

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide the guidelines necessary to deter, prevent and reduce domestic violence through vigorous enforcement of this serious crime.

The Domestic Violence Unit Policy shall apply to the respective duties of Domestic Violence Unit detectives and supervisors in conducting follow-up investigations and Department oversight of cases that involve intimate partners, family or household members. Domestic Violence Unit staff and supervisors shall access the Department's domestic violence policies and procedures for Communications Services, platoon officers and supervisors and the Training Academy in the online resource folder.

A. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The collaboration of criminal justice agencies within New Orleans to develop a coordinated criminal justice response to domestic violence is the City's *Blueprint for Safety*. The New Orleans Police Department, along with the city's other *Blueprint for Safety* agencies, is committed to a set of shared foundational principles that maximize safety for victims of domestic violence and holds offenders accountable while offering them opportunities to change.

NOPD shall ensure supervisors participate in ongoing interagency *Blueprint* monitoring, evaluation and maintenance.

B. DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Battering – An ongoing pattern of coercion, intimidation, and emotional abuse, reinforced by the use and threat of physical or sexual violence. Battering can include a range of tactics including:

- **Cyberstalking** (La. R.S. 14:40.3)
- **Bodily injury or threat of bodily injury**, including, but not limited to domestic abuse aggravated assault (La. R.S. 14:37.7) and domestic abuse battery (La. R.S. 14:35.3).
- **Harassing telephone calls** (La. R.S. 14:285)
- **Sexual abuse or assault**
- **Property crime directed against the victim** (La. R.S. 14:56)
- **Stalking** (La. R.S. 14:40.2 (A))
- **Strangulation** (La. R.S. 14:35 B. (3))
- **Violation of a court order of protection or similar injunction** (La. R.S. 14:79)
- **Death threats or death (including a third party)**

Community stakeholder – Entities in the community that have joined together to foster effective intervention in and prevention of domestic violence. Community stakeholders can include but are not limited to, *Blueprint for Safety* partners, the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC), the New Orleans Family Justice Center, law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, parole and probation officers, advocacy organizations, social service agencies,

adult and child protective services, clergy, educators, government agencies, animal welfare organizations, businesses and employers.

Court order – All forms of court orders related to domestic violence, both civil and criminal, whether issued by a court of this state or another and regardless of whether service has been made.

Cyberstalking – The action of any person to accomplish any of the following (R.S. 14:40.3):

- Use in electronic mail or electronic communication of any words or language threatening to inflict bodily harm to any person or to a person's family member or physical injury to the property of any person, or for the purpose of extorting money or other things of value from any person.
- Electronically mail or electronically communicate to another repeatedly, whether or not conversation ensues, for the purpose of threatening, terrifying or harassing any person.

Domestic abuse aggravated assault – An assault with a dangerous weapon committed by one household member upon another household member (R.S. 14:37.7).

Domestic abuse battery – The intentional use of force or violence committed by one household member upon another household member (R.S. 14:35.3).

Domestic violence – Used to refer to battering between intimate partners, family or household members. Intimate partner, family and household relationships include (R.S. 46:2132, R.S. 46:2151, OPC 54-525):

1. Adults or minors who are current or former spouses;
2. Adults or minors who live together or who have lived together;
3. Adults or minors who are dating or who have dated;
4. Adults or minors who are engaged in or who have engaged in any type of consensual sex act;
5. Adults or minors who are related by blood or adoption (i.e. parents, children, foster parents, foster children, siblings);
6. Adults or minors who are related or formerly related by marriage (i.e. stepparents, stepchildren);
7. Persons who have a child in common or whose relationship resulted in a current pregnancy; or
8. Minor children resulting from the offender having any of the relationships listed in sections (1) through (6) of this definition.

Electronic communication – The transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature, transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, computer, electromagnetic, photoelectronic or photo-optical system.

