



Bringing Victims into Community Policing



A Police Guide to First Response: Domestic Violence, Residential Burglary, and Automobile Theft

by The National Center for Victims of Crime and
The Police Foundation

This document was prepared by the National Center for Victims of Crime and the Police Foundation, supported by 98-CK-WX-0074, awarded by the U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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Acknowledgments

"Bringing Victims into Community Policing" is the result of hard work on the part of many people at the National Center for Victims of Crime, the Police Foundation, and professionals from the fields of policing, victim services, criminology, and criminal justice.

Susan Herman and David Weisburd led the project team as Co-principal Investigators. David Anderson managed the National Center's efforts, conducted most of the site visits, and developed the first response guides and the model policy on repeat victimization. Rosann Greenspan and Graham Farrell managed the Police Foundation efforts, conducted the literature review, and analyzed the survey results.

Karen Dempsey coordinated the focus groups and the forum, developed the case examples for the first response guides, and assisted with the development of the model policy on repeat victimization. Insightful editorial assistance was provided by Diane Alexander, Trudy Gregorie, Barry Meiners, Lara Murray, and Cressida Wasserman.

Justin Ready, of the Police Foundation, conducted the surveys of police and victim service organizations. At the Police Foundation, the following people were involved in the early stages of the development of the survey and the review: Brooke Bedrick, Annette Gartin, Erin Lane, Ann Marie McNally, and Michael Prachar. Diane Johnson, of the National Center, developed the victims service organization survey. In addition, the following team worked on different aspects of the survey interviews, data coding, data entry and data cleaning: Carsten Andresen, Liz Ashmine, Yesenia Fermin, Sam Hakim, Vilma Hernandez, James Perlez, Marissa Porchak, Jesy Pizzarro, Tawandra Rowell, Tom Sharpe, Aislynn Stearn, Vanja Stenius, Ernesto Urbina, Erika Vergara, Laura Wycoff, and Kristen Zgoba.



Perri Gottlieb assisted in the collation of the literature, various aspects of the data analysis and the preparation of many tables for this report. Heather Sparks transcribed many interviews and assisted in the preparation of the data tables. Kelli Edwards assisted in data entry and transcription of the National Center. Diane Johnson helped develop and manage the national survey.

Three consultants worked on the survey in different capacities: Steven Mastrofski, Edward Maguire, and Rhoda Cohen.

For their continued support, we thank Karin Schmerler, Stacey Bushée, and Nancy Leach of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). For their time and valuable input, special thanks go to Mary Blake-Holly, Victim Services (Jacksonville, Florida); James Bueermann, Redlands (CA) Police Department; Cressida Bridgeman, British Home Office; Pam Chapman, National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives, Sylvia Chenery, University of Huddersfield (England); Ed Davis, Lowell (MA) Police Department; Rob Davis, Vera Institute of Justice; Lisbeth Eddy, Seattle (WA) Police Department; Steve Eckstrom, Washington State Office of Crime Victims Advocacy; Carroll Ellis, Fairfax County (VA) Police Department; Ron Fernstedt, Utah County Sheriff; Ed Flynn, Arlington County (VA) Police Department; Don Georgens, Office of the Attorney General (TX); Ellen Halbert, Travis County (TX) District Attorney's Office; Earl Mathis, Charlotte - Mecklenburg (NC) Police Department; Rodney Monroe, Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department; Silverio Ontiveros, Phoenix (AZ) Police Department; Jane Sadusky, Battered Women's Justice Project; Rana Sampson, Community Policing Associates; and Joan Scanlan.



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Letter From the Director

Dear Colleague:

The community policing philosophy emphasizes the importance of problem-solving partnerships. Law enforcement professionals have shown over and over again that crime and disorder problems are most efficiently and effectively solved when all the stakeholders are represented in the solution. The victim of a crime is arguably the most important stakeholder in the criminal justice system, and often underserved. Such victims represent a significant resource available to law enforcement to help address crime and the fear of crime in communities across the country.

Our partners in advancing community policing, the National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC) and the Police Foundation, felt that an untapped opportunity existed for law enforcement to bring victims of crime into community policing. Law enforcement professionals could not only better serve members of their communities, they could also involve more stakeholders in solving community problems. Together, NCVC and the Police Foundation used COPS grants to produce this toolkit, *Bringing Victims into Community Policing*. This toolkit includes three First Response Guides that address bringing victims into community policing in the following areas: Domestic Violence, Residential Burglary, and Automobile Theft.

Local law enforcement professionals are often the first to come into contact with victims of crime. This toolkit provides guidance to community policing professionals who interact with victims and victim service organizations at every step of the process. It addresses repeat victimization and how to



break that cycle. It provides helpful information about building successful partnerships between law enforcement and victim service organizations. This toolkit offers insights into resources that many law enforcement organizations currently overlook.

This toolkit reinforces one of the cornerstones of community policing: that collaborative partnerships are an effective way to solve and prevent crime. The research performed by NCVC and the Police Foundation show that closer collaboration between crime victims, victim service organizations, and law enforcement can significantly benefit each party, and this toolkit explains how that can benefit your agency. COPS is proud to help fund this and other valuable research available to law enforcement agencies to advance community policing. Bringing victims into community policing is one more way community policing keeps America safe.

Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services



Introduction

by

Susan Herman, National Center for Victims of Crime
David Weisburd, Police Foundation
Co-principal Investigators

Our project, "Bringing Victims into Community Policing," started with the premise that community policing would be significantly enhanced by the development of a stronger relationship between crime victims and police. We theorized that a collaborative problem-solving relationship between police and crime victims (and crime victims' organizations) could strengthen crime control and order maintenance, and contribute to reducing the fear of crime in communities.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services agreed to help us explore this idea by providing a generous grant. Our project emphasizes collaboration as a central component in building effective crime prevention approaches.

Accordingly, we also sought to develop a fully collaborative approach to the research itself. Staff at the National Center for Victims of Crime and at the Police Foundation worked together on each aspect of the project and on the products that were developed.

Over the past 18 months, our project team has surveyed hundreds of police and victim organizations, visited promising programs throughout the United States and the United Kingdom, and conducted a comprehensive literature review to understand the current state of relationships between police and victims of crime. In addition, we have conducted focus groups with representatives from victim service and police organizations, and we held a day-long forum with more than 20 representatives from victim services, policing, and academia. This work has convinced us



that crime victims can indeed play a significant role in the response to their own victimization and the effort to solve community crime problems.

To illustrate the role that victims and victim organizations can play, we have developed a set of tools designed to help police organizations prevent repeat victimization and respond effectively to victims of crime. Our model policy on preventing repeat victimization provides a blueprint for how police organizations could begin to integrate the prevention of repeat victimization into general operations. Our guide to first response recommends a collaborative problem-solving approach between police and victims, and then illustrates how that approach can be used in response to domestic violence, residential burglary and automobile theft.

Several themes emerged from our work.

Victims are stakeholders. Police usually treat victims as clients, with services being delivered to them. While victims of crime do need help, they are also key participants in the immediate response to the crime, the ongoing investigation of the incident, and efforts to prevent a recurrence. By approaching victims as powerful and resourceful stakeholders, police can have a greater impact on crime and perceptions of community safety.

Victim service organizations offer unique opportunities for partnership. Victim service organizations (VSO) have unique knowledge and capabilities that could enhance efforts to investigate and prevent crime. Victims often give different kinds of crime-related information to counselors at VSOs than they would to police officers. Still respecting the confidentiality of their clients, VSOs can identify patterns of crime as well as gaps and deficiencies in police services that police



may not know of otherwise, participate in problem solving activities, and help to prevent repeat victimization. Through their work with victims, VSOs can play an important part in community policing.

Productive relationships between police and victims require better communication. Victims often have too little information about police procedure and what happens during the initial response to and subsequent investigation of a crime. Interaction with a victim should include an educational component designed to increase understanding and facilitate a victim's active participation in problem-solving.

Reducing the risk of repeat victimization is an important component of effective response to crime. The risk of revictimization increases with each victimization. By working to prevent repeat victimization, police can reduce the occurrence of crime and enhance individual and community safety.

Partnership is key to preventing repeat victimization. There is an opportunity to transform society's response to crime by building collaborative relationships between victims of crime, the organizations that serve them, and police. Because the time that officers can spend with victims is limited, police organizations should develop responses that include civilian employees and other non-police agencies and organizations. By breaking down organizational barriers and building strategic alliances, police can improve the response to victims without necessarily increasing their workload.

