

CIRCULAR



Title
Domestic Violence Liaison Program
Number
CIR-23-04
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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this circular is to inform members of the relaunch of the Domestic Violence Liaison (DVL) Program, with initial focus on 5D, 6D, and 7D. This co-response program pairs MPD Volunteer Corps DVLs with patrol officers to respond to intrafamily (i.e., domestic violence) calls for service.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Overview

1. DVLs are MPD Volunteer Corps members who have received specialized training from DC Survivors and Advocates for Empowerment (DC SAFE) to respond primarily to intrafamily calls for service, however, DVLs are trained to provide all victims and witnesses of violence with various resources and may also be useful on other scenes.
2. DVLs are liaisons between MPD, DC SAFE, and victims and the success of the program depends on this collaboration. DVLs:

DVL Responsibilities
a. Provide victims with information and resources from across the District;
b. Make required notifications to DC SAFE, when appropriate;
c. Make referrals to DC SAFE and communicate with DC SAFE, as needed, to ensure victims are connected as quickly as possible.

3. As non-sworn volunteers of the department, DVLs:

Role of DVLs
a. Are not law enforcement officers;
b. Do not take on the role of law enforcement officers and are aware of their responsibility to inform an officer of any relevant information learned during victim interactions;
c. Are not confidential advocates and shall inform an officer of any relevant information learned during victim interactions; and
d. Follow the direction of officers and officials.

B. Riding Along and Calls for Service

1. Pursuant to [GO-OPS-304.11 \(Handling Intrafamily Offenses\)](#), members accompanied by DC SAFE Crisis Response Line advocates or MPD DVLs

shall advise the dispatcher of their presence so that they can be notified of applicable calls for service.

2. Pursuant to [GO-OPS-204.04 \(Ride Along Program\)](#), when operating vehicles with a ride-along, absent exigent circumstances, members shall refrain from responding to any code one assignments as the primary unit.
3. When responding to intrafamily calls for service (to include family disturbances and offenses), members shall act in accordance with all requirements of [GO-OPS-304.11](#) to investigate and document the situation and make all required notifications. The DVL shall assist by speaking with the victim to evaluate their safety, provide information about available resources, and obtain relevant information required to make a notification to DC SAFE for appropriate cases through the DC SAFE Crisis Response Line.
4. Pursuant to [GO-OPS-304.11](#), the DVL or the member shall initiate a **mandatory** call to DC SAFE while on the scene of an intrafamily situation (incident or offense, with or without an arrest) when any of the following circumstances exist:
 - a. Intrafamily situations between intimate partners; **or**
 - b. There is reason to believe that an act that constituting domestic violence occurred involving intimate partners; **or**
 - c. Based on the information available, the member's assessment is that once the victim is no longer in the presence of a first responder the potential for assault or danger is high; **or**
 - d. The member is aware of repeat calls for service to this family; **or**
 - e. The member believes that a risk assessment screening should be conducted.

C. Program Oversight

1. DVLs schedule their shifts through the ride-along program and shall call the watch commander the day of their scheduled shift to ensure that the districts the DVL is needed.
2. DVLs possess MPD identification, have passed a background investigation, and do not need a Washington Area Law Enforcement System (WALES)/National Crime Information Center (NCIC) check prior to each ride along.
3. Officials shall place DVLs in police service areas (PSAs) with high domestic violence calls and avoid special assignments such as a special beat or hospital detail.
4. DVLs are permitted and highly encouraged to attend roll call.

5. DVLs beginning their shift at an irregular time (i.e., not during call) shall respond to the sergeant's office and request placement.
6. Members and officials shall contact the Strategic Engagement Office at ovc.adminbox@dc.gov or (202) 727-6587 with any questions or concerns about the program.



Robert J. Contee III
Chief of Police

RJC:KDO:MOC:SMM

<i>Amendment #</i>	<i>Page #</i>	<i>Description of Change</i>	<i>Effective Date of Change</i>	<i>Name and Title of Authorizing Member</i>
1	3	Revised Part II.C.6 with updated contact information.	3/12/2024	Maureen O'Connell, Director, Policy and Standards Branch