



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
A TRADITION OF SERVICE SINCE 1856

NEWS RELEASE

Incident Date and Time:

April 30, 2021 @ 2:26 pm

Location:

500 block of Quarry Road, San Carlos

Summary: Deputies Added ECIT Resources and Training has Positive Outcome in Disengagement of Person in Crisis During Welfare Check.

On Friday, April 30, 2021, San Mateo County Sheriff's Deputies responded to the 500 block of Quarry Road in San Carlos to conduct a welfare check on an individual who was reported as possibly experiencing a mental health crisis. While enroute, deputies learned the subject was also in possession of a knife. Deputies staged a safe distance away and made phone contact with several parties at the scene, including the individual's social worker.

Deputies learned the individual did not make any threats, commit any crimes, and no one was being held against their will. The individual had no interest in speaking with his social worker in person or with deputies on the phone. Approximately one hour after arriving on scene, deputies determined it was in everyone's best interest that they disengage and leave the scene without forcing contact with the individual. Deputies followed-up with the individual's social worker the following day and learned the individual had stabilized and was no longer experiencing a mental health crisis.

This response highlights the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office's Enhanced Crisis Intervention Training program (ECIT) and how our crisis response has aligned with recent law changes (California AB-392) as well as community expectations. Unless there is imminent danger or threats to others, deputies will conduct pre-assessments, gather as much information as possible, and form a plan for de-escalation prior to attempting contact with individual in crisis.

We understand the mere presence of uniformed deputies can escalate situations, and we will utilize time and distance whenever possible to assess the best course of action for each situation. In cases like this, by modifying our response and not making immediate contact to check the welfare of an individual in crisis, we maintain the option to disengage, which in some cases, provides the individual the opportunity to self-de-escalate.

In many cases where mental illness is involved, crisis communication and verbal de-escalation can prove to be challenging because their disability may affect their ability to understand or comply with commands from deputies. For this reason, disengagement in these cases is sometimes the best de-escalation option. Deputies can then refer the case to the Sheriff's Office Psychiatric Emergency Response Team, who will then form a plan to contact the subject at a later time if appropriate, to assess for resources.

Release Date: May 11, 2021