Police and victim service organizations can find common ground in preventing crime. Sometimes language gets in the way of collaboration. "Crime



prevention" is something that police organizations tend to do at a community or group level. Victim service organizations are often hesitant to focus on crime prevention because they are usually focused exclusively on the aftermath of crime. However, victim service organizations, especially those working on domestic violence and stalking, often assist individual victims with "safety planning" to develop strategies to maximize the victim's safety. Collaborative efforts using both these approaches could prove to be very effective.

In summary, our overall project has reinforced for us the importance of closer collaboration between crime victims, crime victim organizations, and the police. It is time to bring the victim into community policing.

Our work shows that community policing can be greatly enhanced by working to prevent repeat victimization and building collaborative problem solving relationships with victims and victim organizations. The information and tools included in this package are a distillation of all that we have learned over the last 18 months about the relationship between police and crime victims. We hope that these materials will help police organizations enhance the practice of community policing by building stronger problem solving relationships with crime victims and the organizations that serve them.



Overview of Publication

The publication is divided into four main sections:

1. Description of Repeat Victimization

This section defines repeat victimization and points to its significance within overall crime totals. It describes how analysis of data collected from non-traditional as well as traditional sources can lead to a better understanding of the challenges of repeat victimization. It illustrates how the effectiveness of the first response by police can be enhanced through the adoption of an analytic, problem-solving approach that includes victims. It explains how the use of a graduated response, geared to the victim's level of risk, can prevent repeat victimization.

2. Model Policy

This section provides a blueprint for a department-wide policy for the prevention of repeat victimization. The Model Policy describes the steps required in order to create a more effective system for combating repeat victimization. It delineates the roles of first response, graduated response, victim assistance, data recording and analysis, dispatching and reporting systems, training, and performance evaluation in preventing repeat victimization.

3. Guide to First Response

This section provides an overview of the significance of the first response to crime in the prevention of revictimization. It highlights the opportunity that first response provides for building collaborative, problem-solving relationships with victims. It explains why first response is so critical. It illustrates how initial police interaction with victims can enhance or inhibit their



involvement in helping to solve crimes and prevent revictimization. It shows how police officers can help set realistic victim expectations and educate victims to be full partners in the response to a crime incident.

4. Three Specific Guides

This section contains three "first response" guides for three different crime categories. These guides are designed to complement local protocols and policies governing police responses to the victims of these types of crime. All highlight the importance of setting realistic expectations and gaining a sound understanding of the context and/or history of the crime. All stress the role of recording and reviewing information, safety planning, and problem-solving. All include first response checklists, case examples, and sample "Crime Incident Actions Forms."

(a) **First Response to Domestic Violence**

The First Response Guide to Domestic Violence highlights the need for police officers to understand the nature of domestic violence and the prior history– the background to the incident under investigation. It sets out questions that the officer must ask in order to gain critical information. It shows the importance of discovering whether the offender has a criminal record, a history of substance abuse, a history of violent behavior towards other people or animals, access to firearms, details of probation or parole officers who are involved, whether there were witnesses to the current incident.



It illustrates the kind of details that the officer must seek from the victim to help ensure safety and prevent re-victimization.

(b) **First Response to Residential Burglary**

The First Response Guide to Residential Burglary explains how to work in cooperation with victims and gain an understanding of the context in which the crime occurred. It lays out key questions officers should ask victims in order to discover the facts and reduce the risk of repeat victimization through appropriate safety planning. It stresses the need to learn and understand neighborhood factors (such as tensions between families or groups) and get a clear picture of recent criminal activity in the area (e.g., drug dealing, street crimes, as well as burglaries).

(c) **First Response to Automobile Theft**

This guide illustrates the kinds of questions police officers need to ask victims in order to discover the nature of the incident and reduce the risk of repeat victimization. It focuses on the special problems that arise when people lose their normal means of transportation. It suggests ways in which victims may be able to reduce their risk for future automobile theft.



A Description of Repeat Victimization

Repeat victimization occurs when the same person or target suffers more than one crime incident over a specified period of time. Patterns of repeat victimization can occur in a wide range of crime types including burglary, automobile theft, assault, robbery, witness intimidation, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, hate crimes, and vandalism. A person or target may suffer the same type of crime repeatedly (for example, repeated burglaries) or different types of crime.

In some jurisdictions, repeat victimization can account for more than 50 percent of certain crimes.¹ Moreover, analysis of criminal history data and victimization surveys demonstrates that a small percentage of people and targets suffer a large percentage of all crimes. One crime survey showed that 2 percent of respondents reported 41 percent of all property crime and 1 percent of respondents experienced 59 percent of all personal crime.²

The International Crime Victims Survey provides data on the portion of particular crimes in the United States attributable to repeat victimization:³

Burglary	33% of all burglaries
Automobile Theft	32% of all auto thefts
Assault and Threats	43% of all assaults and threats
Thefts from Persons	15% of all thefts from persons
Sexual Assault	49% of all sexual assaults



The survey's findings are only estimates. Some researchers believe that actual rates of repeat victimization are greater, especially in high crime areas (Pease, 1998).

An individual's risk of repeat victimization depends on a number of variables, including personal characteristics, perpetrator characteristics, and crime type. Police personnel should never use general repeat victimization rates to establish the risk faced by an individual victim. Victims should simply be informed that the risk of revictimization exists, that the risk is highest during the first few months after an incident, and that the overall risk increases as the number of victimizations increases.

The Promise of Preventing Repeat Victimization

A fundamental tenet of community policing holds that police should work with community-based partners to solve problems. The most difficult aspect of problem solving is the identification and effective analysis of problems. Police organizations use an array of macro-level tactics to identify and analyze crime problems. Data are collected, crime maps are analyzed, patrol officers are surveyed, and community organizations are consulted. This approach depends on a high level of resources and tends to only identify problems once they have become big enough to draw police attention.

In contrast, identifying and preventing repeat victimization is problem solving that starts at the micro level. Because repeat victimization affects individual people and targets, effective problem solving begins at an individual level and moves to larger groups when appropriate.

To fully understand the nature of repeat victimization and develop effective responses, law enforcement agencies must



capitalize on non-traditional as well as traditional sources of information. It's essential, for example, to look beyond arrest data and calls for service and consider residential, business and environmental surveys, victim and offender interviews, mapping/GIS data, and social services data. The next task is to analyze this data.

Thorough data analysis can yield surprising information about underlying causes, illuminating problems and pointing the way to solutions. Only through sound analysis can the detailed picture needed to fashion effective responses emerge. Without it, opportunities to develop alternative, non-traditional responses are likely to be missed and strategies to prevent repeat victimization are likely to fail.

One final point. Effective first response is vital to address the problem of repeat victimization. But, it can also reduce reliance on resource-intensive problem identification methods, enabling the early resolution of crime problems.

Implications of a Policy to Prevent Repeat Victimization

This policy creates an approach to preventing repeat victimization that focuses on victim safety and strengthens the foundation of community policing: partnering and problem solving. Creating an organizational focus on preventing repeat victimization of individuals will affect many principles governing police operations.

The Primacy of Prevention – Crime prevention should be a primary police activity beginning during the first response to a crime incident and reinforced by secondary responders.



The Importance of First Response – The nature and quality of the first response to an incident greatly influences the safety of the victim. A police organization committed to preventing repeat victimization must emphasize the importance of first response through training and management of patrol officers (performance evaluations and promotions).

A Continuum of Response – The first response to a crime should be the beginning of a longer period of interventions involving other units of the police organization and partner organizations (such as victim service providers).

Collapsing Boundaries – Preventing repeat victimization is a natural way for police organizations to collaborate with other governmental and community organizations. The measurable outcomes of preventing repeat victimization will help to clarify shared goals.

The Opportunity for Victims to be Partners – Community policing to prevent repeat victimization can enable victims to play an important role in problem solving and prevention efforts. Victims can partner with police in response to their own victimization and join with police and other community stakeholders to work on community problem solving efforts.

Problem-Oriented Record Keeping – Police record keeping should allow for the identification and analysis of repeat victimization. In addition to criminal history records, police organizations need to maintain victimization history records and keep track of responses and outcomes to provide performance measurement information. Information about a person's prior victimization can be just as important as information



about the history of crime at a location. The success of prevention activities can then be measured by tracking the occurrence of repeat victimizations.

A Graduated Response to Crime and Victimization

Most police organizations have policies and procedures that create different responses to different types of crime and allocate resources based on organizational priorities. Dispatch policies prioritize incidents and assign police response based on the severity of the incident (a practice called *differential response*). Patrol officers and other personnel are allocated based on calls for service or another workload measurement. Crime prevention and victim services are provided depending on the type and severity of crime incidents.

