



Fact Sheet

City of Chicago / Department of Police • Richard M. Daley, Mayor • Matt L. Rodriguez, Superintendent

Coordinating the Response to Domestic Violence in Chicago

Key Elements of The Initiative

Domestic Violence Policy

The Police Department's stance on domestic violence is clear:

"Domestic violence is not a private family matter; it is a crime and will not be tolerated. Illinois law establishes it as a crime. Department policy says it is a crime. Our own experience tells us it is a crime—often involving assault, battery, and homicide. Failure of officers to act in domestic violence situations can subject them and the Department to a lawsuit."

Chicago Police Department Training Bulletin

The Chicago Police Department and the City of Chicago continue to implement proactive strategies designed to reduce both new and repeat domestic violence crimes in the City. A new grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), provides important resources to further this goal. This grant will allow the City to incorporate new domestic violence prevention efforts into the crime control and prevention strategies of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS).

To enhance current domestic violence initiatives, \$200,000 in grant funds will be used to expedite further organizational changes in City government and the Police Department. These changes will improve the quality and effectiveness of the police response to the serious problem of domestic violence. The following outcomes will result from this new effort:

- Creation of the *Mayor's Domestic Violence Advocacy Coordinating Council* — a cohesive team of police officers; city, county and state agencies; and community advocacy representatives, all organized around the single goal of reducing domestic violence.
- Improved *analysis and mapping* of locations where the potential for escalating domestic violence exists. This information will improve victim referrals by police officers, provide more timely intervention and prevention services for victims, target repeat offenders, and increase officer safety.
- Establishment of a *uniform intervention/referral strategy* in all 25 police districts.
- Linking beat officers in all 25 districts with *community-based service providers*. Together, they will use the CAPS problem-solving model to address families at risk in their communities.

Building Blocks to Success

To ensure an effective response to families in crisis, a number of programmatic elements must be planned and implemented. Many of these elements are already in place in Chicago.

Making Clear the Department's Domestic Violence Policy and Procedures

The Illinois Domestic Violence Act, passed in 1986, acknowledged that domestic violence is a crime. In response, the Police Department published General Orders stating what officers must do to enforce the law and to protect victims of domestic violence. Even with the publication of these orders, however, some officers were still unsure of their responsibilities in enforcing the law and providing victim assistance.

Ensuring Police Officers Know the Appropriate Response to Domestic Violence Calls

Most officers received a block of domestic violence training as recruits. But because the average officer has served a dozen or more years on the force, a refresher course was clearly needed. In

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Commitment to Training

More than 12,500 Department members have received roll-call training on domestic violence. In addition, 490 sergeants, 18 lieutenants, and 104 detectives have received enhanced domestic violence training, taught by police personnel, prosecutors, and domestic violence victim advocates.

July 1994, Superintendent Rodriguez directed that a series of roll-call training sessions be dedicated to domestic violence. The Department, in consultation with domestic violence victim advocates, developed a comprehensive and up-to-date roll-call training program on domestic violence. Over the course of a seven-week period, this training was presented to all field personnel by specially trained sergeants.

Seven accompanying training bulletins were developed, covering the following training subjects:

- Size and Scope of the Problem
- Domestic Violence Act and Orders of Protection
- Criminal Laws
- Response Procedures
- In-Custody Procedures
- Intervention and Referral
- When a Police Officer Is an Alleged Offender

Providing Officers with Information about Households at Risk for Domestic Violence
 In addition to knowing domestic violence laws and the appropriate procedures for responding to calls for service, police officers need access to accurate and timely information concerning the specific household to which they are responding. Because domestic violence calls are often dangerous and difficult to defuse, it is essential that officers be alerted to those households with a history of domestic violence crimes. In addition, officers need an overall knowledge of domestic violence incidents on their beat to more effectively identify, analyze, and solve problems.

With the completion of the enhanced ICAM 2 (Information Collection for Automated Mapping) computer system in the late fall of 1996, police officers will be able to produce a map of all “households at risk” on their beat. For each of those households, officers will also be able to generate a detailed printout of all incidents involving that household. This new tool will provide officers with information necessary to monitor and intervene at households where crime-related data has shown that the potential for escalating violence exists.

