravely disabled
4. If the criteria are not met for a 5150 detention, determine if it is safe to leave the person in their home
5. Give appropriate referrals
6. Contact MEU for advice

C. Recognize peace officer actions when a person affected by mental illness does not meet detention under the *Welfare and Institutions Code section 5150*

1. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention?  
**NO.**

VIII. Scenario #2

A. You and your partner receive a radio call of a possible suicide attempt. When you arrive at the residence Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, the parents of 16-year-old Katie, meets you. They tell you that Katie recently broke up with her boyfriend, has been doing poor in school and told her parents “I’d be better off dead.” When you interview Katie, she states she does not want to kill herself.

1. List the behavior (s) that may be signs of mental illness.
  - a. Depression
2. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
  - a. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
  - b. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene
  - c. Ask Katie if she wants to kill herself
  - d. Determine if she has a plan
3. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
  - a. Remain calm



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- b. Avoid overreacting
- c. Treat the person with respect
- d. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
- e. Identify self
- f. Reassure that you are there to help
- g. Ask simple questions
- h. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time, and place (e.g. name, date, year)
- i. Be friendly, patient and truthful
- j. Remain professional

4. How will you resolve this situation?
- a) Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
  - b) Actively solicit information from the family regarding the person's mental illness history, if any
  - c) Determine if the person is a danger to self or others
  - d) If the criteria for a 5150 detention is not met, determine what are the most appropriate options available, (e.g. stay at home with parents, see their doctor)
  - e) Give appropriate referrals
  - f) Contact MEU for advice
5. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention? **NO**. A statement of suicidal ideation alone, absent anything else, does not automatically become a 5150 detention.

**IX. Scenario #3**

- A. You and your partner receive a radio call of a man with a possible mental illness. When you arrive at the location, you see the subject in the front yard dressed in a robe and boxer shorts. You observe him vacillating between pacing back and forth, sitting down, and then standing up. You hear him repeat over and over, "Everything is ok now. I have my Dad here and the police are here. I'm finding a happy place. Everything's ok." You are told he lives alone at the location.
- 1. List the behavior(s) that may be signs of mental illness.
    - a. Agitation
    - b. Manic behavior

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- c. Anxiety
- d. Paranoia
- 2. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
  - a. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
  - b. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene
  - c. Find out if the person has a history of violence under similar circumstances
  - d. If the person is begging to be left alone or offering frantic assurances that he is ok, that person may be in a potential crisis
- 3. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
  - a. Remain calm
  - b. Avoid overreacting
  - c. Treat the person with respect
  - d. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
  - e. Identify self
  - f. Reassure that you are there to help
  - g. Ask simple questions
  - h. Understand that you may not have a rational discussion
  - i. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time, and place (e.g. name, date, year)
  - j. Be friendly, patient and truthful
  - k. Remain professional
- 4. How will you resolve this situation?
  - a. Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
  - b. Actively solicit information from the family regarding the person's mental illness history, if any
  - c. Determine if the person is a danger to self or others
  - d. If the criteria for a 5150 detention is not met, determine what are the most appropriate options available, (e.g. stay with father, see their doctor, get back on their medication)
  - e. Give appropriate referrals
  - f. Contact MEU for advice

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5. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention? **NO.**

**X. LEARNING ACTIVITY- ROLE PLAYS [37.VI.B.1-6]**

A. The student will participate in a facilitated critique following a series of simulated incidents regarding effective law enforcement intervention techniques with people exhibiting behavior which may be indicative of a disability. At a minimum the depictions must involve people exhibiting behaviors characteristic of:

1. Mental illness
2. Physical disability
3. Developmental disability

B. The critique shall minimally address the following issues as they pertain to the contact:

1. The types of behaviors exhibited by the person contacted
2. Possible causes of the behaviors
3. Tactical safety measures employed by the responding officers, if applicable
4. Appropriateness of the resolution, referral, or follow-up strategy, if applicable
5. Overall effectiveness of the contact

C. The student will participate in one or more learning activities from the POST-developed *Instructor's Guide to Learning Activities for Leadership, Ethics and Community Policing (December 2005)* or other comparable sources regarding people with disabilities.