It is possible to use repeat victimization information to develop a system that allocates policing resources to the people and places most in need of assistance. Because the risk of another victimization increases with each repeated victimization, the number of repeats can give police a reliable measure of a victim's future risk. It is important that police interventions change in response to increasing risks. By using a graduated response to crime incidents, police can create a system of evolving interventions that match the level of response with the level of risk.

A strategy of graduated response begins with the first victimization and then increases the level of intervention based primarily on the number of repeat victimizations.

Components of graduated response:

- Response is standardized and defined in policy and procedures.



- Additional prevention-oriented resources during the first response to the first incident to reduce the number of chronic and severe cases.
- Response levels determined largely by the number of repeat victimizations (because the number of repeats is a good predictor of risk).
- First responders are made aware of prior victimizations and play a significant role in the delivery of services and in determining the appropriate level of response.

An Example of a Graduated Response to Residential Burglary

A graduated response protocol for residential burglary could have three different levels of response to burglary incidents. In general, response levels will be determined by the number of incidents – Level 1 applying to the first incidence of burglary, Level 2 the second incidence, and Level 3 for three or more re-victimizations. However, police personnel would have the discretion to apply higher response levels (based on defined decision-making policies). Here are two examples of the way a graduated response would work:

A Level 1 response to a burglary would include the police sending a letter to the victim explaining available resources and assistance options and provision of discount coupons for security equipment and a crime prevention pamphlet, but it might also involve a home security audit.

A Level 2 response would require (in addition to the Level 1 responses) a visit from the Crime Prevention Officer or other security professionals, installation of free temporary monitored alarm, interviews with neighbors, checking with informants, and checking stolen property outlets. It might also include increased police patrols. The different levels of response are summarized in the following chart.



Chart: Graduated Response to Residential Burglary

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter to victim explaining the available resources and assistance options. • Discount coupons for security equipment. • Crime prevention advice pamphlet. <p>Discretionary (Police decision or victim's informed choice):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property engraving or marking. • Home security audit. • Security equipment loan. • Police target potential offenders. 	<p>Response includes all of Level 1 plus:</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit from Crime Prevention Officer or other security professional. • Installation of free temporary monitored alarm. • Interview neighbors. • Check informants. • Check outlets for stolen property. <p>Discretionary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased police patrol. • Forensic analysis (fingerprints and other physical evidence). • Cocoon Watch. 	<p>Response includes all of Levels 1 and 2 plus:</p> <p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensic analysis. • Installation of hidden cameras and alarms. <p>Discretionary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking dyes to identify offenders. • Tracking devices to monitor and identify the location of stolen property.

A few of the interventions listed in this example require definitions:

- *Cocoon Watch* – similar to a neighborhood watch, but more focused. A cocoon watch concentrates on organizing the surrounding neighbors in an effort to increase surveillance and provide assistance to the victim.
- *Marking dyes* – exploding dye packets similar to those used to identify bank robbers. Packets are hidden in commonly stolen items in order to help identify the perpetrator.
- *Tracking devices* – signal devices attached to commonly stolen items so that police can find where the items are taken.



A graduated response protocol need not require an increase in police resources. Instead, it should allow for the allocation of police resources to the locations and persons most affected by crime. Moreover, early intervention should reduce the number of severe and escalating problems, allowing resources to be allocated to proactive problem solving efforts.

Successful Graduated Response Models

Huddersfield

In 1994, officials in Huddersfield, England created a graduated response for residential burglary that consisted of three levels depending on the number of victimizations. One incident merited a Bronze level response, two incidents a Silver level, and three incidents a Gold level. The three levels each provided a range of tactics that could be used to address residential burglary problems. If an officer felt it necessary, Silver or Gold level tactics could be used for a first response. At the end of the program, the graduated response was judged to have reduced the incidence of residential burglary by 30 percent, reduced the level of repeat burglaries, increased the number of offenders arrested, and improved the quality of service to victims (Bridgeman and Hobbes, 1997).

Killingbeck

Another example of graduated response is a 1997 domestic violence prevention project conducted in Killingbeck, England. Again, three levels of response were defined, both for victims and for offenders. Patrol officers played a key role in some interventions, but a commanding officer was responsible for evaluating each case to determine the appropriate level of response. The Killingbeck project resulted in an increase in the reporting of domestic violence incidents, a reduction in repeat victimization, and an increase in the time intervals between domestic violence incidents (Hanmer, et al, 1999).



Implementing a Policy on Repeat Victimization

Repeat victimization should also be addressed in police policies governing the following topics:

- **Particular incident types** – Policies governing the response to specific crimes, or types of crime, should address repeat victimization. Policies should include any knowledge about the nature of repeat victimization for a specific crime type and guidelines for how the organization and its partners can work to reduce the risk of repeat victimization. While most prevention efforts will focus on recurrence of the same crime type, special attention should be paid to situations involving domestic violence, stalking, hate crimes, and witness intimidation because repeat victimization can take a variety of forms.
 - **Victim confidentiality issues** – Policies related to confidentiality and information management should specify how victimization history records are to be managed and protected to ensure that the privacy rights of victims are not compromised.
 - **Information management** – All procedures for record keeping and analysis of information should support the goal of preventing repeat victimization. For example, crime reporting systems should track repeat incidents affecting a particular victim over a defined period of time.
 - **Communications** – Policies covering the activities of emergency and non-emergency call takers, dispatchers and other communications personnel should specify how they can help to identify and prevent repeat victimization.
 - **Response procedures** – The management of police response should support graduated response and, where applicable, participation by non-police partners.
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- **Victim services** – police-based victim services units should work in partnership with community-based victim services, crime prevention groups and community organizations to provide broad support for the prevention of repeat victimization.

Ultimately, all procedures and policies should reflect a goal of preventing repeat victimization. Achieving this goal can be accomplished incrementally, rolling out different programs and procedures to support the policy. For example, an implementation process could begin by developing and implementing a graduated response to burglary accompanied by changes in record keeping to support the collection of repeat burglary incidents. Police organizations could then progress to crafting a response to domestic violence and so on, until all aspects of the organization have been adapted to the new focus on preventing repeat victimization.



Model Policy: Preventing Repeat Victimization

Problem Statement

- A. Repeat victimization is a substantial part of all crime in [name of police organization's jurisdiction]. A victim's risk of repeat victimization increases with each revictimization. Without effective intervention, repeat victimization endangers citizens and depletes the resources of this organization and the entire community.

Purpose

- A. The purpose of this policy is to govern how members of [name of police organization] will work to prevent repeat victimization.

Policy

- A. It is the policy of [name of police organization] to respond to victims of crime in a manner that will help to reduce the risk of repeat victimization. Members of this organization will seek to prevent repeat victimization.
 1. All personnel will understand how repeat victimization affects their work and what they can do to prevent it.
 2. The extent of repeat victimization will be measured and performance evaluations will include, whenever possible and appropriate, the assessment of how personnel contribute to the prevention of repeat victimization.
 3. The [name of police organization] will seek to collaborate with other government agencies and community organizations to reduce repeat victimization.



4. The [name of police organization] will collect and analyze data from traditional and non-traditional sources to build the detailed picture of repeat victimization that will inform its prevention strategies.

Definitions

- A. *Repeat victimization* occurs when the same person or target suffers from more than one crime incident over a specified period of time.
 1. A person who has been victimized has a greater risk of being victimized in the future than a person who has never been victimized. The risk of revictimization increases each time a person is victimized. This phenomenon of increasing risks also affects targets.
 2. Repeat victimizations occur soon after the first victimization, with the period of greatest risk lasting no more than six months.
 3. Most repeat victimizations involve the same type of crime. However, victims of domestic violence, stalking, hate crimes, and witness intimidation are more likely to experience a variety of offenses.
 - B. *Graduated response* – a system of response that bases the type and degree of intervention on a victim's risk of revictimization. The most important measure of risk is the number of times a victim has been victimized in the past 12 months. Other factors (such as the severity of the most recent victimization, characteristics of the offender, level of violence, etc.) should also be taken into account when determining the appropriate response.
 1. *Level 1* – repeat victimization prevention strategies for first-time victims.
 2. *Level 2* – measures that are moderately resource-intensive and targeted at victims with a moderate risk of revictimization.
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3. *Level 3* – highly intensive responses targeted at victims with a high risk of revictimization.
 - C. *First responder* – any member of the organization (other than a 911 operator) who has initial contact with a victim of a crime and is gathering information for a complaint or incident report. Such contact can occur either in person or through telecommunications.
 1. For example, a 911 operator would not be a first responder, but a call-back operator who gathers information for an automobile theft report would be a first responder.
 - D. *Secondary contact* – any member or partner of the [name of police organization] who contacts a victim following a first responder and after the occurrence of an incident. In general, a secondary contact is responsible for investigating an incident and/or providing assistance to a victim.
 1. Examples of secondary contacts include victim advocates, detectives, crime prevention experts, and administrative staff.
 - E. *Safety plan* – a strategy to increase the safety of an individual victimized by criminal behavior. This plan can be developed with the assistance of a first responder or secondary contact, depending on the available resources.
 - F. *Crime prevention* – activities intended to prevent the occurrence of crime.
 - G. *Victim* – a person directly affected by a criminal act.
 - H. *Target* – a place or object that is the focus of a criminal act.



