

The Law Enforcement/Mental Health Learning Sites project provides peer-to-peer support for groups interested in improving upon an existing—or planning a new—specialized policing response (SPR) to people with mental illnesses. Technical assistance from learning site representatives may include telephone and e-mail consultations, in addition to site visits to learn more from these agencies.

Please contact Whitney Kujawa (wkujawa@csg.org / 240-482-8577) with any additional questions.

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1. What kinds of technical assistance (TA) do the Learning Sites offer?

The Law Enforcement/Mental Health Learning Sites offer three main types of TA to law enforcement officials and mental health professionals interested in learning more about specialized policing responses (SPR). This includes e-mail, conference calls, and in-person site visits. Types of TA are *not* mutually exclusive: several TA e-mails might lead to a TA conference call, which could, in turn, lead to a site visit.

2. How do I know which learning site to contact?

If you do not have a specific learning site in mind, please complete the “Technical Assistance Request Form,” and return to [Whitney Kujawa](#) as specified in the form’s instructions. Your answers to the questions about the type of problems your agency is facing and information about your jurisdiction will allow Justice Center staff to match you with the most appropriate learning site(s). Questions about engaging university police agencies may be fielded by one learning site, whereas questions about large urban areas may be fielded by another, as appropriate.

Additionally, take the time to review the [program descriptions](#) for each learning site, and contact [Whitney Kujawa](#) with any questions.

3. If I already know which learning site I want to work with, can I contact it directly?

If you already have a relationship with one of the learning sites or if you want to learn more about its program, you are welcome to either e-mail or call the learning site representative directly to request TA.

The answers to the following series of questions are intended to help jurisdictions think through what kinds of TA would be most appropriate as a **starting point** when reaching out to a learning site. As the relationship between agencies and the TA needs evolve, the points of contact should discuss the best way to advance the site's progress. The scenarios described below are, of course, not exhaustive, but are intended to represent a range of the types of assistance jurisdictions want.

4. When is it appropriate to connect with a learning site via e-mail?

The scenarios described in this section identify the types of challenges, issues, and questions that a jurisdiction could likely solve through e-mail.

- A jurisdiction has just started a SPR, but is having difficulty establishing process protocols or policies. The jurisdiction contacts a learning site that has a program and/or demographics similar to its own via e-mail and requests copies of that site's written materials, including any relevant printed materials. The requesting jurisdiction uses these materials to revise its own protocols.
- A jurisdiction is interested in starting a SPR, but has no local or state laws that govern collaborative criminal justice/mental health law enforcement initiatives or training requirements. The jurisdiction is interested in learning whether other counties or states have such laws, and e-mails one or more learning site to request this information. The learning site provides any written local or state ordinances or laws that govern their SPR's activities as an example.
- An established SPR is exploring the means to grow and expand its program through data collection and/or restructuring. The SPR contacts a learning site that works extensively on data collection issues via e-mail and asks for materials and basic information about their data collection efforts. The learning site provides information on how to collect data and which data to collect and/or how to evaluate the program and reengineer the SPR. Note: This is a great example of a type of TA that could easily evolve from e-mail correspondence to one or more TA conference calls.

5. When is it appropriate to request a conference call with a learning site?

The scenarios described in this section identify the types of challenges, issues, and questions that a jurisdiction could likely solve through telephone calls with individual learning site representatives or conference calls with multiple people from the requesting jurisdiction, the learning site, or both.

- A jurisdiction is exploring new means of engaging local partners to expand the reach of its SPR. The requesting jurisdiction identifies the learning site with a program that engages the types of stakeholders with which the jurisdiction is interested in collaborating. The jurisdiction contacts the learning site (either via e-mail or telephone) to arrange a call with the appropriate individuals from the learning site to discuss partners and discern who they should engage and how. Potentially, this TA could expand into future follow-up calls with the requesting jurisdiction to assess its progress and address additional questions.
- A jurisdiction is exploring ways to expand its SPR through enhanced training. The jurisdiction identifies the learning site that conducts the types of training the jurisdiction is interested in, and contacts that learning site (either via e-mail or telephone) to set up a call with learning site representatives. On the call, the group discusses issues such as training facilities, curricula, protocols, and possibly attending and participating in a training event. The learning site provides advice and guidance on issues such as how to expand training by finding qualified instructors, funding, training space, and so on. Note: This is an example of the type of TA request that could potentially evolve into an in-person site visit to observe/attend training at the learning site.

6. When is it appropriate to request a site visit?

In-person site visits, although incredibly useful, should generally not be thought of as the “front line” of learning site TA. Much TA can be provided remotely through e-mail and conference calls, and jurisdictions should be thoughtful about their needs before deciding on the proper TA format. With that said, an in-person site visit is an invaluable resource for understanding how a program works, especially for those jurisdictions that are unfamiliar with the day-to-day operations of a SPR. The following scenario represents an example of a TA request that would benefit from an in-person visit.

- A jurisdiction is exploring the possibility of establishing a SPR and wants to become acquainted with the daily operations of such initiatives, and is particularly interested in, for example, how community mental health representatives work alongside law enforcement officers on a day-to-day basis, or how to address the needs of specific populations. The requesting jurisdiction identifies a learning site and contacts them via e-mail or telephone to arrange a site visit. Preparations for the site visit include e-mail and/or telephone discussions with the learning site (and potentially Justice Center staff) focused on a needs assessment to ensure that the learning site addresses the needs of the requesting jurisdiction.

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