



# **New York State Defenders Association, Inc.**

## ***Public Defense Backup Center***

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### **Resolution Calling for State Financial and Technical Support to Help Localities Provide Training and Services that Promote the Well-being of People with Mental Illness in, or at Risk of, Psychiatric Crises and the Community.**

WHEREAS, the absence of appropriate treatment and support may lead some people with mental illness into psychiatric crises that require specialized intervention; and

WHEREAS, while most people with mental illness do not commit violent or other criminal acts, some behaviors manifest in psychiatric crises can lead to the involvement of law enforcement and the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, successful sequential intercept models exist for protecting both individuals in psychiatric crisis and the people around them; and

WHEREAS, an appropriate crisis intervention infrastructure that directs trained first responders to crisis scenes and identifies in advance multi-stage strategies for diverting people with mental illness from the criminal justice system when appropriate may avoid negative outcomes for people with mental illness, their families, friends, and communities, and those working within the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, providers of public defense services are among those who may affect, and be affected by, the way people in psychiatric crisis are treated in the criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, some states and New York State localities have successfully implemented sequential intercept models such as Crisis Intervention Teams (CITs) or similar collaborative intervention structures; and

WHEREAS, additional New York State localities and their residents would benefit from greater access to resources and assistance to implement multi-jurisdictional or rural CITs or other collaborative intervention structures,

IT IS RESOLVED, that the New York State Defenders Association calls on the State Office of Mental Health and the Division of Criminal Justice Services to provide financial and technical support to localities seeking to implement sequential intercept models such as Crisis Intervention Teams or similar collaborative intervention structures appropriate for the particular locality. Representatives of all local stakeholders, including public defense providers, must be included in the planning and implementation of such structures.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, the New York State Legislature, the State Office of Mental Health, and the Division of Criminal Justice Services.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NEW YORK STATE DEFENDERS ASSOCIATION

January 25, 2013

New York, NY