

Police Chiefs' Organization Makes Improved Relations Between Law Enforcement and Persons with Mental Illness a Priority

The **President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACE), Ronald C. Ruecker**, has stated a priority of his is to improve relations between law enforcement and persons with mental illness! The following is an excerpt from his first *President's Message* (November 2007):

“There are other areas that need careful and thoughtful examination. Over the last two decades, we have seen a dramatic change in the type of housing and care for the mentally ill in our communities. People who used to be institutionalized are now living in mainstream society. All too frequently, their encounters with police have resulted in tragedy. We can improve on the degree to which we prepare our officers to deal with the mentally ill. Like use-of-force issues, this is not an issue solely for police; we need whole communities to work together on it. Again, we will work with the mental health community and our criminal justice partners to help develop recommendations for more effective training, policies, available resources, and responses to our encounters with the mentally ill.”

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This priority interest may have a significant and positive influence on the **Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Program** and other issues relating to the criminal justice and mental health systems.

NAMI members and other interested persons should consider writing to thank IACP President Ronald Ruecker for his position at: IACP, 515 N. Washington St., Alexandria VA 22314-2357 or, call 1-800-843-4227 or, information@theiacp.org.

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ABOUT IACP

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is the world's oldest and largest nonprofit membership organization of police executives, with over 20,000 members in over 100 different countries. IACP's leadership consists of the operating chief executives of international, federal, state and local agencies of all sizes.