

Punta Gorda Police Create Veteran Crisis Assistance Team

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The Punta Gorda Police Department is excited to announce the creation of the Veteran Crisis Assistance Team (VCAT). The purpose of the VCAT is to help ensure that the Punta Gorda Police Department has the ability to effectively handle situations involving military veterans experiencing a mental health crisis or who are in need of assistance. The VCAT will be made up of sworn Punta Gorda law enforcement officers who have served, or are currently serving, in a branch of the United States Military. These officers will engage with community veteran organizations to ensure that veterans in need are connected with appropriate services and assist them in receiving the military benefits they are entitled to.

Our veterans have given so much and deserve to have someone there for them in their time of need.

Chief Pam Davis

Members of the VCAT will respond to situations involving military veterans in need of assistance and have received specialized training in de-escalating situations involving military veterans and dealing with the special needs associated with veterans. The VCAT will assist veterans in connecting to needed services and will then continue to follow-up with veterans to help the veteran avoid further crisis.



VCAT members from left: Officer Fiorino, Officer Vetri, Officer Gray, Officer Meddaugh, and Detective Delgado

On December 18th members of the VCAT in cooperation with Charlotte County Veterans Services and the Military Heritage Museum hosted a Veterans Services Seminar, bringing together individuals representing organizations providing resources and assistance to veterans within Charlotte and Lee Counties. The purpose of this seminar was to allow member of these organizations to network together and gain a better understanding of each organizations mission and what they offer. The hope is that by working together these organizations can better serve the veterans of our community.

Chief Pam Davis said, "We are proud to have the opportunity to better serve the veterans of our community. Our veterans have given so much and deserve to have someone there for them in their time of need."