At a minimum, each activity, or combination of activities must address the following topics: **[37.VI.C.1-3]**

1. Responsibility of a peace officer to exercise ethical leadership during contacts with people with disabilities **[37.VI.C.1]**
2. Use of effective communication skills (e.g. empathy, respect and honesty) and problem solving to enhance an officer's efforts to appropriately resolve issues of equal treatment and access to services **[37.VI.C.2]**
3. Impact of an officer's attitude and actions toward people with disabilities on the community, agency and the officer **[37.VI.C.3]**

**LEARNING ACTIVITY- ROLE PLAYS**

**Role Play # 1**

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**Procedures:**

- A. **INSTRUCT** students refer to their LD #37 Mental Illness Reference Documents to use as a guide to assist during the role-play scenarios.
- B. **HAVE** one instructor in soft clothes portray a possible male or female with a mental illness.
- C. **CHOOSE** two students to be the officers who respond to the radio call or citizen flag down.
- D. **CHOOSE** the witness or PR, whom may be another instructor or another student.
- E. **Do not** read the scenario to the class. The students will respond to the location and meet the witness or PR. The students will need to interview the witness or PR to obtain the necessary information to continue the role-play scenario.

*You and your partner respond to a radio call of a female/male refusing to leave the Yoshinoya Beef Bowl restaurant. When you arrive, the manager identifies the subject. He asked her/him to leave after she/he had started talking to herself/himself, causing him and the customers to feel uneasy.*

*The subject is seated at one of the tables, staring at an adjacent chair. Her/his hair is unkempt, and she/he is wearing old, unwashed clothing. His/her skin is dirty, and she/he smells of body odor.*

➤ **MANAGER**

- 1. Meet the officers
- 2. Inform them that the subject appears to be talking to themselves, is making customers uncomfortable, and was asked to leave
- 3. Add information regarding her appearance and body odor

➤ **SUBJECT**

- 1. You are seated at a table staring at an empty adjacent chair
- 2. Your demeanor is calm
- 3. You appear to be listening and then responding to the empty chair; you are speaking quietly
- 4. Your arm movements seem to be congruent

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with your speech

5. You are unaware of the officers approaching
6. When approached by officers you begin to become slightly agitated and fearful, but not out of control
7. Share the following information if asked
  
8. You were speaking to your son
9. He passed away about a year ago
10. You live nearby with your husband/wife
11. You have taken medication in the past for depression

NOTE: If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by following the officers' directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

1. You receive a radio call to respond to the Yoshinoya Beef Bowl restaurant for a possible female/male with a mental illness
2. Interview the manager
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed

NOTE: If responding officers want to contact the subjects spouse, another instructor can role-play this part. The spouse will share that his wife/husband has not taken their medication for a few days. The spouse is the primary caretaker.

After the completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
3. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been

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committed

- e. Attempt to watch and listen to the subject prior to engaging
- f. Call the subjects spouse and interview regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
- g. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation
- h. Remind students that being dirty and smelly does not necessarily equate to gravely disabled

**Role play #2**

You and your partner receive a radio call to a popular local restaurant. When officers arrive, you are met by the owner who tells you that a customer who frequents the restaurant came in this morning and when he saw a couple sitting at the table he usually sits at, he became very agitated and verbally inappropriate to the couple. He was asked to stop and sit at another table which he refused to do.

➤ **MANAGER**

- 1. Meet the officers
- 2. Inform them that the subject wanted to sit at his regular table and became extremely upset and verbally abusive to the couple already sitting at the table
- 3. He offered the subject another table which was refused
- 4. The subject became more agitated and he called the police

➤ **SUBJECT**

- 1. You are highly agitated and upset that these people are sitting at **YOUR** table
- 2. You are pacing back and forth
- 3. Your speech is pressured and rapid
- 4. You are not going to be talked out of the belief that this is your table
- 5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You live with your sister
  - b. You **used** to have some mental problems, but you are fine now

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- c. You don't take medication because there is nothing wrong with you
- 6. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer's directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

- 1. You receive a radio call to respond to a disturbance at a local restaurant
- 2. Interview the manager
- 3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed

**NOTE:** If officers want to contact the subject's sister, another instructor can role play this part. The sister can share that her brother has been off his medication and becomes easily upset. She is the subject's primary caregiver.

