



GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE INCIDENTS



ISSUE DATE:	15 April 2025	EFFECTIVE DATE:	
RESCINDS:			
INDEX CATEGORY:	04 - Preliminary Investigations		
CALEA:			

I. PURPOSE

This directive:

- A. informs Department members of guidelines and responsibilities when responding to calls that are gender-based violence in nature to provide unbiased and effective service.
- B. establishes procedures and responsibilities for gender-based violence incidents for responding officers and field supervisors.
- C. provides general information and guidelines for assisting victims of gender-based violence, such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. **Gender-Based Violence:** Per the Illinois Gender Violence Act (740 ILCS 82/), gender-based violence is a form of sex discrimination and defined as:

- 1. one or more act of violence or physical aggression satisfying the elements of battery under the laws of Illinois that are committed, at least in part, on the basis of a person's sex, whether or not those acts have resulted in criminal charges, prosecution, or conviction.
- 2. a physical intrusion or physical invasion of a sexual nature under coercive conditions satisfying the elements of battery under the laws of Illinois, whether the act or acts resulted in criminal charges, prosecution, or conviction.
- 3. a threat of an act described in item (1) or (2) causing a realistic apprehension that the originator of the threat will commit the act.

NOTE: Gender-based violence is bias-based harm against another person based on their gender identity. Gender-based violence can include but is not limited to physical, sexual, psychological, economic, or technological abuse or harm (e.g., cyberstalking, sextortion, image-based abuse).

- B. **Gender Bias:** A set of assumptions or expectations regarding how people of a gender will behave that are not objective or based on factual evidence.
- C. **Gender Identity:** Is comprised of one's concept of oneself as male, female, a blend of both, or neither and includes how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from one's sex assigned at birth.
- D. **Gender Expression:** Is exhibited through the external appearances of one's gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, voice, clothing, haircut, etc., and which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine.

- E. **Sexual Orientation:** Includes a person's romantic or physical attraction to people of a specific gender or genders. It includes an individual's enduring romantic, emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual attraction to other individuals. It is important to note that sexual orientation is distinct from gender identity and expression. Transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual, just like cisgender people.
- F. **Bias:** Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.
- G. **Domestic Violence:** Physical abuse, harassment, intimidation of a dependent, interference with personal liberty or willful deprivation but does not include reasonable direction of a minor child by a parent or person in loco parentis. (750 ILCS 60) Illinois Domestic Violence Act of 1986.
- H. **Family/Household Member:** Persons who qualify as having a domestic relationship under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act IDVA (750 ILCS 60/101):
1. spouse/former spouses;
 2. parents;
 3. children/stepchildren;
 4. other person related by blood or by present or prior marriage;
 5. persons who share or formerly shared a common dwelling;
 6. persons who have or allegedly have a blood relationship through a child;
 7. persons of the same sex or opposite sex who have or have had a dating or engagement relationship;
 8. persons with disabilities and their personal assistants or caregivers;
 9. minor children or dependent adults in the care of petitioners;
 10. persons residing or employed at a private home or public shelter which houses abused family or household members; and
 11. protection for animals under the Illinois Domestic Violence Act.
- NOTE:** The Illinois Domestic Violence Act (IDVA) now includes protections for animals as part of an order of protection.
- I. **Criminal Sexual Assault:** (720 ILCS 5/11-1.20) A person commits criminal sexual assault if that person commits an act of sexual penetration and:
1. uses force or threat of force;
 2. knows that the victim is unable to understand the nature of the act or is unable to give knowing consent;
 3. is a family member of the victim, and the victim is under 18 years of age; or
 4. is 17 years of age or over and holds a position of trust, authority, or supervision in relation to the victim, and the victim is at least 13 years of age but under 18 years of age.
- J. **Criminal Sexual Abuse:** ([720 ILCS 5/11-1.50](#)) A person commits criminal sexual abuse if that person:
1. commits an act of sexual conduct by the use of force or threat of force; or
 2. commits an act of sexual conduct and knows that the victim is unable to understand the nature of the act or is unable to give knowing consent.