Electronic mail – the transmission of information or communication by the use of the Internet, a computer, a facsimile machine, a pager, a cellular telephone, a video recorder, or other electronic means sent to a person that is identified by a unique address or address number and received by that person (R.S. 14:40.3 (A)).

Full faith and credit – The requirement by the U.S. Code title 18 section 2265 that jurisdictions honor the terms and conditions of a protective order issued by another jurisdiction.

Harassing telephone calls – The use of a telephone call, conversation or conference with another person, anonymously or otherwise, and therein use obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, lascivious or indecent language; making any suggestion or proposal of an obscene nature; threatening any illegal or immoral act with the intent to coerce, intimidate or harass another person; making repeated telephone communications anonymously or otherwise in a manner that is reasonably expected to annoy, abuse, torment, harass, embarrass or offend another, person, whether or not conversation ensues (R.S. 14:285).

Household member – A household member is (R.S. 14:35.3(B)(3)):

- A person of the opposite sex who is presently living with the offender “as a spouse” (whether married or not).
- A person of the opposite sex who lived with the offender “as a spouse” (whether married or not) within the past five years.
- A child who presently lives with the offender, or has lived with the offender during the previous five years
- Any child of the offender, regardless of where the child resides.

This definition relates specifically to charges of domestic abuse battery and domestic abuse aggravated assault. See the Domestic Violence definition for other relationships covered by this policy and procedure.

Petitioner – The person alleging abuse in a petition for an order of protection.

Predominant aggressor – The person who poses the most serious ongoing threat. *Note:* An injury resulting from a person acting in self-defense is neither abuse nor a crime.

Proarrest response – The expectation that officers shall arrest a person for committing domestic violence, unless there is a clear and compelling reason not to arrest (such as a lack of probable cause).

Protective order – *Any civil or criminal restraining order, injunction, bail or release order, probation condition and all other orders for protection issued to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking or to deter offenders from further violence or abuse [. . .including] protections contained in support, child custody, and visitation orders and protective directives in other court orders. 18 U.S.C. § 2266(5). Emergency, ex parte, temporary, and final orders are subject to full faith and credit under VAWA.*

Public figure – An elected official, sports figure, television or radio personality, celebrity, or other well-known person.

Respondent – The person alleged in a petition for a protective order to have abused another.

Self-Defense – The use of force or violence in defense. If force has been legally used in self-defense, there is an absolution of guilt or culpability. Officers shall apply laws regarding self-defense (La. R.S.14:19).

Stalking – The intentional and repeated following or harassing of another person that would cause a reasonable person to feel alarmed or to suffer emotional distress.

Stalking shall include but not be limited to (R.S. 14:40.2 (A)) the intentional and repeated uninvited presence of the perpetrator at a person's home, workplace, school or any place that would cause a reasonable person to be alarmed or to suffer emotional distress as a result of verbal or behaviorally implied threats of:

- Death
- Bodily injury.
- Sexual assault.
- Kidnapping.
- Any other statutorily criminal act to him/herself or any member of his/her family or any person with whom he/she is acquainted.

Strangulation – Intentionally impeding the normal breathing or circulation of the blood by applying pressure on the throat or neck or by blocking the nose or mouth of the victim (R.S. 14:35 B. (3)).

Violation of Protection Order – Violation of a protective order is the willful disobedience of a preliminary or permanent injunction issued after a contradictory court hearing, or any ex parte protective order if the defendant has been given notice of the order through a contradictory hearing or service of process. (La. R.S. 14:79)

C. PREVENTION THROUGH COLLABORATION

The NOPD shall maintain ongoing partnerships with community stakeholders in general and victim advocacy organizations in particular to develop domestic violence curricula and train officers to enhance their abilities. The department shall provide local community stakeholders with copies of all domestic violence curricula, procedures and policies for review and feedback.