After the completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

- 1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
- 2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
- 3. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
- 4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been committed
  - e. Attempt to watch and listen to the subject prior to engaging
  - f. Call the subject's family and interview regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
  - g. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation

**Role play #3**

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You and your partner receive a radio call to respond to the outdoor swap meet located in your division for an unknown disturbance. When you arrive, you are directed to a booth where they are selling scarves. You see a woman who is extremely upset and attempting to grab the scarves from their display. When you talk to the owner of the booth she tells you that this woman became very upset when she saw the scarves, has been trying to take them, and keeps saying that the owner “stole her colors and she wants them back.”

➤ **BOOTH OWNER**

1. Meet the officers
2. You are upset because you have been trying to reason with this woman, to no avail, and she keeps attempting to take your sale items
3. You have not seen her before and know nothing about her

➤ **SUBJECT**

1. You are very agitated
2. Your speech is rapid and pressured
3. You believe that the owner of the booth who is selling the scarves has stolen your colors and you want them back, you keep repeating that these are your creations, your colors. You ask the booth owner how she got your creations and accuse her of taking them
4. You will not be able to be talked out of this belief; no amount of rationalization on the part of the officers is effective
5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You take medication called Tegretol
  - b. You live nearby in a home with other people (board and care facility)
  - c. You have a doctor you see regularly
6. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer’s directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

1. You receive a radio call to the local swap meet for an unknown disturbance
2. You locate the PR, the owner of the booth, who you interview



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3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed  
After completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
3. Why? What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't?
4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, or gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been committed
  - e. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation

**Role play #4**

You and your partner receive a radio call to respond to Vons market for a possible female with a mental illness. When you arrive, you are met by the manager who tells you that there is a woman taking all the fresh and frozen chickens and turkeys and putting them in her cart. She keeps repeating to the food that she is going to bring them back to life with cryogenics that she is going to save them by freeing them.

➤ **MANAGER**

1. Meet the officers
2. Inform them that the woman is in the frozen food aisle putting turkeys and chickens in a cart
3. He heard her repeating that she was going to free them
4. They have had some problems with this woman in the past

➤ **SUBJECT**

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1. You are calm and methodical
2. You are placing chickens and turkeys into your cart
3. You continue to repeat how sorry you feel for them, that you are going to save them by bringing them back to life with cryogenics
4. You explain this quite rationally to the officers as you truly believe this
5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You are on medication but don't know the name
  - b. You take it most of the time when you feel anxious
  - c. You live with your son/daughter
6. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer's directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

1. You receive a radio call to respond to Vons market for a possible female with a mental illness
2. You interview the manager
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed
4. After completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.
  - a. What strategies did you see the officers use?
  - b. What would you have done the same? Differently?
  - c. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
  - d. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
    - 1) Interview the PR
    - 2) Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
    - 3) Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
    - 4) Determine if a crime has been committed
    - 5) If applicable, attempt to call

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- family members regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
- 6) If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation

**XI. PRACTICAL APPLICATION – Role Plays- Handling Mentally Ill Persons [37.VI.B.1-6]**

A. Purpose: To allow officers an opportunity to have hands on experience handling various types of radio calls involving persons who are mentally ill or have a developmental disability.

B. **Procedures:** Large group activity

C. **FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Choose students from the class to participate in various scenarios and identify contact and cover officers.
2. Assess both strong and weak points in a follow-up critique.
3. Various scenarios should include:
  - a. Person who is suicidal due to recent loss of job and residence because of a natural disaster (mood disorder)
  - b. Person who is depressed and suicidal due to the loss of a child /a spouse / a significant other relationship due to a drunk driver (mood disorder)
  - c. Person holding a knife and threatening to harm self if he/she can't "stop the voices" (thought disorder)
  - d. Person in a grocery store taking eggs out of the carton and talking to them. (Does not meet criteria for detention under 5150 WIC)
  - e. Person refusing to exit the bus because they think the world outside is quicksand and they will die. (Does not meet the criteria for detention under 5150 WIC)
  - f. A traffic stops where the individual does not respond to the officer's commands and is shaking his head side to side and pointing to his ear.