- I. *Victim assistance* – any assistance provided to victims by [name of police organization] or partners of this organization. Such assistance could include service referral, giving "Last Step in First Response" cards to victims, safety planning, counseling, and support activities.

Procedures

A. Initial Response

1. First responders will work with victims to:
 1. decrease the risk of immediate revictimization by helping victims identify risks and suggesting actions that could reduce identified risks.
 2. inform victims about available prevention and support services and ensure that the appropriate type of secondary contact [define] is provided by this organization or its partners.
 - a. The [name of police organization] will create and maintain a process that enables the assignment of secondary contacts by first responders.
 - b. The [name of police organization] will define a process by which information about the initial response is communicated to secondary contacts.

B. Graduated Response

1. The [name of police organization] will provide a graduated response based on the number of prior victimizations and the risk of revictimization as determined by the evaluation of associated risk factors.
 1. Level 1 responses will be provided to all crime victims.
 2. Level 2 and Level 3 responses will be provided based on the number of repeat victimizations and the assessed risk of revictimization.



2. The [name of police organization] will develop and maintain a system that involves first responders, investigators, victim assistance providers and analysts in the definition of response levels for every type of crime and victimization.

C. Victim Assistance and Investigations

1. Victim assistance will be provided through the [name of police organization] victim assistance program and/or through partnerships with prosecutor or court-based victim services, and community-based victim services.
2. The goals of victim assistance will be to help victims:
 1. develop and implement short and long term safety plans.
 2. understand and participate in the criminal justice process related to the particular crime.
 3. understand and access the resources available for counseling, compensation and other forms of practical assistance and information.
 - a. These goals apply to any [name of police organization] victim assistance and will be incorporated into any partnerships with other organizations.
3. Investigators will:
 1. interview victims and analyze incidents using methods intended to discover the context and history surrounding the crime incident.
 - a. information should be gathered about previous incidents and other knowledge that could help in the identification and prevention of repeat victimization.



2. explain what information is necessary for a successful investigation and collaborate with the victim in an effort to obtain the information.
 - a. Investigators will provide victims with written information about the investigatory process and how victims can contact the investigators to provide additional information or to receive an update about the case.
3. First responders, secondary contacts (and all other personnel who have contact with victims) will collaborate with crime victims to develop and implement problem solving strategies.
4. The [name of police organization] will manage a process that informs victims about the status of a case.

D. Records and Analysis

1. Records of calls for service, dispatches, activities, and criminal cases will be created and maintained to allow measurement and analysis of repeat victimization.
 1. A rolling period of 12 months will be used to track repeat victimization.
 2. Systems will record information to allow review of the victimization history of any victim or target.
 3. Record systems will allow the comparison of incident information so that patterns of repeat victimization can be identified over a defined period of time.
 4. Historical information will be gathered and maintained for both targets and victims.



2. Analysts will use records and reports to search for patterns of repeat victimization for victims and targets.

1. The analysis of repeat victimization will be incorporated into other analyses of crime patterns, resource deployment and service demands.

3. The [name of police organization] will develop and operate a system that regularly evaluates the effectiveness of efforts to prevent repeat victimization.

E. Communications

1. Dispatch and reporting systems will record and provide personal and location information about previous victimizations within the past twelve (12) months.

F. Training

1. All personnel will receive basic and continuing training in preventing repeat victimization.

1. Existing training curricula will be revised to include information about repeat victimization, where appropriate.

2. New curricula will be developed and maintained so that training in the prevention of repeat victimization can be delivered to both law enforcement and civilian personnel.

G. Performance Evaluation

1. The [name of police organization] will create and manage a process by which all personnel are evaluated based on their success in reducing repeat victimization.



A Guide to First Response

Introduction

The first response to a crime incident requires decisive action. The crime scene must be secured, the safety of victims and witnesses must be assured, and information about the incident must be collected. The first responder has a great deal of responsibility and limited time to accomplish what needs to be done. To add to the pressure, how these initial tasks are accomplished has a tremendous impact on the investigation of the crime incident, the long-term safety of victims and, for that matter, the safety of the entire community.

More than anything else, the first response is an opportunity for police to build a collaborative, problem solving relationship with victims. Done well, the first response can help to make a bad situation better. Done poorly, the first response can alienate victims and reduce the possibility of a successful investigation and/or decrease a victim's willingness to participate in the criminal justice process.

An effective first response should meet the needs of the police and the needs of victims. Police should be sensitive to victims' emotional responses to crime. They should also respect the important role that victims can play in the investigation of the crime and the prevention of future incidents. Victims may have special knowledge about crime and disorder problems. Sometimes, they may not be aware of this knowledge. For this reason, it is important to discuss with the victim not only the circumstances of the particular crime, but also why this problem is occurring and ways it might be solved. Ultimately, first response is an opportunity to learn the facts of the present, understand the past, and develop strategies to prevent repeat victimization in the future.



Background

Police departments have become increasingly concerned with the needs of crime victims. Victims and victim service organizations have urged police to improve officer sensitivity, develop services to assist victims and to guide victims through the intricacies of the criminal justice system. Throughout the United States, police organizations have responded to the call for better victim services by developing a universe of programs intended to increase police sensitivity and provide support.

Incorporating the philosophy of community policing into first response presents the opportunity to do more. The initial contact between police and victims can be much more than a chance for police to provide support and comfort. It can be the beginning of a problem solving partnership. Crime victims have a tremendous stake in the crime that has affected them and they can be powerful partners with police.

As partners, victims can help

Solve crime – Research shows that victims are vital to crime solving. If first responders are unable to obtain useful information from victims, it is very unlikely that the crime will be solved (Rand, 1975 and Eck, 1983).

Reduce their own risk – Victims can reduce their risk of revictimization if they are educated about what they can do to prevent a repeat incident, and then receive help with safety planning and implementation.

Prevent community crime – By working with police to solve and prevent crime, victims can enhance safety in their communities. Effective response to victims can help to strengthen the entire community by building relationships to prevent future victimization.



The Components of the Guides

The following three guides to first response are intended to help police personnel respond to incidents of domestic violence, residential burglary, and automobile theft. They build on an existing foundation of basic training in victims' needs and concerns, interviewing techniques, and police operations. Based on the dual tenets of community policing, partnering and problem solving, these guides are designed to help create collaborative problem solving relationships between crime victims and police.

The interview process begins by setting expectations and explaining the anticipated results of the interview. The next step seeks to create an understanding of what happened and explore the deeper context of the crime incident. Next, the process moves into a planning effort intended to reduce the risk of revictimization, prepare victims for the next steps in the criminal justice process, and to explain what the victim can do to help the investigation of the crime. The interview process ends with the completion of a *Crime Incident Action Form*, which summarizes the interview, provides contact information, and records the main points of the safety plan. Sample *Crime Incident Action Forms* and First Response Checklist Cards are included with this publication.



First Response Checklist Card (General)

Set Expectations	Police should know: <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim information. <input type="checkbox"/> Offender information. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim's safety plan. Victim should know: <input type="checkbox"/> Role in investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Next steps. <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for help and information. <input type="checkbox"/> How to minimize risk. <input type="checkbox"/> What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	<input type="checkbox"/> Who was involved. <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Ways to help prevent another incident. <input type="checkbox"/> How to aid the police investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Where to get help. <input type="checkbox"/> Five Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete Incident Action Form.

