

RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge this department's, governmental entity's and/or any of this department's employees' civil or criminal liability in any way. It is not to be construed as the creation of a specific standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance or litigation. Violations of this directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-departmental administrative sanctions.

Chief of Police: Jason Soto /s/	
Approving Deputy Chief: Thomas Robinson V /s/	
General Order No: P-180-17	Issued: October 24, 2017
General Order Title: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INVESTIGATIONS	

POLICY

The Reno Police Department recognizes that Domestic Violence has serious consequences for involved families, first responders and the community which necessitates prompt and thorough investigation. The Department will investigate all reported incidents of domestic violence related crimes. The Department recognizes that victim-centered, pro-arrest philosophy and thorough, evidence based investigations are the most effective means to address domestic violence.

DEFINITIONS

Domestic Violence - Adhere to the meanings as defined in NRS 33.018, 171.1225 and 217.400, as may be amended.

Dating Relationship – Adhere to the meaning as defined in NRS 33.0178, 171.1225 and 217.400, as may be amended.

Investigator – Officers, detectives, community services officers, police services specialists or any other Reno Police employee assigned to take reports of domestic violence.

Primary Physical Aggressor – In addition to the meaning as defined in NRS 171.137 and as may be amended, Primary Physical Aggressor is the most dominant aggressor, not necessarily the first aggressor

PROCEDURES

Domestic Violence Investigations

The investigation procedures apply to all investigators, including sworn and civilian employees who take domestic violence reports. Investigators will:

1. Adhere to the arrest, reporting and collection of statistics requirements set forth under NRS 171.137.
2. Investigate all domestic violence cases as though the victim will not testify.
3. Make reasonable efforts to locate and arrest a domestic violence suspect within 24 hours; or for non-sworn employees, notify a supervisor so that efforts can be made.

4. Interview all witnesses. All witness statements will be recorded on written statements, on audio recording or video recordings. If statements aren't taken, the investigator will explain why in their report.
 - a) When juveniles are involved, investigators will interview them separate from the parties involved. Forensic interviews are not necessary in domestic violence investigations.
5. Quote in their report, as closely as possible, any excited utterance made by the victim, by a witness impacted by the incident or by a child impacted by the incident.
6. Take photographs of injuries to all involved parties, the scene and of anything else that would support the investigation.
7. Book any items of evidentiary value, including downloading audio or video recordings, photographs, etc., prior to the conclusion of their shift, in accordance with the Property and Evidence Control General Order.
8. Complete the Domestic Violence Statistical form, to include documenting all injuries on the form's location of injury diagram and submit it with the original report
9. Include as much information as possible regarding the victim and assailant, in order to improve follow-up, contact by Detectives, VSU and the prosecuting attorney's office. This will include, but not be limited to the individual's contact information, place of employment, hours worked, and any information that the victim may have regarding the assailant's whereabouts.
10. Complete a thorough report and submit it in accordance with the Report Process and Review General Order.
11. Notify Washoe County Children's Services, whenever juveniles are on scene during incidents of Domestic Violence.

Arrest Procedures

NRS 171.137 mandates that an officer makes an arrest when probable cause establishes that a domestic battery has occurred within the preceding 24 hours. Citations are not appropriate. A domestic violence arrest does not require the officer to witness the offense, nor is it required for the victims to sign a criminal complaint.

NRS 171.137 provides guidelines in determining and arresting the Primary Physical Aggressor in situations where more than one battery may have occurred. Additionally, officers should evaluate which of the involved parties was the most dominant aggressor, not necessarily the first aggressor.

Follow-up Procedures

Whenever probable cause has been established, but the suspect has not been arrested, every effort will be made to arrest the suspect within 24 hours. Supervisors will review all domestic violence reports from the prior 24 hours and assign officers to attempt to locate the suspect. If the suspect cannot be located within 24 hours of the incident, the supervisor will ensure the case is submitted for warrant.

Victim Services Unit

Victim Advocates from the Victim Services Unit are available to assist investigators with victims of domestic violence, 24 hours a day. Victim Advocates can provide assistance to victims in obtaining emergency/after hours protection orders, emergency transportation, and emergency shelter. Investigators should consider contacting VSU or the on-call Victim Advocate on every incident of domestic violent and will always contact VSU or the on-call Victim Advocate in the following situations:

1. When the suspect is arrested and in custody and the victim wants to pursue an Emergency Order for Protection.
2. When the suspect is not on scene and the victim is fearful that the suspect may return and wishes to be placed in a temporary shelter.

Domestic Violence Incidents Involving City Employees or Employees of Other Law Enforcement Agencies

A supervisor will be notified whenever an investigation in a domestic violence involves a City of Reno employee or a known employee of another law enforcement agency. A report will be completed in all cases, whether or not an arrest is made.

Supervisor's Responsibilities

A field supervisor will respond to every domestic violence incident involving a City of Reno employee or a known employee of another law enforcement agency.

1. In cases where a Reno Police Department non-sworn employee is involved, the supervisor may request an outside agency to investigate and will notify the involved employee's chain of command.
2. In cases where a Reno Police Department sworn employee is involved, the supervisor will request another agency respond to investigate. If no other agency is involved, the supervisor will notify the watch commander and ensure that a thorough investigation is completed and appropriate action is taken.
3. In cases where another law enforcement agency employee is involved, the supervisor will notify the highest ranking on duty employee of that agency.

In cases where a Reno Police Department employee is arrested for domestic violence, the on-scene supervisor will take the following actions:

1. Place the employee on administrative leave pending determination of duty status by the Chief of Police or his designee.
2. Review all related reports.