**Learning Activity 3- Role Plays:  
Handling Mentally Ill Persons**

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(hard of hearing)	
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**LEARNING ACTIVITY 1-TABLE TOP EXERCISES**

**I. LEARNING ACTIVITY-TABLE TOP EXERCISES [37.VI.B.1-6]**

**NOTE: The table top activities can also be used as role plays.**

Purpose: To provide the student with the opportunity to identify effective assessment and communication strategies and identify appropriate resolution options. The emphasis is de-escalation through communication skills, decreased use of force incidents, and resolution options other than a 5150 detention or jail when applicable.

**Procedure:**

- A. **BREAK** the class into small groups.
- B. **DISTRIBUTE** different scenarios to each group.
- C. **INSTRUCT** students to pick one spokesperson from their group.
- D. **INSTRUCT** students to read their scenario and answer each question. Do this in a “brain storming” fashion.
- E. **GIVE** the groups 10 minutes to work through the debrief questions.
- F. **DEBRIEF** by soliciting responses from each spokesperson. Be sure to reinforce the points at end of each scenario if not brought out by the class.

**Scenario #1**

You and your partner receive a call of a burglary investigation. You contact your PR, Mrs. Becker, a woman in her early 50’s. Mrs. Becker reports to you that she needs to discuss the details of her burglary on the sidewalk outside her home. You follow Mrs. Becker to the curb where she tells you that she knows that the FBI has broken into her home and placed listening devices and cameras throughout. Mrs. Becker states that she has been followed by various international intelligence agencies from all over the world for most of her life because of her involvement in the Warren Commission investigation that probed the Kennedy assassination.

Recognize behavioral indicator that may be generally associated with people affected by mental illness

4. List the behavior(s) that may be signs of mental illness.
  - a. Delusions
  - b. Paranoia
  - c. Anxiety

Recognize appropriate tactical actions when responding to a call involving a person with a mental illness

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5. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
- c. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
  - d. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene

Recognize the potential effects of negative nonverbal signals

Give examples of effective communication techniques for

Active listening

Establishing effective lines of communication

Overcoming barriers to communication

Discuss the communication techniques that can be used for obtaining voluntary compliance

3. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
- d. Remain calm
  - e. Avoid overreacting
  - f. Treat the person with respect
  - g. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
  - h. Identify self
  - i. Reassure that you are there to help
  - j. Ask simple questions
  - k. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time, and place (e.g. name, date, year)
  - l. Understand that you may not have a rational discussion
  - m. Be friendly, patient and truthful
  - n. Remain professional
4. How will you resolve this situation?
- a. Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
  - b. Attempt to find family, neighbors, or friends who can give history regarding the person
  - c. Determine if the person is a danger to self, others, or gravely disabled
  - d. If the criteria are not met for a 5150 detention, determine if it is safe to leave the person in their home
  - e. Give appropriate referrals
  - f. Contact MEU for advice

Recognize peace officer actions when a person affected by mental illness does not meet detention under the *Welfare and Institutions Code section 5150*

5. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention? **NO.**

**Scenario #2**

You and your partner receive a radio call of a possible suicide attempt. When you arrive at the residence Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, the parents of 16-year-old Katie, meets you. They

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tell you that Katie recently broke up with her boyfriend, has been doing poor in school and told her parents “I’d be better off dead.” When you interview Katie, she states she does not want to kill herself.

2. List the behavior (s) that may be signs of mental illness.
  - a. Depression
  
6. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
  - a. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
  - b. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene
  - c. Ask Katie if she wants to kill herself
  - d. Determine if she has a plan
  
7. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
  - a. Remain calm
  - b. Avoid overreacting
  - c. Treat the person with respect
  - d. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
  - e. Identify self
  - f. Reassure that you are there to help
  - g. Ask simple questions
  - h. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time, and place (e.g. name, date, year)
  - i. Be friendly, patient and truthful
  - j. Remain professional
  
8. How will you resolve this situation?
  - g) Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
  - h) Actively solicit information from the family regarding the person’s mental illness history, if any
  - i) Determine if the person is a danger to self or others
  - j) If the criteria for a 5150 detention is not met, determine what are the most appropriate options available, (e.g. stay at home with parents, see their doctor)
  - k) Give appropriate referrals
  - l) Contact MEU for advice
  
9. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention? **NO**. A statement of suicidal ideation alone, absent anything else, does not automatically become a 5150 detention.

