

# NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

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## Peer to Peer Intervention (NM240017)

New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy

Annual In-Service Training Curriculum 2024

## Lesson Plan / Instructor Guide

**COURSE TITLE:** Peer-to-Peer Intervention

**TERMINAL GOAL:** The student will learn how to recognize behavioral issues and effectively intervene with fellow officers, or ideally, learn how to step in and help before misconduct occurs.

**ENABLING OBJECTIVES:**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the career-saving benefits of intervention and the huge risks (including the growing legal risks) of non-intervention.
2. Identify the signs that an intervention is necessary.
3. Identify two different types of interventions:
4. Identify the “inhibitors” to intervention.
5. Define what it means to be an “Active Bystander”.
6. Actively promote intervention and discourage passivity.
7. Identify how and why to respectfully intervene, and to accept intervention.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:**

Classroom lecture, handouts, and visual aids (PowerPoint presentation)

**HANDOUTS:**

Student guide

**COURSE DURATION:**

1 Hour

**CURRICULUM REFERENCES:**

1. <https://www.police1.com/police-training/articles/ive-got-your-6-the-value-of-officer-intervention-training-GHES33GnQe3l3XQT/#Blind%20Spots>
2. New Orleans Police Department “Ethical Policing is Courageous (EPIC)” Peer Intervention program webinar. [https://pspdata.blob.core.windows.net/webinarsandpodcasts/NOPD\\_EPIC\\_Presentation.pdf](https://pspdata.blob.core.windows.net/webinarsandpodcasts/NOPD_EPIC_Presentation.pdf)
3. “EPIC Training is About Officers Helping Officers”, Police Executive Research Forum publication, Vol. 30, No. 2; 2017
4. “Special Problems of Police Officers: Stress-Related Issues and Interventions”, The Counseling Psychologist Volume 11, Issue 2; Stephen Alkus, Christine Padesky; 1983.
5. “Running in the Fog”, SWTC Training; Rich Libicer; 2015.

**EQUIPMENT, PERSONNEL, AND SUPPLIES NEEDED:**

COMPUTER, AUDIO AND VISUAL AIDS; WHITEBOARD

**TARGET AUDIENCE:**

NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS – CADETS / RECRUITS

**INSTRUCTOR RATIO:**

1 / 50

**EVALUATION STRATEGY:** Students will discuss and provide examples of intervention strategies and situations.

**AUTHOR & ORINATION DATE:**

SOUTHWEST TRAINING CONSULTANTS LLC JUNE 2023

**REVISION / REVIEW DATE(S):**

**REVISED / REVIEWED BY:**

The introduction is critical. It will be invaluable to immediately grab the student's attention and let them know why this course is so important. Some ideas for starting the class:

- 1) Ask the students what they want from the class.
- 2) Tell them a story about a time you witnessed behavior that justified intervention.
- 3) Show a video of an intervention or lack of intervention. Options:
  - a. Sunland PD Chief in the booking room, 2022.  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1145720039550749>
  - b. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/nypd-officer-suspended-video-chokehold-suspect/>
- 4) Always start the class with a positive message. You are going to get something positive from this training. This training will be of benefit to you, and possibly many others, in your future.

- A. Incidents of Officer intervention and the failure to intervene have become headline news nationally.
- a. From the first day of the police academy, it is ingrained in us that we protect our fellow officers to the extent that we will sacrifice our lives for each other.  
There are many phrases we use: "I've got your back," "I got you" and "I've got your six." The latter means your "six," the blind spot behind you that you cannot see, I have that covered to protect you.  
The other, less obvious blind spot we all share is not intervening when a fellow officer is doing something wrong. With the profession of policing on life support, we must rethink what "having each other's six" means. (1)
  - b. Cases like George Floyd and Sergeant Christopher Police have brought this issue to the forefront, where training is getting mandated. This is not a bad thing but rather a chance for law enforcement to improve their service to the community. What this really comes down to is just doing good work, knowing the laws, keeping yourself in check, and toeing the line.
  - c. During this block of instruction, we will go over the benefits of intervention. The signs that intervention is needed. The different types of intervention. The inhibitors to someone intervening. The definition of an active bystander. We will also go over how to intervene.

The focus of this instruction is awareness and knowing when to act. The student should be advised to be aware of policy and procedure in all facets to be better educated on when to intervene. In most cases were there has been an issue, not all, the officer works outside the scope of policy and or procedure or violates the constitution. Officers are being held accountable for not acting/intervening, even indicted. We have to hold ourselves to an exceptionally high standard so the community we serve can trust us.

- B. What is a "Good Officer"?
- a. A good officer wants to do the right thing.
  - b. What is "the right thing"?
  - c. Sometimes officers with the best intentions may lack the moral courage and/or the tools to safely and effectively intervene when faced with potential police misconduct or concern for a fellow officer's mental or physical health.
  - d. Most officers will find themselves, at some point in their career, caught between two very unsatisfactory choices, or become frustrated to the point of making a bad decision.
  - e. Police officers are human beings dealing with inordinate levels of stress and conflict, navigating a challenging job.