3. is under 17 years of age and commits an act of sexual penetration or sexual conduct with a victim who is at least 9 years of age but under 17 years of age.
 4. commits an act of sexual penetration or sexual conduct with a victim who is at least 13 years of age but under 17 years of age and the person is less than 5 years older than the victim.
- K. **Stalking:** ([720 ILCS 5/12-7.3](#)) A person commits stalking when he or she knowingly engages in a course of conduct directed at a specific person and he or she knows that this course of conduct would cause a reasonable person to:
1. fear for his or her safety;
 2. fear the safety of another person;
 3. fear of safety in a workplace, school, or place of worship; or
 4. suffer emotional distress.
- L. **Human Trafficking:** ([720 ILCS 5/10-9](#)) a person commits trafficking in persons when he or she knowingly:
1. recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains by any means, or attempts to recruit, entice, harbor, transport, provide, or obtain by any means, another person, intending or knowing that the person will be subjected to involuntary servitude; or
 2. benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture that has engaged in an act of involuntary servitude or involuntary sexual servitude of a minor. A company commits trafficking in persons when the company knowingly benefits, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture that has engaged in an act of involuntary servitude or involuntary sexual servitude of a minor.

III. POLICY

- A. The Chicago Police Department seeks to reduce gender-based violence in our communities by providing trauma- informed and victim-centered services to all victims of crimes with a gender-based violence component in an unbiased, effective manner to improve the Department's response to these incidents. Department members will:
1. be aware that a victim's nonconformity with behavioral stereotypes should not impact the evaluation of the incident.
 2. be careful to not base judgements about the credibility of a victim's account on assumptions or stereotypes about the "**types**" of people who can be victims or how they "**should**" respond or behave.
 3. be aware that biases and stereotypes should not prevent officers from taking a report, collecting potential evidence, or conducting a full investigation of the incident.
- B. As delineated in the Department directive titled "[Protection of Human Rights.](#)" The Illinois Human Rights Act secures for all individuals within Illinois the freedom from discrimination or retaliation because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military service in connection with employment, real estate transactions, access to financial credit, and the availability of public accommodations; prevents unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment in employment, elementary, secondary and higher education; discrimination based on citizenship status employment, and discrimination in connection with real estate transaction based upon familial status. [Illinois Compiled Statutes, Chapter 775 ILCS 5/1-102.](#)

- C. The Chicago Police Department is committed to working with the communities of the City to serve and protect; to safeguard lives and property; to guarantee all persons fair and equal treatment under the law; and to ensure that all persons may enjoy their fundamental rights as human beings consistent with the Department directive titled "[Vision, Mission Statement, and Core Values](#)."
- D. Department member's daily interactions with members of the community present a unique opportunity to strengthen police-community relations and build trust. In all contacts with the public, members must inspire respect for themselves as individuals and as representatives of the Department by respecting the human rights of the members of the community.
- E. All Department members will comply with the Department directives and the [Rules and Regulations of the Chicago Police Department](#). Department members who fail to comply or hinder the effective performance of the Department's functions will be subject to disciplinary action. Sworn members will be held strictly accountable for properly exercising the authority they have been given to protect the rights, lives, and property of all individuals.
1. The Department requires that officers comply with Department policies when responding to such incidents:
 - a. [Domestic Incidents](#)
 - b. [Illinois Sexual Assault Incident Procedures Act](#)
 - c. [Sexual Assault Incident Notice](#)
 - d. [Anti-Stalking Statute](#).
 2. All officers will receive in-service training at least every three years to ensure the Department's response to allegations of gender-based violence, including dispatch response, initial officer response, and on-scene and follow-up investigation, is both effective and unbiased.
- F. Department members must continue to be committed to positively interacting with all members of the diverse communities in which it serves in an unbiased, fair, and respectful manner; treating community members with dignity and conveying goodwill. Department members will:
1. remain patient, objective, nonjudgmental, neutral and impartial, compassionate and empathetic;
 2. remain fair, unbiased, and respectful when interactions occur between Department members and victims of crime, providing an opportunity to strengthen community trust and foster public confidence in the Department.
- G. The Department will take into account that victim's stress and trauma can be mitigated or perpetrated by their interactions with Department members. Therefore, Department members will, when required by law or Department directive, upon request, or when otherwise appropriate, provide victims and witnesses with the appropriate victim assistance and resources, including, but not limited to, the following written information notices:
1. Victim Information Notice ([CPD-11.383](#));
 2. Sexual Assault Incident Notice ([CPD-23.404](#));
 3. Domestic Incident Notice ([CPD-11.443](#)); and
 4. Illinois Attorney General's Statement of Crime Victims' Rights ([OAG/CV-08/22](#)).
- NOTE:** Additional victim assistance can be found in the Department directive titled, "[Crime Victim and Witness Assistance](#)."
- H. The Department will recognize the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledge the role that trauma has played in a gender-based violence victim's life.

