



The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations
Representing America's Finest

August 27, 2013

NAPO WASHINGTON REPORT FLASH

Mental Health Legislation

Individuals with mental health issues are significantly overrepresented in the prison and jail population. State and local governments are increasingly finding the need for greater collaboration between criminal justice, juvenile justice, and mental health and substance abuse treatment systems to better allocate resources across systems, increase connections to needed services, and reduce recidivism. NAPO continues to strongly support and advocate for efforts to improve access to mental health services for people who come into contact with the criminal justice system, and to provide law enforcement officers the tools they need to identify and respond to mental health issues in the community, as evidenced by our commitment to passing the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Act (JMHC) of 2013.

To expand on the importance of providing law enforcement officers with the training they need to respond to individuals with mental health issues, please listen to a Department of Justice COPS Office podcast at the following link: <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2370>. The podcast includes Dr. Amy Watson (Associate Professor at the University of Illinois-Chicago) discussing procedures and best practices for police encounters with persons who have mental illness.

Throughout the podcast, Dr. Watson outlines the importance of training officers in procedural justice techniques, and teaching officers skills to use when engaging different populations, particularly vulnerable individuals, such as those with mental health issues. (The complete transcript of the podcast can be found at: http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/html/podcasts/the_beat/08-2013/TheBeat-082013_Watson_Transcript.txt).

If you have any questions about this podcast or NAPO's actions regarding the passage of the JMHC, please contact Melissa Nee at: mnee@napo.org.

Source:

"COPS Office: Podcasts." *COPS Office: Podcasts*. N.p., n.d. Web. 27 Aug. 2013.
<<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2370>>.

Please monitor NAPO's website www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on Twitter at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.