Sunrise, Florida, November 2021. A sergeant is observed on a lapel camera agitated and red in the face dealing with a male subject which is said to be resisting. The male has been placed in the back of the squad car, and Sergeant Christopher Police is showing signs of aggression towards this handcuffed man. A female officer from behind pulls the Sergeant back, and the Sergeant turns and pushes the female officer back by putting his hand near or around her neck. Did she do the right thing?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZP3RqnOz8>

C. Bystandership

a. Passive Bystandership

- i. The community understands that police officers make mistakes.
- ii. Non-critical loyalty (Passive Bystandership) and/or cover-ups shift the public perception from a “mistake” by one officer to “corruption” by several officers.
- iii. Watching it happen, knowing you could do something.
- iv. Passive bystandership has a corrosive effect on standards and mental health.

b. Active Bystandership

- i. Acting rather than watching.
- ii. Custodianship of our profession and our well-being.
- iii. Intervention when we see:
  1. An officer doing something or about to do something that would discredit themselves, the department, or the profession.
  2. An officer engaging in behaviors that are harmful and/or of concern for well-being, mental health, physical health, etc.
  3. An encounter that is likely to end badly (hostile or escalating behavior, unprofessional conduct, etc.)
  4. Unsafe behavior or tactics by an officer.
  5. Cutting corners that could jeopardize an investigation, safety, or public confidence.

D. Intervention

a. Assessment

- i. Is the issue minor? Serious?
- ii. Can an intervention wait, or is it an emergency?
- iii. Danger Signs
  1. Indicators that stress levels are high, performance is suffering, focus is lacking, etc.

b. Non-Emergency Interventions

- i. It may be best to speak with a coworker privately. Be discreet, if at all possible.
- ii. Approach with courtesy and respect, to identify the issue and offer assistance.
- iii. Make the intervention obvious. It may take time to “sink in”, and follow-up may be necessary.
- iv. Recognize how you would want to be approached. It is a requirement for a professional to learn to accept an appropriate intervention.
- v. If the coworker dismisses your effort, it may be necessary to “escalate” to a higher rank, or another officer, to make sure you’ve done enough.

c. Emergency Interventions

- i. “Critical” intervention.
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- ii. Improper behavior needs to be stopped immediately, or you sense a fellow officer is under stress and might be on the verge of doing something wrong - such as excessive force.
- iii. React the way you need to react.
  - 1. Example: Excessive force.
    - a. Could be verbal – “I am taking over,” or “I’ll handle this”, “I’ve got this.”
    - b. Physical – you may have to physically insert yourself into the situation.
  - 2. Some situations will require immediate escalation.
    - a. Threats of suicide
    - b. Issues with domestic violence or other criminal acts.
    - c. Major policy violations.
- d. Intervention in General
  - i. The ultimate goal of intervention is to PREVENT an incident that could require reporting and discipline.
- e. Inhibitors to Intervention
  - i. Is it your job to support a fellow officer, whether they’re right or wrong?
  - ii. Is it your job to correct behavior, especially with a higher-ranking officer?
  - iii. What is your department policy for reporting misconduct or mental health concerns?

Discuss with the class what they think are the most common danger signs with co-workers, and the most common inhibitors to intervention. Discuss possible intervention examples and ask for their strategy. Discuss possible countermeasures with them. How can those inhibitors be reduced? Is there concern for retaliation, transfers, or other actions? Are there policies that protect them? What would possible solutions be?

#### E. Conclusion

- a. Police officers operate in a highly stressful environment.
  - b. There are higher than normal levels of depression, anxiety, alcoholism, family problems, and suicide.
  - c. It is critical to recognize the moments that stress is getting the better of one of our colleagues and to have the courage and tools to step in and offer help.
  - d. It is always better to PREVENT a problem from occurring in the first place.
  - e. Always respectfully accept intervention.
  - f. Always intervene respectfully, effectively, and safely. Be discreet.
  - g. Recognize the difference between a non-emergency situation and an emergency intervention.
  - h. It IS your job to do the right thing.
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Additional video:

Intervention

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOKhqabg-Ys>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvcVCjlwu3s>

Failure to intervene

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DLA4OeAt5E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOPLidyGs4A>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGMzokkftAg>

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/LIBzmlFGwKk>

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Evaluation

The instructor will put the class into groups of two or three people to a group. Then task them with the following questions:

- 1) What is the goal of intervention?
- 2) How can we make officers feel secure so they will bring up bad or unacceptable behavior by another officer?
- 3) Are you willing to intervene if you see a handcuffed suspect being struck, hit, or beaten?

The instructor should look for discussion from the groups to see if they have retained any course material. You are looking for good decision-making and positive reinforcement related to being able to report and condemn bad actions. The conversations should focus on how we change the culture as a group or team and not belittle those in their actions or beliefs. The instructor will have to remain in control and ensure the students don't use humor as an escape or defense mechanism, as this is not the class for that.

Please ensure you get participation from each student or group so you can feel confident there is proficiency.

**COURSE AUDIT**

PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR:

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SECONDARY INSTRUCTOR:

SUPPORT STAFF:

DATE(S)/ TIME(S) OF INSTRUCTION:

LOCATION OF INSTRUCTION:

**RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM CHANGES:** Identify inaccurate information, outdated information, new information to be added to update material, etc. (Use additional pages if necessary)

**ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS:** (If any portion of the course content was not presented, indicate the specific content here)

Alternative curriculum was taught.

Accreditation number of alternative curriculum:

SIGNATURE

DATE

Primary Instructor

Reviewed by Program Coordinator

Reviewed by

Reviewed by Director/Chief or Designee