II. DETECTIVE POLICY

Detectives build upon the initial information on risk and danger and evidence collected by platoon officers. The subsequent investigation can be a critical factor in determining whether a prosecutor can take action in ways that minimize the victim's direct participation in the prosecution and need to confront the offender. Evidence developed by the detective can make it possible to pursue charges related to witness tampering and to actions of violence that are associated with increased risk and lethality, such as stalking, strangulation and sexual coercion and aggression.

A. DISTRICT DETECTIVE PROCEDURE

In addition to adhering to general department policy, district level detectives conducting a supplemental investigation in a domestic violence related case shall follow the Domestic Violence Unit Detective policy and procedures.

B. INVESTIGATOR PROCEDURE

In addition to adhering to general department policy, any officer conducting a supplemental investigation in a domestic violence related case shall follow the Domestic Violence Unit Detective policy and procedures.

C. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DYNAMICS

All NOPD officers shall work in collaboration with victims, cognizant of the principles of "continuing engagement." Officers shall be aware that a single incident of domestic violence is usually part of a patterned use of coercion, intimidation and the use or threat of violence –

namely battering. As such, the relationship is characterized by a “continuing” set of actions committed over time and in countless situations. Officers shall respond to domestic violence incidents in a manner that confronts the pattern of ongoing abuse and violence. Officers shall:

- Minimize the victim’s need to confront the offender whenever possible.
- Advise the victim that the officer will not share information obtained with the suspect.
- Treat each interaction with the victim as an attempt to build collaboration over multiple interventions.
- Be mindful of the complex and often dangerous implications of a victim’s cooperation with the legal system.
- Be aware that the fundamental purpose of battering is to control what the victim says, thinks, feels and does.
- Engage in dialogue with the victim, thereby avoiding inadvertently treating her or him simply as an information source.
- Offer a clear alternative to messages from the batterer that the victim is crazy, at fault, unbelievable and unable to make decisions and that the abuser is unstoppable.

D. OFFICER LIABILITY

An officer exercising due care and good faith making an arrest and/or report while responding to a domestic violence call pursuant to La. R.S. 46:2140 and La. R.S. 46:2141 shall be immune from any civil liability that may arise as a result of the action (La. R.S. 46:2142).

E. OFFICER AND PARTY SAFETY

The investigation of domestic violence cases often places officers in emotionally charged and sometimes highly dangerous environments. No provision of this policy is intended to supersede the responsibility of all officers to exercise due caution and reasonable care in providing for the safety of any officers and parties involved.

F. INVESTIGATION

Detectives shall conduct investigations to thoroughly capture evidence crucial to the successful prosecution of domestic violence cases. Detectives shall evaluate cases for all possible charges.

Detectives shall incorporate the following into their investigations:

- Take appropriate action for violation of protection orders.
- Prioritize safety and protection for adult and child victims of domestic violence.
- Promote the safety of law enforcement personnel responding to incidents of domestic violence.
- Provide victims or witnesses of domestic violence with support and assistance through cooperative efforts with community stakeholders in order to prevent further abuse and harassment or both. Respond to and investigate reports of domestic violence professionally, effectively and in a manner without bias based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, in accordance with the rights secured or protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States.
Appropriately classify and investigate reports of domestic violence, collaborate closely with the DA and community partners, including the NOFJC, and apply a victim-centered approach at every stage of the response.

In cases where a primary investigation centers on a non-domestic crime but a domestic violence–related crime was also involved in the case, detectives shall fully investigate the domestic-related crime.

G. RESPONDING WHEN A SUSPECT IS NOT ON SCENE

Detectives shall prioritize investigation of cases where the suspect is gone-on-arrival in the same manner as in-custody cases and take victim safety into account.

H. VICTIM ENGAGEMENT

Detectives shall engage with the victim or victims in a way that prioritizes safety, offers resources, builds collaboration over time and increases access to services and protection.

I. SPECIAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CRIMES

Detectives shall be alert for crimes that often occur in domestic violence situations and investigate according to the Domestic Violence Unit Procedure. Such crimes include:

- Stalking/harassment
- Strangulation
- Sexual coercion and sexual aggression
- Witness tampering

J. INCIDENTS INVOLVING LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OR PUBLIC FIGURES

Detectives shall:

- Conduct all investigations involving department employees and law enforcement personnel as suspects jointly with the Public Integrity Bureau, in accordance with department policy and procedure.
- Conduct all investigations involving a public figure in accordance with department policy and procedure.

III. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT SUPERVISOR POLICY

Supervisory oversight of the Domestic Violence Unit shall reinforce thorough evidence collection, attention to risk and danger and strategies that minimize the need for a victim to confront the offender. Oversight shall emphasize proper investigation and documentation to accurately charge a case. In addition to the responsibility of supervising Domestic Violence Unit detectives, the supervisor of the Domestic Violence Unit also assists platoon supervisors in maintaining the quality of platoon officer reports and helps maintain connections between the department and other intervening agencies.

A. CASE INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENT

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall promptly review every domestic violence–related report where an officer has determined that probable cause exists that a crime was committed and assign cases to a detective for a supplemental investigation as necessary.

Case assignments shall be prioritized based on danger to the victim, the severity of that danger and the need to secure additional evidence. Felony cases shall be prioritized over misdemeanor cases.

B. LIAISON TO DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE & NEW ORLEANS FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

Upon completion of a supplemental investigation, the Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall send the report to the appropriate domestic violence prosecutor.

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall meet quarterly and as needed with representatives from the District Attorney's office to discuss and review problematic cases.

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall ensure that the unit participates in the operation, development and sustainability of the New Orleans Family Justice Center; works in co-location with other civil and criminal agencies and community-based organizations; and supports a centralized, multi-agency Family Justice Center model in the handling of domestic violence cases in New Orleans.

C. DETECTIVE OVERSIGHT

The supervisor of the Domestic Violence Unit shall:

- Ensure and document that every Domestic Violence Unit detective is familiar with the department's domestic violence policies and procedures.
- Monitor investigative files to determine if all necessary actions were taken in the investigation and direct any necessary follow-up.

D. REPORT COMPLIANCE

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall take the following actions to ensure platoon officer reports and investigative reports are compliant with department policy and procedure:

- Complete the *Supervising the Platoon Officer Response to Domestic Violence: Platoon Officer Report Checklist*, located in the Resource Folder on nopd.org, when reviewing platoon officer reports for compliance with policy and protocol.
- Hold district roll-call trainings when additional training is required.

E. CASE TRACKING

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall prepare a quarterly case tracking report to be presented at COMSTAT.

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall prepare a weekly report tracking reports on domestic violence incidents, including by gender and race, and publically report on this data on at least an annual basis.

F. TRAINING & POLICY MAINTAINENCE

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall review the department's domestic violence policies and procedures with new detectives assigned to the unit within 30 days of their assignment.

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall provide domestic violence detectives initial training of no fewer than 32 hours and ongoing annual in-service training. This training shall include advanced, skills-based instruction in evidence collections; victim assistance; interviewing, including taped mock victim interviews; and other topics. The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall be responsible for identifying additional training needs with respect to NOPD Domestic Violence Policy and Procedure 320.

The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall work with *Blueprint for Safety* partners and the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC) annually to update Policy and Procedure 320 to reflect changes in policy, law and developments in research on best practice and to maintain consistency with the *Blueprint for Safety*.

G. VICTIM ENGAGEMENT

The supervisor of the Domestic Violence Unit shall regularly meet with the District Attorney's Victim Witness Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor to ensure that victims are receiving follow-up contact, and that any additional information gathered by the victim witness advocates is communicated to NOPD as necessary. Per the *Blueprint for Safety*, the District Attorney Victim Witness unit will attempt to make follow-up contact with all victims of domestic violence, inquire about subsequent violence or intimidation and notify victims of bail conditions. Per the *Blueprint for Safety*, the District Attorney Victim Witness Unit will share this information with the NOPD, as appropriate.

