



Abilene Police Department

## News Release

NR 0603045

450 PECAN STREET – ABILENE, TX 79602 Ph: (325) 673-8331

Posted online at [www.abilenepolice.org](http://www.abilenepolice.org)

Media Contact: Rick Tomlin, Public Information Coordinator

Ph: (325) 437-4529 Email: [apdpio@abilenetx.gov](mailto:apdpio@abilenetx.gov)

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### Community Response Team To Aid With Mental Health Wellness

ABILENE, TX – The Abilene Police and Fire Departments along with the Betty Hardwick Center are committed to empowered and coordinated behavioral health services for all citizens. To take full advantage of existing programs and newly created leadership structures, a Community Response Team (CRT) has been formed and will soon hit the streets of Abilene. The team will include a police officer, a fire fighter paramedic and a mental health clinician. By leveraging such talents, mental health clients will receive direct, onsite care that will increase their wellness and make Abilene a safer community for everyone.

In 2017, Abilene Police responded to 1,709 calls for service involving an individual(s) in mental health crisis. The Fire Department responded to 1,022 calls during the same timeframe. In 2018, the City and County began working to redefine response to mental illness in our community, which has resulted in remarkable progress. Behavioral health triage services are now offered in the Police Communications Center (9-1-1 Dispatch), resulting in fewer calls actually being dispatched to units. Additionally, a full-time Jail Navigator was assigned to the Taylor County Jail, with the goal of reducing the number of incarcerated mental health clients. And now, the CRT is set to be operational on Tuesday, June 11<sup>th</sup>.

We are better together, and we hope our citizens join us in thanking your local leaders for joining a leadership collaborative that has redefined how we treat those with mental illness. Systems are being integrated so that existing and new programs will have a positive impact on treatment access and recidivism.

Media Conference to announce the CRT program:

Thursday, June 6, 2019

10 a.m.

Soda District Courtyard, 834 S. 3rd

Thank you,

Stan Standridge  
Chief of Police

Cande Flores  
Fire Chief

Jenny Goode  
Chief Executive Officer

[www.abilenepolice.org](http://www.abilenepolice.org)



@abilenepd



Abilene Police  
Department

"You are the  
first line of  
defense  
against crime"

Stan Standridge, Chief of Police | 450 Pecan | Abilene, TX | 79602

*"We work together to build and maintain a community of the highest quality for present and future generations"*