**Scenario #3**

You and your partner receive a radio call of a man with a possible mental illness. When you arrive at the location, you see the subject in the front yard dressed in a robe and boxer shorts. You observe him vacillating between pacing back and forth, sitting down, and then standing up. You hear him repeat over and over, “Everything is ok now. I have my Dad here and the police are here. I’m finding a happy place. Everything’s ok.” You are told he lives alone at the location.

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3. List the behavior(s) that may be signs of mental illness.
  - a. Agitation
  - b. Manic behavior
  - c. Anxiety
  - d. Paranoia
  
3. What do you want to assess or determine regarding this situation?
  - a. Establish if there are weapons available to the person
  - b. Determine if there have been signs of violence at the scene
  - c. Find out if the person has a history of violence under similar circumstances
  - d. If the person is begging to be left alone or offering frantic assurances that he is ok, that person may be in a potential crisis
  
3. What communication skills will you utilize to deescalate the incident?
  - a. Remain calm
  - b. Avoid overreacting
  - c. Treat the person with respect
  - d. Speak simply, briefly and slowly
  - e. Identify self
  - f. Reassure that you are there to help
  - g. Ask simple questions
  - h. Understand that you may not have a rational discussion
  - i. Ask specific questions to determine level of awareness and orientation to person, time, and place (e.g. name, date, year)
  - j. Be friendly, patient and truthful
  - k. Remain professional
  
4. How will you resolve this situation?
  - a. Determine if the person is on medication, under the care of a doctor, has a history of mental illness
  - b. Actively solicit information from the family regarding the person's mental illness history, if any
  - c. Determine if the person is a danger to self or others
  - d. If the criteria for a 5150 detention is not met, determine what are the most appropriate options available, (e.g. stay with father, see their doctor, get back on their medication)
  - e. Give appropriate referrals
  - f. Contact MEU for advice
  
5. Were the criteria met for a 5150 WIC detention? **NO.**



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**Learning Activity 2- ROLE PLAYS**

**I. LEARNING ACTIVITY- ROLE PLAYS [37.VI.B.1-6]**

- A. The student will participate in a facilitated critique following a series of simulated incidents regarding effective law enforcement intervention techniques with people exhibiting behavior which may be indicative of a disability. At a minimum the depictions must involve people exhibiting behaviors characteristic of:
1. Mental illness
  2. Physical disability
  3. Developmental disability
- B. The critique shall minimally address the following issues as they pertain to the contact:
1. The types of behaviors exhibited by the person contacted
  2. Possible causes of the behaviors
  3. Tactical safety measures employed by the responding officers, if applicable
  4. Appropriateness of the resolution, referral, or follow-up strategy, if applicable
  5. Overall effectiveness of the contact
- C. The student will participate in one or more learning activities from the POST-developed *Instructor's Guide to Learning Activities for Leadership, Ethics and Community Policing (December 2005)* or other comparable sources regarding people with disabilities. At a minimum, each activity, or combination of activities must address the following topics:
1. Responsibility of a peace officer to exercise ethical leadership during contacts with people with disabilities
  2. Use of effective communication skills (e.g. empathy, respect and honesty) and problem solving to enhance an officer's efforts to appropriately resolve issues of equal treatment and access to services
  3. Impact of an officer's attitude and actions toward people with disabilities on the community, agency and the officer

**Role Play # 1**

Procedure:

- D. **INSTRUCT** students refer to their LD #37 Mental Illness Reference Documents to use as a guide to assist during the role-play scenarios.
- E. **HAVE** one instructor in soft clothes portray a possible male or female with a mental

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illness.