PROCEDURE

I. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT PROCEDURES

In addition to adhering to general department policy, the Domestic Violence Unit will take the following actions in conducting investigations in domestic violence–related cases.

A. INVESTIGATIONS

If there is the possibility of multiple charges in a case, the detective will thoroughly investigate all crimes.

1. CONDUCT FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

The assigned detective shall:

- Identify and obtain contact information for witnesses if not included in the incident report.
- Conduct follow-up interviews with and obtain statements from witnesses, including the person who called 911 and children, if the initial interview was incomplete or missing important information.

Detectives shall apply the following considerations in determining whether to conduct follow-up interviews with children:

- The child's physical, emotional or psychological ability to give a statement.
- The child's age and ability to understand questions and formulate responses.
- The non-offending parent or guardian's preferences as to whether and how to talk with the children.

When the detective conducts an interview of a suspect in custody, follow the department's custodial interrogation policy and procedure.

2. INTERVIEW THE VICTIM

Detectives shall conduct a thorough interview with the victim that includes attention to:

- Her or his account of events surrounding the incident
- The extent to which the victim feels uneasy about providing information to law enforcement and if so, why
- The extent to which the suspect has ever warned the victim about talking with law enforcement or outsiders for help, now or in the past, and the specifics of any threats or warnings
- Initial and continuing treatment of injuries
- Indicators of stalking

If the victim and/or witnesses do not speak English, arrange for an interpreter or interpreter service in accordance with NOPD Policy 368. Do not use neighbors or family members to provide interpretation.

3. CONDUCT RISK ASSESSMENT

Detectives shall conduct the following domestic violence risk assessment with the victim:

- Review the victim's response to the four risk questions included in the platoon officer's report.
- If it appears there is a history of violence, ask follow-up risk questions. Cover the following risk factors and as time allows probe for what the victim thinks are the risks associated with each factor. The risk factors listed below are a guide and not an exclusive list; follow up with additional questions based on the victim's answers.

Weapons

- Does he/she own a gun?
- Has he/she ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon?

Lethality

- Does he/she ever try to strangle you?
- Has he/she ever forced you to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Has he/she threatened to kill you or himself/herself?
- Has he/she ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?

Previous attempts to leave or seek help

- Have you ever left after living together?
- Has he/she avoided arrest for domestic violence?
- Have you ever been threatened for leaving or seeking help from law enforcement?

Control/Stalking

- Does he/she control many of your daily activities (e.g., friendships, whether or when your family can visit, travel)?
- Is he/she jealous of you?
- Does he/she follow or spy on you or leave threatening notes or messages?

Children

- Do you have a child that is not his/hers?
- Has he/she beaten you when you were pregnant?

Social Factors

- Is he/she working?
- Does he/she use drugs? If so, what kind and with what effect?
- Is he/she an alcoholic or problem-drinker?

In the victim interview and risk assessment, probe for details related to:

- Severity and frequency of abuse
- Victim's level of fear
- Isolation
- History of violence (whether or not it resulted in law enforcement contact)

Detectives shall follow up on any indications or suspicions of strangulation, stalking, witness tampering or sexual coercion or aggression. Detectives shall document all answers from the victim interview in the incident report.

4. COLLECT ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

The assigned detective shall:

- Obtain a medical release from the victim and information about where medical treatment will be or was sought when applicable. Seek the victim's authorization for release of records regarding follow-up treatment. Obtain all medical reports after receiving the release.
- Run a criminal history check, including NCIC to determine the suspect's arrest and conviction history, warrants and indications of stalking.
- Document all history of abuse by obtaining:
 - Past law enforcement reports on the offender.
 - Past and current protective orders including the petition and affidavit and any existing stay away orders issued by criminal court.
 - In cases of stalking or increased risk of harm, attempt to locate law enforcement reports from other jurisdictions within and outside of the state.