The Importance of Expectations

Helping a victim understand what to expect is essential to building an effective relationship between police and victims (Chandek, et al., 1998). Research into victim assessments of police response has found that "...greater attention should be paid to the manner in which police officers interact with crime victims and that the officers should provide victims with information and advice that is pertinent to their particular victimization (Hirschel, et al., 1998)."



By creating realistic expectations, the interview process encourages the development of a collaborative relationship between victims and police. Too often, a police officer's uniform, weapons and authority create an imbalance of power in which victims merely follow the officer's direction. One of the primary goals of effective first response should be to educate victims so that they can be full partners in the response to a crime incident.

First responders should also be prepared to find ways to work with victims who are not able to collaborate with police. Some victims may be so traumatized by an incident that they are unable to participate in the activities specified in the guide. Others may be incapacitated by drugs or alcohol. Some victims may have developmental disabilities. Victims may suffer from a physical or mental illness. There can be cultural or language barriers that make it difficult for victims and police to communicate.

The first response should provide the *opportunity* for *all* victims to play a responsible role in the aftermath of crime. Police organizations should be prepared to dispatch special services such as translators or counselors when necessary. In addition, secondary responders (such as victim services personnel or investigators) play an even more important role in the response to victims with special needs. In many cases, the appropriate secondary response should be able to work through the process outlined in these guides.

The Benefits of Using the Guides

A standardized first response that promotes collaboration should improve the effectiveness of initial interviews. Since the information gathered during a first response is vital to effective investigation and prevention of repeat victimization, the guides are designed to help reduce crime and increase the effectiveness of community policing.



Police conduct has a tremendous influence on how victims respond to the aftermath of a crime. A compassionate and effective response will help to create a positive perception of the police and encourage victims to work with the police and other agencies of the criminal justice system.

Implementation

Law enforcement agencies wishing to implement the processes outlined in the guides should make adjustments to fit local laws, policies, and procedures. Customized first response procedures will need to specify the role of the responding officer, define the criminal justice processes, and provide detailed information about local victim assistance resources. More specific questions should be developed, based on local laws and conditions. Remember to allow the first response interview to flow naturally rather than require officers to read a defined list of questions. It is important that first responders use these guides to develop a two-way conversation with victims.

First Response to Domestic Violence

Prepared by David R. Anderson and Susan Herman





This guide is designed to complement local protocols and officer training on domestic violence issues. It assumes that a responding officer will first assess a victim's physical and emotional safety. A victim's need for medical attention and personal safety is of primary importance. A first responder will also want to make sure that the victim is separated from the perpetrator so that the interview is private. Also, remember to find out if there are any children involved and take steps to keep them safe.

I. Set Expectations

Setting expectations at the beginning of a first response is critical. Be clear and realistic about what you and your police organization can and cannot do. Explain any time constraints that may exist and let the victim know that this is only the beginning of the assistance that will be available.

Begin by discussing the expected outcomes, allowing the victim to explain his or her expectations as well.

"Before we finish this initial discussion, I want you to know:

- Your role in the investigation of the case,
- What I'm going to do next,
- Who to contact about the case,
- Who to contact for other services,
- How to minimize your risk and how others can help you,
- What to expect during the next few weeks."

"Before I leave, I would like to know:

- What happened (including the background of the incident),
 - More about you,
-



- More about the offender,
- Steps you can take to be safer,
- Who might be able to help you."

II. Understand the Incident

History is critical in domestic violence cases. Your understanding of the current incident will depend on your ability to discover the context of the incident. Events that appear insignificant could be part of a campaign of intimidation and threats. For example, delivery of flowers or gifts may seem innocent, but to a domestic violence victim hiding from an abusive partner, it becomes a threatening message that s/he now knows where s/he lives.

Domestic violence laws are different in every jurisdiction. In most jurisdictions, much of what you do and say to offenders and victims will be specified by local ordinance and state statutes. Be sure to follow local policies and procedures.

As you work with the victim, your goals are to:

- Discover the facts of the case,
- Set realistic expectations,
- Create a conversation that helps you learn the context of the incident,
- Develop a plan with the victim to reduce the risk of repeat victimization.

While some of the following questions may be standard in a traditional investigation, they are included here so that you will understand how the questions can help in the development of a collaborative, problem solving approach.

**"Who was involved?"**

Find out what the victim knows about the offender. If the offender is not at the scene, ask where he or she might be. Explain your organization's arrest and charging policies and, based on the nature of the incident, describe what you will need to know to make an arrest. Work with the victim to collect information about the offender including:

- Where the offender lives.
- Phone numbers where the offender might be reached.
- Names and contact information for the offender's friends and colleagues.
- Places where the offender might be found.
- Whether the offender might use a disguise and how he or she might look.

If the offender is present, you might ask:

- "Does the offender have a criminal record?"
- "Do you know who the parole/probation officer is?"
- "Does the offender have any history of substance abuse, access to firearms, a history of violence with other people or animals?"

Finding out about witnesses is important to the prosecution of the case and it may help you find people who could help ensure the victim's future safety.

- "Did anyone else see what happened?"
- "Does anyone else know something about what happened?"

"What happened?"

Find out the nature of the incident. How did the incident start? What did the offender do? You may want to use a cognitive interviewing technique and ask the victim to start from the end of the incident and then work back to the



beginning. This approach helps the victim focus on the sequence of events and can reveal important information that otherwise might not be recalled. Ask about the victim's actions in a constructive way. Avoid passing judgement.

"Has anything like this happened before?"

This question initiates an effort to find out about the context of the incident. An incident of domestic violence is often part of a larger pattern of abuse. Knowing that violent incidents have occurred before can help you and the victim solve the immediate problem and develop an effective safety plan.

Remember to ask if there is any evidence of the past incidents. Important evidence includes:

- Documented injuries or property damage,
- Police or medical reports,
- Existing protective orders,
- Witness accounts,
- Photographs.

Proof of prior domestic violence may help the victim obtain an order of protection and could provide prosecutors with the evidence to build a stronger case.

"Please tell me anything else that you think is relevant to this case."

This statement allows the victim to provide any additional information that might help explain the context of the incident or reveal important facts that may have been skipped earlier.

III. Develop a Safety Plan

Now that you have developed an understanding of the incident, it is time to plan for the future and take steps to maximize the victim's safety. As you work through the



planning process, record the action items on the *Crime Incident Action Form*.

"Sometimes, once this has happened, it happens again."

Inform the victim that there is a very real chance that more violence will occur and that it is most likely to happen within the next three months.

"What can be done to help you be safe?"

While the simple answer is that the violence needs to stop, the behavior of the offender is not something that victims can control. Instead the victim needs to concentrate on what he or she can control. Help the victim create a vision of safety and then work backwards to determine how that vision can become reality.

Questions that will help you do this include:

- "What will help you feel safe tonight? Over the next few days?"
- "Is there somewhere else you can stay?"
- "Are there things you can change in your environment (home security, safety outdoors, safety at work) that would help you be safer?"
- "Who could help you be safe?"

Follow the victim's lead and, as part of the conversation, inform the victim about the services provided in your jurisdiction. Be clear about what the police, and other agencies, can actually do. Explore the benefits and shortcomings of protective orders. Explain what services are available to help the victim stay safe.

Explore how friends or family can help. For example:

- A domestic violence victim might benefit from a cocoon watch – an agreement among neighbors to watch for and report suspicious activities.



- Family or friends might be able to provide a place to stay, transportation, or financial assistance.
- Employers, co-workers, or childcare providers could enhance their security procedures.

Victim advocates can be very helpful working out the details of an ongoing safety plan. Encourage them to seek their assistance.

"There are things that you can do to assist the investigation."

Explain your arrest policies and, based on the nature of the incident, describe what the police need to know to make an arrest. Highlight any missing information and encourage the victim to contact you (or the appropriate person) with any information that might be recalled at a later time.

Important information for a domestic violence case includes:

- offender's name,
- where offender might be found,
- other identifying characteristics.

IV. Review and Record Information

In closing the interview, you should run through a summary of the action items agreed upon during the interview. Use the First Response Checklist Card and the *Crime Incident Action Form* to ensure that everything has been covered and all decisions and important information have been recorded. (Samples are included at the end of this guide.) Give a copy of the completed *Crime Incident Action Form* to the victim, together with a "Last Step in First Response" card containing contact information.



Case Example

Police respond to a 911 call from a woman reporting that her boyfriend assaulted her. A police officer arrives at the private residence and is met at the door by a young man who says that he and his girlfriend had been arguing, but the matter is now resolved. The officer asks to come in. A young woman appears from a back bedroom, visibly upset as she soothes her crying toddler. The officer notes broken glass on the floor and an overturned chair. A second officer arrives at the scene and removes the boyfriend to another room for a separate interview.