NOTE: Focus should be on the needs and concerns of a victim to ensure compassionate and sensitive delivery of services in a nonjudgmental manner.

- I. The Department will recognize individuals who have experienced a sexual assault or sexual abuse can feel empowered through building rapport with the investigators, advocates, and prosecutors in the justice system.

NOTE: The Department will also recognize that other individuals may choose not to participate with the justice system.

- J. The Department will recognize that responses to crimes and crime victims can directly impact a victims' recovery, as well as the willingness to participate in the successful adjudication of the criminal offense and the identification of witnesses, offenders, or additional victims.

- K. The Chicago Police Department is committed to identifying and preventing gender bias. Department members will assist victims by considering the following principles to help reduce the potential for discrimination on gender-based violence incidents:

1. recognizing and addressing biases, assumptions, and stereotypes about a victim;
2. treating all victims with respect;
3. appropriately classifying reports of sexual assault or domestic violence;
4. referring victims to appropriate services; and
5. properly identifying the predominant aggressor in domestic violence incidents.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

When responding to a gender-based violence incident, Department members will ensure compassion and sensitivity in the delivery of services while obtaining the facts of the situation in a nonjudgmental manner.

- A. Responding officers will:

1. respond to reports of gender-based violence with a victim-centered approach that includes but is not limited to the following:
 - a. having a focus on the needs and concerns of the victim;
 - b. being compassionate and professional;
 - c. recognizing that the victim is not at fault or responsible for the gender-based violence; and
 - d. not compromising an investigation by judgements made about a victim.
2. positively interact with victims of the diverse communities in which the Department serves in an unbiased, fair, and respectful manner; treating all victims with dignity and conveying goodwill. Below are some of the diverse community victims that Department members may come in contact with including but not limited to:
 - a. individuals of diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds;
 - b. immigrants and persons with limited English proficiency;
 - c. those with diverse religious beliefs;
 - d. the LGBTQIA+ community;
 - e. individuals with disabilities;
 - f. seniors; and
 - g. juveniles.

NOTE: The Department directive titled "[Chicago Children's Advocacy Center](#)" introduces the legislation process for forensic interviews of children who are victims of sexual assault or sexual abuse.

3. use a trauma-informed approach, which means to avoid re-traumatizing someone who has already suffered trauma. Trauma-informed service delivery is sensitive to the ways trauma can affect victims. By being sensitive to trauma, Department members can provide services in a way that does not trigger the victim or cause further harm. A trauma-informed approach uses the four "Rs":
 - a. **Realizing** the widespread impact of trauma and understanding potential paths for recovery.
 - b. **Recognizing** the signs and symptoms of trauma in victims, families, and others involved. Some of the signs of trauma are nausea, memory gaps, fear, and anger.
 - c. **Responding** to victims of trauma and allowing victims to feel heard.
 - d. **Resisting re-traumatization** by using trauma-informed and victim-centered skills to avoid exposing the victim to additional trauma.
4. recognize that trauma incorporates the three "Es":
 - a. **Events:** events/circumstances cause trauma;
 - b. **Experience:** differs from individual to individual;
 - c. **Effects:** can be broad and disguised as symptoms or behaviors.
5. not utilize police jargon and consider simple terms when engaging with the victim. Additional options to consider include the following:
 - a. "What are you able to tell us about what happened?";
 - b. "Do you know who did this to you?";
 - c. "Your safety and health are a priority to us; would you like to go to the hospital?";
 - d. "You are not alone; how can we help you? Victim advocates are available for you and can support you through this process if you choose."
6. establish rapport and maintain effective communication while gathering information from victims by:
 - a. gathering accurate and detailed statements using some of the following methods:
 - (1) using active listening to meet the needs of the victim and avoid victim-blaming and extend empathy.
 - (2) providing their name, explaining who they are, explaining the legal options and procedures, and providing the appropriate information notices to the victim. ([Domestic Incident Notice](#), [Victim Information Notice](#), etc.)
 - (3) allowing victims and witnesses the personal space to guide the conversation while considering the physical location of where the communication with Department members is being held (i.e., sitting, standing).
 - b. using techniques to help a victim remember while minimizing the risk of contaminating the memory such as:
 - (1) allowing the victim to choose the starting point of their account. The physical process of trauma can cause memory to be fragmented.