Collect all evidence related to the case, when possible, including:

- Follow-up photographs of injuries in cases where bruises may develop after the initial response.
- Physical evidence not collected by the responding platoon officers .
- Any weapons used in the incident.
 - NOTE: If the incident included threats to kill, highlight those threats for prosecution.
- Recordings/printouts of relevant voice mail, e-mail, text messages, etc.

5. INVESTIGATING DECLINED CASES

If a case that the detective believes has strong merit is declined by the prosecuting authority, request the specific reason for the decision to decline and explore the possibility of further investigation to support prosecution. If the prosecutor remains reluctant to proceed with the case, discuss it with the Domestic Violence Unit supervisor for further follow-up.

In cases where the prosecutor has insufficient evidence to charge the case but believes that further investigation would likely produce enough evidence to charge, the prosecutor will specify what additional investigation actions should be taken and designate a time period in which to gather the information.

If there is still insufficient evidence to charge at the end of the additional investigation period, the prosecutor will decline the case and promptly inform the detective.

B. NOTIFY PROBATION AND PAROLE

Detectives shall determine if the suspect is on probation; if so, notify probation of the circumstances of the case, including any offenses where the suspect left the scene and has not been located.

C. IDENTIFY INCOMPLETE PLATOON OFFICER REPORTS

Detectives shall make note of information missing from the platoon officer reports and convey incomplete reports to the Domestic Violence Unit supervisor. The Domestic Violence Unit supervisor will return incomplete reports to the appropriate platoon supervisor or District Commander for review and a supplement, if necessary.

D. RESPONDING WHEN A SUSPECT IS NOT ON SCENE

Conduct investigations where the suspect was not on the scene according to the same procedure as when the suspect was present. Before interviewing the victim, determine if the victim is safe and able to speak freely.

1. INTERVIEWING A SUSPECT WHO IS OUT OF CUSTODY

Detectives shall take the following actions when interviewing a suspect who is out of custody:

- Inform the victim that the detective will attempt to interview the suspect.
- Attempt to locate and obtain a statement from the suspect.

Notify the victim if the detective assesses increased risk of harm and assist the victim in relocating to a safe location. Ensure that the victim has information regarding the Family Justice Center and civil protective orders. Encourage the victim to call law enforcement again if new incidents occur.

E. VICTIM ENGAGEMENT

In conducting the investigation and interacting with victims and suspects, detectives shall take the following specific actions, as appropriate to the circumstances of the case and victim safety.

1. BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR A CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP

- Treat each contact with the victim as an opportunity to build a continuing relationship.
- Be patient with victims who may be hostile.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Ensure that the victim knows who you are and how to contact you.

2. COMMUNICATE SAFELY

- Do not tell the suspect what the victim has told you.
- Inquire about her/his welfare and safety and determine if it is safe for the victim to speak freely.
- If circumstances allow, do not tell the suspect you have spoken to the victim.

3. COLLECT EVIDENCE SPECIFIC TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- Encourage the victim to report contact, abusive behavior and/or violations by the suspect.
- Request that the victim report any threats made by the offender for cooperating with the investigation.
- Inform the victim of the importance of keeping a record of mail, voice mail, e-mail, text messages and other communication and contact from the suspect or others acting on the suspect's behalf.
- If the victim is willing to talk about the full scope of abuse and violence, ask for details and record all credible reports of violence, stalking, coercion, intimidation and related acts of abuse

4. PROVIDE REFERRALS TO SERVICES

- Inform victim of the availability of "welfare" checks at her or his residence by officers.
- Provide referral information regarding advocacy support, restraining orders and other community resources.
- Refer all victims to the New Orleans Family Justice Center.

F. RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Detectives shall refer all incidents involving NOPD law enforcement personnel to the Public Integrity Bureau.

Detectives shall:

- Conduct the investigation following general department policies and procedures and policy and procedure 320.
- When desired by the victim, contact the New Orleans Family Justice Center for assistance in referring the victim for safety planning and services.

G. RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS INVOLVING PUBLIC FIGURES

Detectives shall:

- Conduct the investigation following general department policies and procedures and policy and procedure 320.
- Coordinate with and refer media inquiries to the department's public information officer.
- When desired by the victim, contact the New Orleans Family Justice Center for assistance in referring the victim for safety planning and services.

H. NOTIFICATION TO VOWS

Detectives shall notify the Violent Offender Warrant Squad when a victim, complainant or officer informs the detective that there is an outstanding warrant in a high risk case involving a dangerous situation.

I. TRAINING

Domestic violence detectives shall receive, at least annually, comprehensive mandatory instruction on this policy and responding to domestic violence calls. Trainings will reflect changes in policy, law and developments in best practices over time.

II. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT SUPERVISOR PROCEDURE

In addition to following general department procedures covering supervisory oversight of investigations, the Domestic Violence Unit supervisor will take the following actions in providing supervisory oversight of investigations in domestic violence cases.

A. CASE INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENT

The domestic violence unit supervisor shall read every domestic violence-related report where an officer has determined that probable cause exists that a crime was committed and assign the case for follow-up investigation as needed. The supervisor shall evaluate cases for multiple charges, both domestic-related and non-domestic-related. Regardless of whether the offender is in custody or out of custody, the Domestic Violence Unit supervisor shall prioritize cases based on the following:

- All felonies shall be prioritized for assignment to a detective over misdemeanors. Among felonies, cases with the following factors will receive the highest priority in case assignment:
 - An imminent time deadline before which the suspect must be charged or released
 - Significant injury or impairment
 - Weapon is involved

- Strangulation or stalking behavior has been alleged
- A victim's response to risk questions indicates significant risk of harm
- A victim expresses fear of imminent bodily harm
- As resources permit, if all felony cases have been assigned, misdemeanor cases with the following factors will receive the highest priority in case assignment:
 - Protective order violation
 - Significant injury or impairment
 - Weapon is involved
 - Strangulation or stalking behavior has been alleged
 - A victim's response to risk questions indicates significant risk of harm
 - A victim expresses fear of imminent bodily harm
- In cases where the offender was not arrested at the scene, cases with one or more of the following factors will receive the highest priority for assignment to a detective:
 - Significant injury or impairment
 - Witness tampering, strangulation or stalking behavior has been alleged
 - A victim's response to risk questions indicates high risk of harm
 - A victim expresses fear of imminent bodily harm
- If it appears that the suspect in the case appears to be a victim of battering, assign the case to a detective with instructions to ask the suspect the four risk questions and document the answers in the supplemental report.

B. DETECTIVE OVERSIGHT

The domestic violence unit supervisor shall review investigation files for thoroughness. If a file is unsatisfactory, the supervisor shall return it to the detective with specific instructions on actions to take.

The Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor shall provide consultation to detectives on cases as needed and monitor investigations to determine if additional training is necessary. In reviewing cases, the Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor shall pay particular attention to investigative techniques and skills specific to domestic violence cases (e.g., interviewing, self-defense, victim engagement and predominant aggressor evaluation).

If additional training is warranted, the Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor shall direct the detective to appropriate training and continue monitoring to determine effectiveness of training.

1. REPORT COMPLIANCE

On a quarterly basis, the Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor shall review one random report from each district, using the *Supervising the Platoon Officer Response to Domestic Violence: Platoon Officer Report Checklist*. The Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor will discuss any problems with reports with platoon supervisors and District Commanders as needed.

C. CASE TRACKING

The Domestic Violence Unit Supervisor shall compile and submit a case tracking report to COMSTAT on a quarterly basis, in accordance with general department policy and procedure that includes:

- Number of cases investigated
- Number of cases not investigated
- Number of felonies investigated
- Number of misdemeanors investigated
- Concerns that need to be resolved and anticipated challenges