I. SET EXPECTATIONS

The police officer speaking to the woman outlines the purpose of the interview. He explains that he needs specific information about her, the incident, her boyfriend, and any other relevant background information. He informs her that, in addition to discussing the basic facts of the incident, they will talk about what she needs to be safe right now, what she can expect to happen over the next several weeks with regard to the report, what her role is in the investigation and any charges that result. The officer also tells her that information about people she can contact for help and support will be provided by the end of the interview.

II. UNDERSTAND THE INCIDENT

The officer asks open-ended questions (instead of questions that can be answered "yes" or "no") about who was involved and what happened. The woman tells the officer that her boyfriend pushed her. She is very upset and discussing the incident is difficult. With additional questions from the officer, she says her boyfriend was angry and cursing for much of the evening, shouting at her that it was her fault their child was fussy and crying. After she finally got the child to



sleep, her boyfriend "exploded." He threw a glass at her, which hit the wall instead, and then threw her to the ground with both hands. He held her down and threatened to kill her, then knocked over the chair as he stormed out of the room. She does not have visible injuries. She says her arms are slightly sore where he held her but she does not want medical attention.

Further questioning reveals that the boyfriend has exhibited similar behavior in the past. The victim called police one other time when her boyfriend threatened her and pulled the phone off the wall. An officer responded and wrote a report, but her boyfriend had left the apartment and no charges were filed. She says that the boyfriend has threatened her and used force in the past, but that tonight's incident was worse than his previous behavior.

III. SAFETY PLANNING

Having conferred with his fellow officer, the officer says that they will arrest the boyfriend and charge him with assault. He explains that the boyfriend will be arraigned in the morning and the victim can go to court to talk to prosecutors and apply for a protective order if she chooses. He also explains what a protective order is and how it can be enforced.

The officer uses this opportunity to talk about safety planning. He tells her that he is concerned that the violence has escalated. He assures her that the police and victim services want to support her in developing a plan to keep her safe regardless of whether she chooses to separate from her boyfriend.

The victim is uncertain about a protective order, but would like her boyfriend to stay away. She mentions her concern that, although she would like to stay in the house alone, both her name and her boyfriend's name are on the lease. The officer says that the boyfriend can be legally ordered to stay away.



The officer and victim then discuss other options beginning with simple actions like calling a friend for immediate support, and progressing to more complex efforts, like obtaining a protective order and developing a long-term safety plan with a victim advocate.

Here are the steps identified during the discussion:

VICTIM OPTIONS

- Call friend to come over for immediate support.
- Obtain protective order and change locks.
- Explore child custody/support.
- Consider enlisting friends or neighbors to watch for the boyfriend and report his presence to the police.
- Relocate to a temporary shelter or other safe place.
- Inform supervisor so that employer can implement extra security measures and determine other appropriate supportive actions.
- Notify child care provider in case the boyfriend appears at day care or attempts to take child.

POLICE (AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS) ACTIONS

- Arrest boyfriend.
- Assist with the creation of a long-term safety plan.
- Conduct a home security audit.
- Assist with the filing of a protective order.

During this discussion, the officer makes a point of describing the services available through the police department's victim services unit, local victim service agency, and domestic violence program and shelter. In addition, the officer explains that a detective will call the victim within the next day and will be available if the victim remembers anything new or develops bruises, which should be photographed. He



says that someone from the victim services unit will also call, and that the victim should call the prosecutor's victim/witness assistant and appear in court for the arraignment if s/he chooses.

IV. REVIEW AND RECORD ACTION ITEMS

The interview ends with the officer using the Crime Incident Action Form to summarize the results of the interview, record action items, and provide contact information.



Crime Incident Action Form (Case Example) ---

INCIDENT OVERVIEW ---

Offender		
Name: Alan Smith		
Address: 3456 Treeshade Drive		
City: Brighton	State: MA	Zip: 01111
Phone: 617-555-8734		
Place of employment: Computer Graphics Corp.		
Vehicle: 1996 Nissan Pathfinder, grey, 2-door		

Victim		
Name: Nancy Thompson		
Address: 3456 Treeshade Drive		
City: Brighton	State: MA	Zip: 01111
Phone: 617-555-8734		

History

Arrests yes no unknown *If yes, list charges:*
 Harassment, Warrant outstanding

Convictions yes no unknown *If yes, list sentences:*

Restraining order/Order of protection yes no *If yes, provide information:*
 Will apply in a.m. at District Court.

Owns firearms yes no unknown

Incident summary:
 Offender threw glass at victim, pushed her to the floor, and held her down.

PROCESS OVERVIEW ---

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

Offender arrested. Report will be immediately forwarded to Domestic Violence Detective.
Detective will follow up for more information.
District Attorney will review appropriateness of charges and arraign defendant in the morning after his arrest.

You can identify this case by:

Date and location of incident and offender's name and date of birth.

Services you can request include:

Bail notification if the offender is held on bail.
Protective order. Home security audit.

You can help the police by:

Maintaining contact with detective and prosecutor's office.

Contacting detective if bruises appear or there are any other health-related developments.

Providing information about any efforts Mr. Smith makes to contact you, or if he violates your order of protection in any way.

Notifying detective and prosecutor if your contact information changes.



Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:

Police victim services specialist and domestic violence detective and District Attorney's Office victim/witness coordinator.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Shelter for Battered Women - 555-0000

Police Department Domestic Violence Detective's Unit - 555-2200

Police Department Victim Services Unit - 555-1114

District Attorney's Victim/Witness Unity - 555-8800

Nashua Street Jail - 555-1012

5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

1. Arrest Alan Smith.
2. Put victim in contact with victim service professional.
3. Conduct home security audit.
4. Provide copy of police report for victim to share with employer and landlord.

Victim Options

1. Obtain restraining order.
2. Contact domestic violence advocate and create more detailed safety plan.
3. Provide employer, day care provider, downstairs neighbor and office security personnel with copy of restraining order.
4. Contact friends/family for support.
5. Consider options for temporary emergency shelter. Crime Incident Action Form (Domestic Violence)



Crime Incident Form (Domestic Violence)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

	Victim
Name:	Name:
Address:	Address:
City: State: Zip:	City: State: Zip:
Phone:	Phone:
Place of employment:	
Vehicle:	

--

Arrests yes no unknown *If yes, list charges:*

Convictions yes no unknown *If yes, list sentences:*

Restraining order/Order of protection yes no *If yes, provide information:*

Owns firearms yes no unknown

Incident summary:

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

You can help the police by:

You can identify this case by:

Services you can request include:



Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options

First Response to Residential Burglary

Prepared by David R. Anderson and Susan Herman



This guide is designed to complement protocols and policies governing the response to residential burglary. It assumes that the first officer on the scene will assess a victim's physical and emotional safety.

I. Set Expectations

Setting expectations at the beginning of a first response is critical. Be clear and realistic about what you and your police organization can and cannot do. Explain any time constraints that may exist and let the victim know that your work is only the beginning of the assistance that will be available.

Begin by discussing the expected outcomes, allowing the victim to explain his or her expectations as well.

"Before I leave, I would like you to know:

- Your role in the investigation of the case,
- What I'm going to do next,
- Who to contact about the case,
- Who to contact for other services,
- How to minimize your risk and how others can help you,
- What to expect during the next few weeks."

"Before I leave, I would like to know:

- What happened (including the background of the incident),
 - More about who you think could be responsible;
 - More about your neighborhood,
 - Steps you can take to be safer,
 - Who might be able to help you."
-



II. Understand the Incident

Context is important in residential burglary cases. Learning about the surrounding community will strengthen your preliminary investigation and help you understand what might be done to prevent repeat victimization. Are there tensions between different families or groups in the neighborhood? Are there other incidents of burglary or crime problems, like drug dealing or street crimes, that have occurred in the recent past? What does the neighborhood look like? Are the homes and buildings in good repair? Are there wooded areas or other places that could provide a hiding place for burglars? Does the layout of the neighborhood or the design of the housing stock make the area more vulnerable to burglary? Involve victims in your effort to understand the physical characteristics of the incident.

As you work with the victim, your goals are to:

- Discover the facts of the case.
- Create a conversation that helps you understand the context of the incident.
- Develop a plan with the victim to reduce the risk of repeat victimization.

"What happened?"

Find out the nature of the incident. Was the victim away from home for some period of time? How did the victim discover what had taken place? How might an intruder have gained entry? What items are missing or out of place?

