



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: _____

Program Title: _____

Program Category: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Title: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: _____ Website: _____

Email: _____

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

VACo Award Submission for SPRINT and Co-Response (CORE)

In 2018, there was an incident involving the City of Richmond Police Department and a person in crisis, Marcus David Peters. What came out of that incident would change the culture of policing and their collaboration with mental health clinicians. The Marcus-David Peters Act was passed into law and the Marcus Alert System was created. Traditionally, law enforcement would be dispatched to persons in crisis. The goal of the Marcus Alert is to provide a more appropriate response of public resources to a behavioral health emergency. The Marcus Alert provides services to those experiencing a crisis related to mental health, substance use, or developmental disability. It was put in place to help localities coordinate their available resources between 911 and crisis call centers to establish a specialized behavioral health response from law enforcement when they respond to a person in crisis.

After months of interdepartmental planning, the protocols that Chesterfield County developed for their Co-Response Team (CORE) as a result of the Marcus Alert, was approved in February 2023. A CORE Team is comprised of one sworn law enforcement officer and one mental health clinician who respond to calls for service involving persons in crisis. In July 2023, the first CORE team was implemented with the implementation of the second team in August 2023. Since its inception, the CORE Teams have significantly reduced the amount of time that patrol services is busy sitting with a patient through the emergency custody and temporary detention order (ECO and TDO) processes. In FY24 the CORE teams responded to 449 calls for service involving people in crisis. Over 70% of those calls resulted in hospital diversions with other less restrictive alternatives. Only 16 of those calls resulted in an arrest. CORE is directly related to the reduction of multiple calls for service to the same place for the same person in crisis. CORE is able to divert a larger portion of people in crisis out of the hospital and jail settings by providing outpatient resources or other community resources before the crisis requires inpatient treatment. In Q4 of FY24, CORE reduced the time patrol services was being used for ECO's and TDO's by 240 hours. In July 2024, CORE responded to 68 crisis calls and reduced the use of a patrol services officer by 100 hours. The time that patrol services is being saved allows them to mark back in service to resume taking care of other calls for service from the community.

Our responses to calls for service involving the Marcus Alert lead Chesterfield County to form a new team, SPRINT. The SPRINT team is modeled after Henrico County's collaborative STAR Program and Chesterfield Fire Department's Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) component. The Chesterfield County departments that comprise this team include Police, Sheriff, Fire/EMS (includes MIH), Mental Health, Department of Social Services (DSS), Building Inspection (as needed), and the Workforce Safety and Security team. SPRINT is designed specifically to review and discuss a safe and appropriate follow-up response to incidents such as school threats, "frequent flyers", and police calls for service involving a mental health component. SPRINT meets on a bi-weekly basis to pool county resources in order to assist those individuals with their mental health in the safest and least restrictive way possible. SPRINT also fields emails from

county administration, sheriff's office, police department personnel, and workforce safety and security for people deemed to need mental health services but who are not actively in crisis. The goal of SPRINT is to be proactive in our approach and connect people with services before they are in active crisis, giving them the care and compassion they deserve as a citizen of Chesterfield County.

Since SPRINT's first meeting in February 2024, they have collaborated on over 100 members of this community, with only 22 of those being active on SPRINT's agenda. In some instances, the cases are resolved rather quickly but for most, they remain active longer for numerous reasons. Some of them simply decline the help and others don't necessarily meet the criteria for a resource to become involved. In either of the case, SPRINT will continue to follow-up with the individual until it is deemed by the team as a whole, to no longer be necessary.

Sprint has had a considerable amount of success over the last year, especially with two cases in particular. The first occurred on January 15 and the second on January 29.

January 15, 2025: Assist and provide resources for a woman and her grandson who were homeless living in a van and in desperate need of medical care and other services.

The team responded to the Chesterfield Library with CORE. They met Community Engagement Officer Tim Morton, MIH responders Mike Abbott and Riley, DSS representative Stephanie Vess and others, EMS providers, and representatives from the library branch. The woman and her grandson had been living in their van for 2.5 months, parked at the one of the branches of the Chesterfield Public Library. The grandmother and her adult autistic grandson were living in the van with their 3 cats. The two were added as a potential SPRINT case after the grandmother was refusing all DSS services and it seemed that resources were becoming limited. DSS had worked very hard on the case, and at the SPRINT meeting, Stephanie Vess was concerned that they may need to separate these two for housing and services purposes. The SPRINT Team agreed to accept the referral and immediately started planning.

Stephanie was able to spearhead the SPRINT mission by determining a date and time when all of our services could meet at the library and work to do whatever we could. At first, the grandmother did not want to exit the vehicle and became defensive and emotional, but the grandson came out of the vehicle to talk with providers. Kat Kerr with Chesterfield Mental Health approached the vehicle and began talking with the grandmother, utilizing crisis intervention skills. After continued communication with the grandson, seeing that his grandmother was his only caregiver, and that they had a close and supportive relationship, Adult protective Services (APS) with DSS determined that they would do everything they could to keep them together. MIH and APS worked very hard to arrange for a hotel for both of them, even though initially they were hesitant due to having to leave their van and cats. Everyone continued to work together. Animal Services Unit (ASU) was contacted and arrived on scene. After discussion, ASU stated they would house the cats and care for them until she was able to gain stable and established housing, and that they could also call and visit the cats in the interim.

