

Marcus Alert

Quarterly newsletter on Marcus Alert for Region 4 of Virginia

What is Marcus Alert?

Marcus Alert is a legislative framework designed to improve responses to mental and behavioral health crises in Virginia. The protocols are part of a broader crisis system transformation which expands services such as 988, Co-Response, and Mobile Crisis Response. To learn more, [check out this DBHDS website](#).

Training

Are you interested in learning more about Marcus Alert? Sign up for the next Region 4 Marcus Alert Training on Tuesday Sept. 24th from 2-4pm! CSB employees can register by logging into [Relias](#), going to Course Library, and searching for the training using the code **092424**. Those not with the CSB system can email: hannah.neukrug@rbha.org

Resources

Want to learn about the crisis response transformation happening across the country? [Register here](#) for the Alternative 911 Emergency Response Community of Practice, and [sign-up here](#) for the CSG Justice Center Newsletter!

988 Q&A

Are 988 crisis call takers familiar with local resources?

Currently, 988 calls are routed to call centers based on the caller's area code rather than their location. To get connected with the 988 call center serving Region 4 regardless of your area code, call **804-223-5241** directly. You can also call 988 then ask the crisis call taker to transfer you to the center that serves your city/county.

Is 988 accessible for those with hearing impairments?

Yes: You can directly dial 988 on a [videophone](#) to connect with a crisis call taker who can communicate in ASL. You can also use your preferred relay service or dial 711 then 988.

Can non-English speakers call 988?

Yes: To connect with a Spanish-speaking crisis call taker, call 988 then press 2, or text "Ayuda" to 988. For other languages, 988 uses [LanguageLine](#) to offer interpretation services in more than 240 languages.

What specialty lines does 988 offer?

Service Members, Veterans, & their Families can call 988 then press 1 to connect with the Veterans Crisis Line. LGBTQIA+ youth/young adults can call 988 then press 3, or text "Pride" to 988, to connect with a specialty trained crisis call taker.

How can I learn more?

Check out 988va.org to learn about 988 in Virginia, and sign-up for [988 Crisis Jam](#) to learn about 988 across the nation!



Co-Response Feature: Henrico

This newsletter, we are featuring a co-response team from the locality that most recently implemented the Marcus Alert framework: Henrico! Although Henrico implemented the full framework on July 1st, they launched their current Mobile Response Team (MRT) model in Spring of 2023. Read on to learn about Clinician Salem and Officer Robben from Henrico's MRT.



How long have you been a part of the MRT?

Clinician Salem: I was hired in August 2023 for the MRT SUD Clinician position.

Officer Robben: I started full time with CIT / MRT in 2018. Before that, I was a Henrico Community Officer and was working with CIT on a part-time basis since 2014.

What made you interested in being a co-response officer/clinician?

Clinician Salem: After working for ten years in Henrico's jail system, I became motivated to work to divert those in mental health crisis from incarceration and into mental health or substance use treatment when possible.

Officer Robben: I became interested when I found that some seniors were living alone and needed assistance with daily tasks. Not only were they scared, but they just needed someone to vent to and assist with small details that were huge for their daily living. I could take 15 minutes of my day and make a life changing event for them or their families.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

Clinician Salem: One of the biggest challenges of the job is dealing with the flaws of both the mental health and criminal justice systems. There are many areas where the legality lies in gray areas, or we are bound by legal parameters that limit our abilities to provide the best levels of care. Keeping those things in mind, we still strive to do our best work within these systems.

Officer Robben: Keeping everyone motivated to attend their appointments that CIT works so hard to schedule. Minor issues with transportation become a major hurdle which causes a delay in assistance.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Clinician Salem: Seeing the recognition in a client's eyes when they know that the team cares.

Officer Robben: When citizens start referring to you as a family member - that's when you know you are making a difference in their life. They might not talk to patrol officers that show up at the house, but when you show up and they call you by your first name and really open up to you.

~ Congratulations to Henrico's MRT for receiving a 2024 NACo Achievement Award! ~



Have questions?

Feel free to contact Hannah Neukrug, Marcus Alert Coordinator for Region 4, at: hannah.neukrug@rbha.org