"Who might have knowledge about your routine?"

"Is there anyone who has access to your home?"

"Is there anyone who is familiar with your home and possessions who might have done this?"

"Is there anyone who might have seen what happened?"



"Has this happened to you before?"

Explain the particular information you need to solve the case. Tell the victim that the information they provide will be vital to the effort to catch the perpetrator. Your goal is to help the victim think broadly about acquaintances (even family members) who might be involved in the crime or have information about what happened. Explain that most burglaries are committed by people known to the victim and it is important to explore the possibility that the victim knows who the offender might be. In addition, find out if a neighbor may have been a witness or knows something about the incident. Not only could neighbors serve as witnesses, they may be able to help prevent a repeat burglary and protect other homes in the neighborhood.

"Has anything like this happened before, to you or someone you know?"

This question initiates an effort to learn more about the context of the incident. Residential burglary is often repeated in neighborhoods. Knowing that others nearby have been burglarized can help investigators, the victim, and possibly the surrounding neighborhood in developing an effective, community-wide strategy to prevent burglary.

III. Safety Planning

Now that you and the victim have analyzed the incident, it is time to plan for the future and take some steps to maximize the victim's safety and try to prevent revictimization. Explain that being burglarized once indicates a greater risk for future burglaries, especially during the next three months. While it is impossible to say how much greater that risk is, there are ways to reduce it.



"Sometimes once this has happened, it happens again."

Inform the victim that there is a chance that another burglary will occur and that it is most likely to happen within the next three months.

"Do you have any ideas about what could be done to prevent this from happening again?"

Use the facts of the case to help the victim improve the home's immediate security. Observe any security weaknesses and provide general advice about what the victim could do to get more information and assistance.

Follow the victim's lead. As part of the conversation, inform the victim about the services available in your jurisdiction, such as a home safety inspections or low-cost security equipment. This is also the time to explain what the police, and other agencies, can and cannot do. Make sure to tell the victim how long (hours, days, etc.) it will take for other services to respond. Record this information in the *Incident Action Form*.

"Who could help you be safe?"

Explore ideas about how friends or family might be able to help. For example, a burglary victim might benefit from a cocoon watch—an agreement among neighbors to watch for and report suspicious activities. Talk with the victim about existing neighborhood groups (neighborhood watch, community development corporations) that could help. If nearby homes have been burglarized recently, explain how the victim might work with other community members to reduce the entire neighborhood's risk of burglary.

"There are things that you can do to assist the investigation."

Explain your arrest policies and, based on the nature of the incident, describe what the police will need to know to



make an arrest. Highlight any missing information and encourage the victim to contact you (or the appropriate person) with any information that might be recalled at a later time.

Important information for a burglary investigation includes:

- possible suspects, including description and other information,
- list of objects stolen,
- how the burglar gained entry,
- other incidents of burglary or any other suspicious activity in the neighborhood.

IV. Review and Record Information

In closing the interview, run through a summary of the agreed action items. Use the First Response Checklist Card and the *Crime Incident Action Form* to ensure that everything has been covered and all decisions and important information have been recorded. Complete the *Crime Incident Action Form* and give a copy to the victim, together with a "Last Step in First Response" card with contact information.

A sample Crime Incident Action Form is included with this guide. You can adapt it to fit the needs of your organization. "Last Step in First Response" cards can be ordered through The National Center for Victims of Crime website at www.ncvc.org



Case Example

A 911 caller reports a burglary. A police officer arrives at a detached, single-family home. The victims, a middle-aged couple named Mr. and Mrs. Jones, report that they arrived home to find their house had been broken into and that money and personal items had been stolen.

I. SET EXPECTATIONS

The police officer outlines the purpose of the interview. She explains that she needs specific information about Mr. and Mrs. Jones, the incident, possible witnesses, and other relevant background information. In addition to discussing the basic facts of the incident, she informs Mr. and Mrs. Jones that they will talk about what they can do to protect their home right now, what they can expect to happen over the next several weeks, and what their role is in the investigation, and any charges that may result. The officer also outlines what information the police will need to solve the case.

II. UNDERSTAND THE INCIDENT

The officer poses open-ended questions about what happened. Mr. and Mrs. Jones returned home after an evening out. They entered through the front door and found their rooms in disarray. They left immediately and called police from a neighbor's house. The neighbor accompanied them back home, where they discovered the back door lock had been broken. Jewelry and cash were missing from an upstairs bureau. They have not had time to ascertain what other items might be missing.

The neighbor lives in fairly close proximity and did not hear or see any suspicious activity, but he and his family had only arrived home about an hour before Mr. and Mrs. Jones. The neighbor reports that he has heard reports of another break-in down the street. Mr. and Mrs. Jones live in a middle-class neighborhood,



on a dimly lit cul-de-sac with little pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Their unfenced backyard borders on undeveloped land. Some neighbors have lived on the street for years while others are relatively new to the neighborhood. Except for the other burglary down the street, Mr. and Mrs. Jones and the witness have not heard about other crime problems in the neighborhood.

III. SAFETY PLANNING

Mr. and Mrs. Jones are concerned about the broken lock and will call a locksmith to replace it immediately with a more secure lock. The police officer explains that there is a greater risk of another burglary within the next three months and uses this opportunity to talk about some specific steps the victims and their neighbors can take to improve the security around their homes.

The officer then discusses other steps beginning with simple actions.

Victim Options

- Replace/upgrade door locks.
- Engrave valuables.
- Increase outside lighting.
- Have local municipality cut back overgrown trees to increase backyard visibility.
- Improve backyard security with a fence.
- Install a home security system or get a dog.
- Enlist neighbors to watch for suspicious activity.
- Contact local victims organization.

Police (and partner organizations) Actions

- Provide engraving tool to area homeowners.
- Conduct a home security audit of the Jones' home.
- Help to organize a community safety meeting.
- Interview witnesses in neighborhood.
- Look for stolen items in area pawn shops.
- Compare the incident to other known incidents.
- Arrest offender.



During this discussion, the officer makes a point of describing the services available through the Department's victim services unit. In addition, the officer talks about how local Neighborhood Watch Network (NWN) can help the Mr. and Mrs. Jones and other neighbors reduce the risk of burglary throughout the neighborhood. For example, the Joneses might work with the NWN to create a "cocoon watch" - an agreement among neighbors to watch for and report suspicious activities during the two months of high risk following the burglary. Neighbors would be asked to make a special effort to be on the lookout for specific kinds of behavior and report it promptly.

The officer also explains that a detective will call on the victims for additional information. The victims learn that they will be notified by the detective if any articles surface resembling the stolen items. The officer explains the time frame and process for returning any recovered items and that the prosecutor's office will notify the victims if an arrest is made.

The officer explains how the family can get a copy of the burglary report for insurance purposes and provides them with a brochure that describes the process. The victims provide the officer with a photo of one of the missing items. Victims will also need photos for insurance purposes. The victims will contact the detective unit with descriptions of any other items determined to be missing.

IV. REVIEW AND RECORD INFORMATION

The interview ends with the officer completing the Crime Incident Action Form to summarize the results of the interview and record action items, and giving the victim a Last Step in First Response card containing the contact information .



Case Example Crime Incident Action Form (Residential Burglary)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Offender	Victim
Name: Unknown	Name: Jim Jones
Witness	Name:
Name: Terrance Davis	Address: 21 Apple Ct.
Address: 17 Apple Court	City: Aurora State: IL Zip: 01111
City: Aurora State: IL Zip: 01111	Phone: 708-555-8787
Phone: 708-555-7331	

Incident Summary

Victims arrived home to find had been burglarized between 5:30 and 9:20 pm. Cash, jewelry, possibly other items stolen. Victims and neighbor discovered damaged rear lock.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

Report will be immediately assigned to Detective Unit. Detective will follow up to collect more information.

You can identify this case by:

Date and location of incident.
Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:
Police victim services specialist and detective.
(If a suspect is arrested, you will also be contacted within 24 hours by the District Attorney's Office victim/witness coordinator.)

You can help the police by:

Providing any additional information about possible suspects and descriptions or photos of missing items.
Notifying detective if your contact information changes.