- F. **CHOOSE** two students to be the officers who respond to the radio call or citizen flag down.
- G. **CHOOSE** the witness or PR, whom may be another instructor or another student.
- H. **Do not** read the scenario to the class. The students will respond to the location and meet the witness or PR. The students will need to interview the witness or PR to obtain the necessary information to continue the role-play scenario.

*You and your partner respond to a radio call of a female/male refusing to leave the Yoshinoya Beef Bowl restaurant. When you arrive, the manager identifies the subject. He asked her/him to leave after she/he had started talking to herself/himself, causing him and the customers to feel uneasy.*

*The subject is seated at one of the tables, staring at an adjacent chair. Her/his hair is unkempt, and she/he is wearing old, unwashed clothing. His/her skin is dirty, and she/he smells of body odor.*

➤ **MANAGER**

1. Meet the officers
2. Inform them that the subject appears to be talking to themselves, is making customers uncomfortable, and was asked to leave
3. Add information regarding her appearance and body odor

➤ **SUBJECT**

1. You are seated at a table staring at an empty adjacent chair
2. Your demeanor is calm
3. You appear to be listening and then responding to the empty chair; you are speaking quietly
4. Your arm movements seem to be congruent with your speech
5. You are unaware of the officers approaching
6. When approached by officers you begin to become slightly agitated and fearful, but not out of control
7. Share the following information if asked
8. You were speaking to your son
9. He passed away about a year ago

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10. You live nearby with your husband/wife
11. You have taken medication in the past for depression

NOTE: If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by following the officers' directions

➤ OFFICERS

1. You receive a radio call to respond to the Yoshinoya Beef Bowl restaurant for a possible female/male with a mental illness
2. Interview the manager
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed

NOTE: If responding officers want to contact the subjects spouse, another instructor can role-play this part. The spouse will share that his wife/husband has not taken their medication for a few days. The spouse is the primary caretaker.

After the completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
3. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been committed
  - e. Attempt to watch and listen to the subject prior to engaging
  - f. Call the subjects spouse and interview regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
  - g. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation
  - h. Remind students that being dirty and smelly does not necessarily equate to gravely disabled

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**Role play #2**

You and your partner receive a radio call to a popular local restaurant. When officers arrive, you are met by the owner who tells you that a customer who frequents the restaurant came in this morning and when he saw a couple sitting at the table he usually sits at, he became very agitated and verbally inappropriate to the couple. He was asked to stop and sit at another table which he refused to do.

➤ **MANAGER**

1. Meet the officers
2. Inform them that the subject wanted to sit at his regular table and became extremely upset and verbally abusive to the couple already sitting at the table
3. He offered the subject another table which was refused
4. The subject became more agitated and he called the police

➤ **SUBJECT**

1. You are highly agitated and upset that these people are sitting at **YOUR** table
2. You are pacing back and forth
3. Your speech is pressured and rapid
4. You are not going to be talked out of the belief that this is your table
5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You live with your sister
  - b. You **used** to have some mental problems, but you are fine now
  - c. You don't take medication because there is nothing wrong with you
6. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer's directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

1. You receive a radio call to respond to a disturbance at a local restaurant
2. Interview the manager
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed

**NOTE:** If officers want to contact the subject's sister, another instructor can role play this part. The sister can share that her brother has been off his medication and becomes easily upset. She is the subject's primary caregiver.

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After the completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
3. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been committed
  - e. Attempt to watch and listen to the subject prior to engaging
  - f. Call the subject's family and interview regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
  - g. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation

**Role play #3**

**Procedures:**

You and your partner receive a radio call to respond to the outdoor swap meet located in your division for an unknown disturbance. When you arrive, you are directed to a booth where they are selling scarves. You see a woman who is extremely upset and attempting to grab the scarves from their display. When you talk to the owner of the booth she tells you that this woman became very upset when she saw the scarves, has been trying to take them, and keeps saying that the owner "stole her colors and she wants them back."

