



CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE

GENERAL POLICE ORDER



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| EFFECTIVE DATE: JANUARY 31, 2023 | CHAPTER: 5 – Field Investigations | PAGE: 1 of 2 | NUMBER: 5.07.03 |
| SUBJECT: CHILDREN WHO WITNESS VIOLENCE | | | |
| CHIEF: <i>Dornat A. Drummond, Chief</i> | | | |

PURPOSE: To ensure that members are making the proper notifications regarding children that witness acts of violence.

POLICY: **It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police** that members document and make the proper notifications for children that witness acts of violence or traumatic experiences by notifying The Children Who Witness Violence (CWWV) Program.

DEFINITIONS:

Children - Youth that are seventeen (17) years old or younger.

Witness - Children in view of, involved in, or a victim of any serious acts of violence or traumatic experience.

PROCEDURES:

I. General Guidelines

- A. Incidents that expose children to a wide range of potentially traumatizing events including, but not limited to physical or sexual abuse, domestic violence and community violence, shall be documented and a referral shall be made to The Children Who Witness Violence (CWWV) Program.
- B. CWWV can be notified twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, through the Frontline Service Hotline at (216) 623-6888.

II. Member Responsibilities

- A. Members responding to an assignment where children witness any acts of violence shall ensure the following:
 - 1. The safety of all children involved.
 - 2. Medical attention, if necessary.
 - 3. A supervisor is notified.
- B. In incidents involving domestic violence or physical assault within a residence that is witnessed by a child and results in an incident report, the following notifications shall be made:

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1. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) through the 696-KIDS hotline.
 2. Children Who Witness Violence (CWWV) through Frontline Services.
 3. In incidents where a child is a victim of abuse or neglect, procedures in General Police Order (GPO) [5.07.02](#) Endangering Children shall be followed.
- C. In all cases where a referral was made to CWWV, it shall be noted in the incident report with the contact person.
- D. Instances where no incident report is generated (e.g., fatal motor vehicle accident) where a child witnessed a death or serious injury, officers shall note the referrals in their disposition in Mobile Computer Aided Dispatch (MCAD) or duty report.
- E. Referrals shall be made to CWWV even when the family does not wish for Mental Health Services involvement. This will allow for follow-up contact with the family and an offer of social services.

III. Supervisor Responsibilities

- A. Supervisors shall:
1. Respond to incidents of acts of violence where children have witnessed death or serious injury.
 2. Respond to incidents of child abuse or neglect complaints and ensure appropriate action is taken per GPO [5.07.02](#) Endangering Children.
 3. Review duty reports, Mobile Computer Aided Dispatch (MCAD) entries, and incident reports ensuring appropriate actions are taken in the disposition of the child abuse or neglect complaint.
 4. Ensure that members make the proper notifications for children that meet the criteria of a referral to CWWV.

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.