Bringing Government & Community Interests Together

With these basic building blocks in place, the City’s next steps are to forge a new and focused partnership among those people directly involved in addressing domestic violence and to ensure the coordination of their efforts. Key members of this problem-solving partnership are the Police Department, other City departments, various county and state agencies, and the community—including the victims of domestic violence, as well as community stakeholders, domestic violence victim advocates, and local service providers.

The Mayor’s Domestic Violence Advocacy Coordinating Council
 As part of the new federal grant, Mayor Daley will appoint a Domestic Violence Advocacy Coordinating Council (DVACC). The Council will provide advice on the development of a uniform, citywide intervention/referral strategy and on the service needs of domestic violence victims in the City. The DVACC will also advocate with state and federal funding sources to ensure that needed services are made available, encourage the coordination of services across systems, and address policy issues within systems that impact the effective delivery of services to victims and abusers.

In addition to the DVACC chairperson, members will include the following:

- Advocates representing various victim perspectives.
- Representatives from the Police Department (including both the Patrol and Detective Divisions).
- Representatives from the City Departments of Human Services and Public Health.
- A researcher specializing in domestic violence issues.
- Representatives from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, and the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council.

Staff Support for the Coordinating Council

Under the grant, staff support is provided within the Police Department and the Office of the Mayor.

City Domestic Violence Project Manager. Working out of the Office of the Mayor, the Project Manager will provide staff support to the DVACC and coordinate the provision of domestic violence services in the City. The Project Manager will be responsible for:

- Coordinating the response of City agencies to domestic violence.
- Coordinating with other government and private agencies at the county and state levels.
- Identifying and communicating with domestic violence service providers and interest groups.
- Assisting with public education and marketing.
- Monitoring service availability citywide.

Police Domestic Violence Operations Coordinator. The Police Department's Domestic Violence Operations Coordinator will be a sworn supervisory member with extensive field experience in domestic violence issues. The Operations Coordinator will be charged with improving the Department's response to victims of domestic violence by:

- Developing a comprehensive, uniform intervention strategy in concert with Department units and the Domestic Violence Advocacy Coordinating Council.
- Maintaining coordination with other City, criminal justice, and community-based agencies addressing the needs of domestic violence victims.
- Providing updated lists of service providers and domestic violence information to each police beat.
- Troubleshooting district-level problems related to police response to domestic violence.
- Collaborating in the development of training curricula and materials, and participating as an instructor in recruit and in-service training.
- Keeping officers assigned to District Law Enforcement and the Detective Division informed about criminal justice issues related to domestic violence and problems concerning intervention services.
- Collecting and analyzing citywide domestic violence data to monitor trends concerning the incidence of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Facts and Figures

- In 1995, Chicago police responded to nearly 153,000 domestic violence-related calls for service—an average of 419 calls per day.
- In 1995, more than 90 percent of reported domestic violence crimes involved violence or the threat of violence against the victim. More than two-thirds involved domestic battery.
- In 1995, nearly 2,500 domestic battery-related reports were filed by Chicago police per month. The Cook County State's Attorney's Office reports that charges filed in court **increased** 30 percent from 1994 to 1995.
- Domestic-related homicides in Chicago **decreased** 23 percent between 1994 and 1995. Still, nearly 8 percent of all homicides in the City are domestic-related.

Area Domestic Violence Service Liaisons. More than 150 different agencies provide a myriad of domestic violence services throughout Chicago. Given this volume, coordination of field service activities cannot emanate from a centralized location at Police Headquarters.

It is critical, however, that beat officers are familiar with the community-based service providers available on their beat and are confident that these agencies provide quality service to the victims referred by the officers. Similarly, community service providers need to feel confident that police officers are responding appropriately and treating domestic violence incidents as serious crimes.

To ensure that this level of coordination and communications occurs, contracts will be let for the services of five advocates for the Department, one in each police area. These Area Domestic Violence Service Liaisons will:

- Meet individually with the community-based agencies to ensure coordination of effective service to victims referred by beat officers.
- Troubleshoot problems encountered by beat officers when working with community-based service providers.
- Monitor referrals to ensure that services are being effectively utilized by beat officers.
- Participate in roll-call training sessions to inform officers of the locally based services available to the victims they encounter.
- Act as field representatives for the Police Operations Coordinator, regularly reporting on area service activities.

For More
Information

For more information about the Mayor's Domestic Violence Advocacy Coordinating Council, or about the federal grant funding this initiative, contact:

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More information about the Chicago Police Department and the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy are available on the World Wide Web:

<http://www.ci.chi.il.us>