➤ **BOOTH OWNER**

1. Meet the officers
2. You are upset because you have been trying to reason with this woman, to no avail, and she keeps attempting to take your sale items
3. You have not seen her before and know nothing about her

➤ **SUBJECT**

1. You are very agitated
2. Your speech is rapid and pressured
3. You believe that the owner of the booth who is selling the scarves has stolen

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your colors and you want them back, you keep repeating that these are your creations, your colors. You ask the booth owner how she got your creations and accuse her of taking them

4. You will not be able to be talked out of this belief; no amount of rationalization on the part of the officers is effective
5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You take medication called Tegretol
  - b. You live nearby in a home with other people (board and care facility)
  - c. You have a doctor you see regularly
7. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer's directions

➤ OFFICERS

1. You receive a radio call to the local swap meet for an unknown disturbance
2. You locate the PR, the owner of the booth, who you interview
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed

After completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a large group setting.

1. What strategies did you see the officers use?
2. What would you have done the same? Differently?
3. Why? What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't?
4. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - a. Interview the PR
  - b. Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - c. Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, or gravely disabled
  - d. Determine if a crime has been committed
  - e. If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation

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**Role play #4**

You and your partner receive a radio call to respond to Vons market for a possible female with a mental illness. When you arrive, you are met by the manager who tells you that there is a woman taking all the fresh and frozen chickens and turkeys and putting them in her cart. She keeps repeating to the food that she is going to bring them back to life with cryogenics that she is going to save them by freeing them.

➤ **MANAGER**

1. Meet the officers
2. Inform them that the woman is in the frozen food isle putting turkeys and chickens in a cart
3. He heard her repeating that she was going to free them
4. They have had some problems with this woman in the past

➤ **SUBJECT**

1. You are calm and methodical
2. You are placing chickens and turkeys into your cart
3. You continue to repeat how sorry you feel for them, that you are going to save them by bringing them back to life with cryogenics
4. You explain this quite rationally to the officers as you truly believe this
5. Share the following information if asked:
  - a. You are on medication but don't know the name
  - b. You take it most of the time when you feel anxious
  - c. You live with your son/daughter
6. If students interact appropriately and attempt to utilize learned communication skills, respond by becoming calmer and following the officer's directions

➤ **OFFICERS**

1. You receive a radio call to respond to Vons market for a possible female with a mental illness
2. You interview the manager
3. Interview the subject using all the strategies and communication skills discussed
4. After completion of the scenario, discuss the following with the students in a

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large group setting.

- e. What strategies did you see the officers use?
- f. What would you have done the same? Differently?
- g. What communication skills were utilized? What worked? What didn't? Why?
- h. Appropriate actions the officers should utilize:
  - 1) Interview the PR
  - 2) Interview witnesses if available (5150.05 WIC)
  - 3) Determine if the subject is a danger to self, others, gravely disabled
  - 4) Determine if a crime has been committed
  - 5) If applicable, attempt to call family members regarding history (5150.05 WIC)
  - 6) If subject does not fall under the criteria of a 5150 detention, determine how best to resolve the situation



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**Learning Activity- 3- Practical Application-  
Role Plays: Handling Mentally Ill Persons**

I. ***Learning Activity- Practical Application*** – Role Plays- Handling Mentally Ill Persons  
[37.6B1-6]

Purpose: To allow officers an opportunity to have hands on experience handling various types of radio calls involving persons who are mentally ill or have a developmental disability.

**Procedures:** Large group activity

A. **FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS:**

Choose students from the class to participate in various scenarios and identify contact and cover officers.

Assess both strong and weak points in a follow-up critique.

B. Various scenarios should include:

1. Person who is suicidal due to recent loss of job and residence because of a natural disaster (mood disorder)
2. Person who is depressed and suicidal due to the loss of a child /a spouse / a significant other relationship due to a drunk driver (mood disorder)
3. Person holding a knife and threatening to harm self if he/she can't "stop the voices" (thought disorder)
4. Person in a grocery store taking eggs out of the carton and talking to them. (Does not meet criteria for detention under 5150 WIC)
5. Person refusing to exit the bus because they think the world outside is quicksand and they will die. (Does not meet the criteria for detention under 5150 WIC)
6. A traffic stops where the individual does not respond to the officer's commands and is shaking his head side to side and pointing to his ear. (hard of hearing)