

Domestic Violence Lethality Assessment

Index Code: 1502

Effective Date: 11/01/05 (Revised 8/21/2023)

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish procedures and to implement a domestic violence lethality assessment protocol for reporting, investigations, arrests and referrals in all incidents of domestic violence and other types of family disputes.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff, to take a pro-active posture on domestic violence, identifying victims of domestic violence in a potentially lethal situations, and placing those victims in immediate and direct contact with a domestic violence program counselor. This policy will recognize domestic violence as criminal activity and will not differentiate it from other criminal activities. Arrests will be affected whenever the law authorizes actions to be taken, and victims will be referred for assistance and family counseling as needed.

III. DEFINITIONS

Abuse Is defined as (Family Law Article, Section §4-501)-

- a. An act that causes serious bodily harm;
- b. An act that places a person eligible for relief in fear of imminent serious bodily harm;
- c. Assault in any degree;
- d. Rape or sexual offense under §§3-303 through 3-308 of the Criminal Law Article or attempted rape or sexual offense in any degree;
- e. False imprisonment; or
- f. Stalking under § 3-802 of the Criminal Law Article.

Domestic Violence - For Departmental reporting purposes, Domestic violence is a physical injury or the threat to inflict such an injury, committed by a person who is in or was in an intimate relationship with the victim.

Family Violence – Occurs when one family member inflicts or attempts to inflict physical injury against another family member, with whom no **consensual or incest** intimate relationship exists. This includes abuse and assault of any degree, stalking, and false imprisonment. Victim(s) and/or suspect(s) of family violence can include siblings, niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, cousin, grandchild, grandparent, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, or a caregiver of a vulnerable adult.