

CHARLOTTESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Note: This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge an officer's liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by the Charlottesville Police Department and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.

Type of Directive: GENERAL ORDER	Number: 41-99
Domestic Violence/ Lethality Assessment Protocol	Date: June 18, 2018
VLEPSC Number: OPR.13.01	Manual Number: 531.02
	Effective Date: June 18, 2018
Authorization: Chief R.M. Brackney <i>Rm Brackney</i>	Follow-up Date: As Needed

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Charlottesville Police Department to exercise leadership in the community in responding to domestic violence by recognizing that the nature and seriousness of crimes committed between family or household members are not mitigated because of the relationships or living arrangements of those involved. The department will assign domestic or family violence calls a high priority. Furthermore, the department recognizes that domestics have one of the highest incidents of assaults on officers and as such will ensure that officers utilize proactive and proper officers survival skills at all times.

It is also the policy of the Charlottesville Police Department to use the Lethality Assessment Protocol (LAP) at the scene of a domestic violence incident. The protocol will assist in identifying victims of domestic violence in potentially lethal situations, and establish criteria to place those victims in immediate and direct contact with a domestic violence service program hotline advocate.

II. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to define domestic violence and related offenses, outline a safe procedure for handling violent incidents and calls, and describe measures to end violence and protect victims and prepare for the best possible prosecution of such cases and to address repeat offenders. It is recognized that an immediate criminal justice response can make a major difference in the disputants' lives. With all due consideration for their own safety, department personnel responding to a domestic disturbance call shall (1) restore order; (2) arrest persons when probable cause exists that a crime has occurred; (3) Establish trust and provide safety and security for the crime victim(s); and, (4) Investigate patterns of violence, seek inter-agency collaboration to deter future violence and conduct Lethality Screening to identify potential lethal situations.

A limited number of the enclosed City of Charlottesville Police Department General Orders have been redacted. The redactions ensure that that Police Department's operational and tactical responses are withheld for community and Officer Safety (e.g., bank alarm response, response to an active threat, and Tactical Operations).