Domestic Violence Policy Checklist

✓ Introduction

- Police as the front line in abuse prevention.
- Impact on police from a statistical standpoint.
- Historical background.

✓ Definitions

- Abuse
- Family or household member
- Premises
- Stalking

✓ Dispatcher’s Response

- Determine location of emergency.
- Ascertain what has or is occurring.
- Find out if anyone is in need of medical assistance.
- Establish the whereabouts of the batterer.
- Are there weapons involved and if so, what type?
- Ascertain name of the batterer. If unknown, get a physical and clothing description.
- Inquire about the use of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Ascertain the name of the victim and her safety.
- Find out if there are witnesses.
- Inquire as to the presence of children and their safety.
- Determine if there is an active protection order.
- Check for prior history.
- Issue of pressing or dropping charges should not be addressed.
- Illicit information from computer for responding officer such as warrants, record, etc.

✓ Who’ll be Encountered

- Victim
- Batterer
- Witnesses
Patrol Officers’ Response

- Enroute.
- Approach.
- Inside.
- Medical aid.
- Firearms.
- Arrest – shall if a protection order is in effect and probable cause that it was violated, zero tolerance.
- Arrest – shall be the preferred response based on probable cause a crime was committed.
- Dual arrests strongly discouraged.
- Victim rights.
- Emergency judicial response.
- Bail – beepers, cell phones, etc.
- Safe place – monitors and shelters.

Investigation

Ascertain Facts

- Separate and interview individually, including the children.
- Avoid undue interruption and interference.
- Keep all parties in view.

Interview

- Professional demeanor.
- Objective and concerned attitude.
- What happened?
- Who assaulted you?
- When were you assaulted?
- Where did the incident occur?
- How were you assaulted?
- Injuries and/or pain.
- Weapons involved.
- What prompted the incident?
- Anyone else present?
- Relationship information: length, type, frequency, and end date.
- Children.
- Elderly or disabled persons.
- Phone numbers.
- Where the victim can be reached.
- Messages safely related, close friend or relative.
- Firearms.
- Prior history of assaultiveness.
- Protection orders.
- Custody and/or visitation orders.
- Provide safety information and numbers.
- Victim encouragement.
- Avoid in-depth questioning unless necessary.

** ✓ Interrogation**

- Custodial vs. noncustodial.
- Miranda.
- Handcuffs.
- Location.
- Warrant vs. warrantless.
- Trickery and deceit.
- Baiting techniques.

** ✓ Children**

- Neglect – malnutrition, addiction.
- Physical abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Emotional abuse.

** ✓ Property**

- Damaged – personal, joint or other.
- Stolen.
- Utilities/telephone.
- Mail.

** ✓ Firearms**

- Seize if evidence.
- Request temporary custody.
- Search and take custody when requested.
- Search and take custody for safety.
- Assure lawful custody before returning.
- Judge’s order.
- Chief rescinds the license or permit.
**Evidence**

- Excited utterances.
- Emotional demeanor of both the victim and batterer.
- Physical appearance.
- Photographs of injuries, scene and evidence.
- Physical – objects, impressions, body fluids and excretions, etc.
- Physical – cannot lie, not effected by emotion, unimpeachable, etc.
- Physical – cannot be eluded by faulty memory, prejudice, bias, poor eyesight, etc.
- Medical reports.
- Stolen property.
- Entry.
- Canvass the neighborhood.

**Violation and Protection Order Evidence**

- Letters and cards.
- Flowers and balloons.
- Writings on wall or mirrors.
- Videos and audiotapes.
- Family photographs.
- Answering machine.
- Toll analysis.
- Phone Smart.
- 911 tapes.

**Reports**

- Maintain objectivity.
- Document and describe injuries.
- Photographs taken of injuries and scene.
- Note children and elderly or disabled persons.
- Excited utterances verbatim.
- Physical appearance and description of the victim.
- Physical appearance and description of the batterer.
- Emotion demeanor of the victim and batterer.
- Crime scene.
- Victim statement.
- Batterer statement.
- Witness statement.
- Prior history.
- Evidence collected.
Follow-Up

- Safety check.
- Provide transportation to court, shelter or safe place.
- Referral to victim/witness or community victim advocates groups.
- Photographs.
- Case status.
- Be there for her.

Service of Orders

- Patrol officer responsible for sector.
- In hand.
- Don’t accompany the defendant without a Judge’s order.

Domestic Violence Units and Officers

- Investigation and responsibility should remain with patrol.
- Unit coordinates and manages the Department’s response to domestic violence.
- Maintain statistical database of incidents, arrests, and issued protection orders.
- Training.
- Liaison with other agencies.
- Follow up.

Cops as Batterers

- Ensure victim safety.
- Supervisor investigates.
- Commanding officer responsibilities.
- Role of internal affairs.
- Securing Department and personal weapons.

Military Personnel who Batter

Effects on Children

- Silent victims.
- Emotional problems.
- Developmental problems.
- Intervention.
- Self-medication.
- Perpetuators of the violence.
- Society’s responsibility.
✓ Alcohol and Drug Abuse

- Commonality.
- *Not the cause.*
- Self-medication.

✓ Dangerousness and Lethality

- Homicide.
- Normal personality considerations.
- Mental health
- Hare Psychopathy.
- Continuum of risk.

✓ Stalking

- Willfulness and malicious.
- Followed or harassed.
- Repeatedly.
- Threat with intent to put victim in imminent fear of death or serious injury.

✓ Training

- Victim’s story.
- Use of non-law enforcement trainers.
- History.
- Domestic violence laws.
- Policy and protocol.
- Dynamics and myth destroying.
- Investigative techniques.
- Community resources, shelter visit.
- Length of training.

✓ Conclusion

- Goals of law enforcement.
- Stop the violence.
- Victim safety.
- Batterer accountability.
- Reasons why.