

# CIT INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT ON CIT TRAINING DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC

We have been receiving inquiries from CIT programs across the country about CIT International's recommendations regarding the continuation of CIT training during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our simple answer is to follow public health guidelines for your state and community, which therefore may mean postponing CIT training until it is safe to proceed.

We appreciate the desire to expand the number of CIT trained officers, however conducting in-person training could put officers, training staff and community partners at increased risk for infection. Even if the number of officers in training classes is decreased and/or the size of classrooms increased to allow for 6+ feet of social distancing during class, other elements of the training day (e.g., lines for the restroom, coffee and other activities during breaks) might inadvertently put individuals at risk. Thus, it will be critical that safety precautions based on local conditions are carefully followed.

Some programs have considered putting their entire 40-hour training week online or offering classroom instruction online and putting off scenario training until a time when it can be safely done with no social distancing. We believe CIT training is best done as a one-week in person intensive/immersive experience. Thus, we would advise against putting part or all the training online or breaking the content into segments over a longer period. Agencies that have grants to provide CIT training may want to reach out to funders to request extensions so that training can be provided with fidelity when it is safe to do so.

We understand the desire to provide training opportunities to support improved response to individuals experiencing mental health crisis during the pandemic. We encourage agencies to explore mental health related training content that is appropriate for online delivery. This may include CIT in-service training on specific behavioral health topics, basic mental health awareness training, and suicide prevention training.

CIT International shares your frustration during this uncertain time. We want to remind you that CIT is more than just a training program, and that the time and dedication each of you have spent building community based CIT programs was well worth it as we ride out the COVID 19 pandemic together. The importance of CIT programs being "more than just training" is highlighted now as we share resources and support one another. CIT International is here to support you as you work to keep your communities safe while maintaining the capacity and integrity of your CIT program.