- (2) using open-ended, direct, and close-ended questions. Department members may conduct the interview with broad, open-ended questions, then use direct questions that invite a limited answer on specific aspects of one topic.
 - (a) Beginning with questions such as “Where would you like to start?” or “Would you tell me what you are able to share about your experience?” sets a supportive tone.
 - (b) Asking questions in this way also invites the victim to describe what happened, their thoughts, and their feelings in their own words, which is valuable evidence to document in the case report.

NOTE: Obtain their entire narrative before asking back-and-forth questions that can unintentionally contaminate memory.

- (3) guiding the victim to elicit a free recall. Department members may say, for example, "Please tell me everything you can remember" and instructing the victim not to "guess" if they do not remember or know a detail.

NOTE: Use close-ended questions that require a yes/no response at the very end for clarification purposes.

B. Responding detectives will:

1. make an effort to contact the victim without delay to conduct an initial interview.
2. utilize evidence-based, trauma-informed, victim-centered interview questions and techniques. Detectives will:
 - a. secure a private location, if available.
 - b. acknowledge the impact of the traumatic event on the victim during the interview.
 - c. begin with open-ended questions inviting a narrative response.
 - d. be patient and maintain an open mind while listening to the victim's account.

NOTE: Sexual assault victims present with symptoms of trauma that can negatively impact the fact-gathering process. Signs of trauma may include fragmented memory, gaps in memory, and varied emotional states.

3. ensure during this interview that the victim has been provided with the [Sexual Assault Incident Notice](#).
4. accommodate a victim's request for a person, advocate, or attorney to be present in the interview for the purpose of support or consolation, if possible, or a request for other than a forensic interview.
5. ensure victims are provided with contact information of a victim advocate.

C. Field supervisors will:

1. respond to assist officer's investigations of incidents that are Gender-Based Violence in nature if requested by on-scene officers or when deemed necessary.
2. ensure officers are responding in an unbiased, objective, professional, nonjudgmental, and effective manner.
3. review reports to ensure they are properly completed and conform with Department policy.
4. encourage officers to look for co-occurring and interconnected crimes, including but not limited to the following in accordance with respective Department directives:
 - a. [Human Trafficking](#).

- b. [Domestic Incidents](#).
- D. Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) personnel will follow the OEMC protocol listed in the Department directive titled "[Radio Communications](#)" when dispatching assignments.
- E. The Office of Victim Services supports victims through periods of crisis, provides access to referrals and resources to victims; and prepares them to participate in the criminal justice system more effectively. The Office of Victim Services will:
- 1. review incidents, case reports, complaints, and referrals for victims of gender-based violence and provide timely outreach.
 - 2. offer support services and referrals to community-based service providers, which may include but not be limited to:
 - a. crisis counseling;
 - b. social service providers; and
 - c. victim compensation.
 - 3. conduct comprehensive assessments to evaluate the nature, extent, and severity of cases involving victims of gender-based violence.
 - 4. coordinate with victims to develop immediate safety plans.
 - 5. assist victims in navigating the legal system, including obtaining orders of protection, and accompanying them to court proceedings, hearings, and interviews.
 - 6. serve as a liaison between victims, the court systems, law enforcement, and social service providers to ensure effective communication and coordination of services.
 - 7. participate in community outreach and education initiatives on gender-based violence to raise awareness of victim rights and services.
 - 8. distribute educational materials to inform the public and stakeholders about victim advocacy programs and available resources.
 - 9. perform any other duty identified by the Assistant Director or designee, Office of Victim Services, as deemed necessary for operational needs and to submit the Department's mission and vision.
- F. This directive outlines the foundation for the principals of the Department's response to incidents of gender-based violence. The below-listed Department-wide directives establish the specific Department responsibilities associated with response and investigations that have a gender-based violence component and are divided into the following topic-specific directives:
- 1. "[Illinois Sexual Assault Incident Procedures Act](#)";
 - 2. "[Sexual Assault Incident Notice](#)";
 - 3. "[Anti-Stalking Statute](#)";
 - 4. "[Crime Scene Protection and Processing](#)";
 - 5. "[Preliminary Investigations](#)".
 - 6. "[Domestic Incidents](#)"
 - a. "[Domestic Incident Notice](#)";
 - b. "Domestic Incidents Involving Department Members" *DRAFT
 - c. "[Orders of Protection](#)";

d. "No Contact Order",

(Items indicated by *italics/double underline* have been added or revised)

Authenticated by MWK

Larry Snelling
Superintendent of Police

T24-012 LB/KLW

DRAFT