When responders were ready to help grandmother out of the van, they observed that she was not wearing any clothing from the waist down. The van was full of trash, dirty clothes, and most of

their possessions were soaked in cat urine. The grandmother's hygiene was poor, and she reported she had not showered since Christmas, and she had not had a hot shower in several years. Her feet were extremely swollen, black/blue, and one foot was cracked and bleeding. MIH provider Mike Abbot went to the store and purchased a pair of sweatpants. Kat Kerr had gained the trust of the grandmother who asked her to assist her in putting on the new sweatpants. Unfortunately, the pants were too small, and she was unable to use the size we had. Officer Jessie Bowen (CORE 2) and Kerr travelled to Walgreens and purchased a pair of black leggings, which they were able to assist the grandmother with putting them on without causing her pain with just a few modifications and a pair of trauma shears. The grandmother allowed MIH to help her get into their truck, though this caused her feet to crack and bleed severely, but MIH was able to assist with the bandaging and cleaning of the wounds. Kerr assisted the grandson in getting the possessions they wanted out of the van, though much of them were unable to be taken due to the amount of urine.

What happened next was even more evidentiary of the great support from our community. A neighbor whose property bordered the library was also on scene, observing and offered to help. He had been assisting the two since they started staying at the library. Being concerned that her van would be towed, this kind neighbor offered to move the van to a safe location (his house). The neighbor also offered to help wash their clothes since neither had any clean clothes in the van. The grandson became excited that they would not lose the van or the cats, and he was encouraging his grandmother about going to the hotel. The grandmother remained nervous and concerned as the van was the only property they had. The trust and connection that Kerr had developed with the grandmother allowed her to travel to the hotel with her. Officer Bowen also assisted Kerr so both could ensure the grandmother was settled without any issues. MIH and APS organized the stay and paid for a month. While in the room, Kerr cleaned her foot and wrapped it with a washcloth until MIH was able to properly provide the first aid treatment she needed. MIH and APS did set up food services for them, but those services would not start until the next day, January 16. Officer Bowen and Kerr responded to the McDonalds where Officer Bowen purchased food so they would have something to eat.

It should be noted that grandmother was hesitant to get help due to the amount of trauma that she has been through. Collectively, all of the SPRINT providers were able to gain her trust, let her process her emotions, and gently assist this grandmother and her disabled grandson in getting out of their van and into a safer, cleaner environment. With patience and a caring approach, the grandmother was agreeable to all resources everyone offered, allowing us to avoid an ECO, inpatient hospitalization, and separating the family. We were able to utilize this powerful community approach to meet their many needs and keep their small family together.

Currently, both the grandmother and her grandson are thriving in their new environment and are able to speak with each other weekly.

March 13, 2025: Check the welfare and follow-up on an elderly woman.

The case for this elderly woman, who will be referred to as MK, began on January 13, 2025, when Officer Cecil Watts with Community Engagement sent an email to SPRINT requesting

assistance. Officer Watts responded to MK's residence to check on her but could only communicate with her through the small glass insert in the front door. The concern for MK was to ensure that she was able to take care of herself and to inquire about her finances as she had been sending letters to the police department to check in on her finances.

Kat Kerr and Community Engagement Officer Tim Morton responded out to check on MK on January 29. They were able to chat with her. MK opened the window and spoke through that. They both could witness that MK's home looked cluttered. On February 13, MK's landlord called in asking for PD to check the welfare of MK. The landlord had been trying to contact her for 2 weeks but can't make contact and cannot contact her sister either. The landlord also stated that MK's heat hasn't been working. Two PD units did respond out but were unsuccessful at getting MK to respond to the door. On February 25 SPRINT made the decision to have Kerr and Officer Morton respond out to check on MK again, which they did during a couple occasions. On March 13, they were able to contact MK and could verify that she is eating, sleeping, doing okay, as well as responded to the grocery store to purchase all kinds of groceries. Officer Morton was able to check that the power was on to the residence. MK knew that Kerr and Officer Morton were coming to check on her, so she left them a handwritten note that read, "March 13, 2025: Dear Kat, It was a joy to meet you! You are a beautiful little spirit. You brought comfort and happiness to my heart. Thank you for talking to me and asking if I was alright. I feel like I have another beautiful sister. I would like you to know, you are correct: I did call the police, recently; but I hung up. And today, you were making sure that everything was okay and that I was okay, thank you, thank you for checking up on me. You make this world a more beautiful place with the kindness you extend and the work you do to help others. Thank you for being who you are. Kindest Regards, MK." SPRINT is making progress with MK, and will follow up again to see if she needs any other services from the community.

MK is doing really well. MK is consistent with her grocery shopping, paying her bills, and keeping her home clean and orderly.

These are just two of the most recent examples of just how much SPRINT and our Co-Response teams are impacting the culture of the mental health and public safety system in a progressive and positive manner