Over the last half-century, changes to health care, social programs, and policing have made contact between law enforcement and the mentally ill inevitable. The largest psychiatric facilities in the United States are jails as law enforcement continue to be the primary first responders for individuals suffering a mental health crisis.

Programs like Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) have improved how law enforcement handles the majority of these difficult interactions, but individuals with untreated severe mental illness (SMI) are still 16 times more likely to be killed in an encounter with law enforcement than the general population.

At Axon, we are dedicated to building innovative technologies that protect life. That is why Axon has collaborated with experts in crisis intervention as well as clinicians and behavioral analysts to develop Empathy Development Training in Virtual Reality (VR) that supports de-escalation curricula for encounters with the mentally ill.

By using Axon’s Empathy Development Training modules as a complement to your existing Crisis Intervention (CIT) or Use of Force curricula, your officers will be better prepared to handle difficult, high-stakes situations involving society’s most vulnerable populations.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Trainees will gain a better understanding of what an individual in crisis is experiencing as law enforcement are called on scene.
- Trainees will be able to describe basic symptomology of psychiatric or developmental conditions.
- Trainees will be able to identify best practices in verbal de-escalation and use of force for individuals in crisis.

PRODUCT PILLARS

REALISTIC AND IMMERSIVE SCENARIOS:

- Axon Immersive Training utilizes VR headsets to provide officers with an accurate first-person perspective of an individual in a state of crisis that otherwise could not be experienced.
- Given that VR has been shown to have higher rates of memory retention than traditional educational tools, these trainings will increase officer’s application of learned soft skills in difficult, high-stakes situations.

EFFECTIVE EMPATHY DEVELOPMENT TRAINING:

- Axon Training has worked with a number of experts in crisis intervention and mental health to develop a truly informative and empathetic experience for subjects undergoing symptoms of Schizophrenia, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Suicidal Ideations.
- By using Axon’s Empathy Development Training modules to better understand the symptoms and stressors of a variety of mental health disorders, officers will have the knowledge to confidently interact with individuals experiencing conditions that would prohibit them from complying with an officers’ verbal commands.

AN INEXPENSIVE AND SCALABLE TOOL:

- As a low-cost augmentation to traditional virtual simulator programs, Axon’s Empathy Development Training modules are an accessible tool that won’t burden your agency with the same setup or costs associated with existing training methods.
- Intended to complement existing Crisis Intervention (CIT) or Use of Force curricula without diminishing focus on hands-on drills and reality-based training, these modules are another tool to drive efficient attainment of a training objective.

We invite agencies adopting this training to engage with us as Early Adopters and Collaborators as we continue to develop supporting curriculum, troubleshooting/support, and additional assets.

Customers adopting this program are on the forefront of leveraging VR in the classroom.

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