Services you can request include:

Home security audit.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Neighborhood Watch Network - 555-0000

Police Department Burglary Response Detective's Unit - 555-2200

Police Department Victim Services Unit - 555-1114

District Attorney's Victim/Witness Unity - 555-8800

PERSONAL 5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

1. Forward report to Crime Prevention Unit and have CPU contact the victim to conduct a home security assessment.
 2. Assign detective to follow up with victim.
 3. See that victim services professional contacts victim
-
-

Victim Options

4. Arrange for replacement/upgrade of door locks.
 5. Work with Crime Prevention Unit on a home security assessment to determine additional steps.
 6. Share information with neighbors and discuss possibilities for organized neighborhood watch, including a cocoon watch.
-
-



Crime Incident Action Form (Residential Burglary)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Offender
Name:
Witness
Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone:

Victim
Name:
Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
Phone:

Incident Summary

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

You can identify this case by:

Services you can request include:

You can help the police by:



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

PERSONAL 5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options

First Response to Automobile Theft

by David R. Anderson and Susan Herman





This guide is designed to complement protocols and policies governing the response to automobile theft.

I. Set Expectations

Setting expectations at the beginning of a first response is critical. Be clear and realistic about what you and your organization can and cannot do. Explain any time constraints that may exist and let the victim know that your work is only the beginning of the assistance that will be available.

Begin by discussing the expected outcomes of the interview, allowing the victim to explain his or her expectations as well.

"Before I leave, I would like you to know:

- Your role in the investigation of the case,
- What I'm going to do next,
- Who to contact about the case,
- Who to contact for other services,
- How to minimize your risk and how others can help you,
- What to expect during the next few weeks."

"Before I leave, I would like to know:

- What happened (including the circumstances of the incident),
- More about you,
- More about who might be responsible,
- More about the location of the incident."

II. Understand the Incident

What you learn about the context of the crime will inform your investigation. If the theft occurred in an area familiar



to the victim, does the victim know of a history of similar crimes in the area? Are there other incidents of vehicle theft or crime problems (drug dealing, robbery, theft from vehicles) that have occurred in the area? Does the layout of the neighborhood or the design of the housing stock make vehicles more vulnerable to theft? (For example, apartment complexes with large parking lots are particularly vulnerable.) Involve the victim and, if possible, other community members in your effort to understand the physical characteristics of the incident.

As you work with the victim, your goals are to:

- Discover the facts of the case.
- Create a conversation that helps you understand the context of the incident.
- Develop a plan with the victim to reduce the risk of repeat victimization.

"What happened?"

Find out the nature of the incident. How did the victim discover the theft? Had the victim been away from the car for some period of time? Is the victim a visitor to the area and, if so, did the car have rental or out-of-state plates? Is parking in this area part of the victim's usual routine? How might a thief have gained entry to the vehicle? Was the vehicle locked? Is there any evidence that the vehicle's window was broken? Was there a parking attendant nearby? Is the parking spot well-lit and visible to passers by? Would a thief have had to overcome any security measures like a fence or a locked door?

Explain the particular information you need to solve the case. Tell the victim that the information they provide will be vital to the effort to catch the perpetrator and to prevent future vehicle thefts in the area.



"Has anything like this happened before, to you or someone you know?"

This question initiates an effort to find out more about the context of the incident. Auto theft is often a chronic problem in places like parking lots, garages, and neighborhoods with a lot of on-street parking. Knowing that others nearby have had their cars stolen can aid investigators, the victim, and possibly the surrounding neighborhood in developing an effective community-wide strategy to address vehicle theft.

III. Problem Solving

Now that you and the victim have reviewed the facts and context of the theft, spend some time focusing on the problems that arise with the loss of transportation.

Explain how your organization handles auto theft. Go over any paperwork that you and the victim must complete and make sure the victim understands what will be needed for insurance records.

Explain what happens if the vehicle is found, including procedures for how the vehicle would be returned. Tell the victim about any storage and towing fees that could be assessed.

"Will you be able to get transportation to wherever you were going next?"

Help the victim find public transportation, taxi services and/or the nearest telephone so that he or she can make travel arrangements.

"This incident indicates that you and other people who park in this lot have a greater risk of future thefts. Do you have any ideas about how you might be able to reduce your risk of automobile theft in the future?"



Use the facts of the case to help the victim prevent vehicle theft in the future. Explain that there is a risk of future vehicle theft if prevention steps are not taken. Note any security weaknesses of the car or the location where it was parked, based on the information you have collected. Then, provide advice about what the victim could do and where he/she can turn for more information. Take care to offer advice in a constructive fashion.

For example, mechanical devices like an ignition interlock or a steering wheel locking bar could prevent another theft. Parking in a more secure area such as a garage or enclosed lot might reduce risk. Working with other vehicle owners to increase security could help prevent auto theft throughout the community. Talk with the victim about existing neighborhood groups (police crime prevention units, neighborhood watch, parking lot operators) that could help.

"There are things that you can do to assist the investigation."

Explain your arrest policies and, based on the nature of the incident, describe what the police will need to know to make an arrest. Highlight any missing information and encourage the victim to contact you (or the appropriate person) with any information that might be recalled at a later time.

Important information for an automobile theft investigation includes:

- Possible suspects, including description and other information;
- Information about the vehicle, including the VIN number and license plate;
- How the burglar gained entry.



Tell the victim about any services available in your jurisdiction.

If applicable, inform the victim about programs that might help with short-term transit needs or assistance with insurance procedures. Work with the victim to identify local organizations that might be able to help if there is a chronic problem with car theft in the area.

IV. Review and Record Information

In closing the interview, run through a summary of the action items and information exchanged during the interview, using the First Response Checklist Card and the Crime Incident Action Form should be used to ensure that everything has been covered and that all decisions and important information have been recorded. Fill out the form and give a copy to the victim. Samples of the First Response Checklist Card and Crime Incident Action Form are included with this guide.



Case Example

A 911 call is placed reporting an auto theft. The victim states that his car was stolen from a public parking lot near his workplace. A police officer responds to take the report.

I. Set Expectations

Upon meeting the victim, the police officer outlines the purpose of the interview, explaining that she needs specific information about the victim, the incident, possible witnesses, and relevant background information. In addition to discussing the basic facts of the incident, she informs the victim that they will talk about what the victim can expect to happen over the next several weeks, what his role is in the investigation, and what steps the victim could take to protect himself from revictimization.

II. Understand the Incident

The officer poses open-ended questions about what happened. The victim discovered his car was missing at the end of the workday. He had parked the beige, 1993 Toyota Camry in his usual spot in part of the lot behind the building, shielded from the street and the sidewalk. Because he arrives very early, the parking lot is relatively empty and free of activity at that time. When he left work, he found another car parked in the spot where he had left his car.

The victim reports that the lot generally fills up each day with people who work in his and the neighboring buildings. He has not heard any reports of other car thefts, though one colleague reported his car had been broken into in recent weeks. There is a parking lot attendant.



This is the victim's first experience with vehicle theft. The car doors were locked but the car was not equipped with any additional security devices.

III. Solve Problems

The officer explains the procedures for auto theft and walks the victim through the paper work, making sure that the victim retains copies of paperwork that will be required for insurance reports. She also explains that the car could be recovered and, if it is, it will be stored in the city's impoundment lot and the victim will be contacted by the manager of the lot.

Having dealt with the victim's immediate concerns, the officer explains that certain locations can become targeted by car thieves, leaving those who park there vulnerable to revictimization. She mentions the advantages of parking in well-lit areas, with a lot of pedestrian traffic. In addition, she advises him that he should try to park within sight of the attendant's office. She tells him that some insurance companies offer reduced rates to customers who equip their vehicles with security devices and gives the victim a brochure about anti-theft devices.

The officer describes the Crime Prevention Unit (CPU), which can advise the victim on security measures that may protect him from such crimes in the future. In addition, the officer tells the victim that, with his help, the CPU could also work with the parking lot owners and the businesses in the building to devise more effective security measures. For example, the CPU could work with workers in the building to organize a program to install anti-theft devices and report any suspicious activity. The officer also tells the victim that he can contact the Victim Services Unit with other questions or problems related to the case.



During their discussion, the officer and the victim identify the following action steps:

Victim Options

- Report the crime to insurance company.
- Provide police with VIN number.
- Report crime to parking lot administrator.
- Notify employer and fellow employees who park in the area and encourage them to report suspicious activity.
- Research safety devices and alternate parking arrangements for the future.

Police (and partner organizations) Actions

- Compare the incident to other known incidents.
- Look for stolen vehicle.
- Request that the Crime Prevention Unit contact the victim and the parking lot ownership to offer help prevent future thefts.
- Interview the parking lot attendant.
- Arrest offender.

Review/Define Action Items

The First Response Checklist Card and the Crime Incident Action Form should be used to ensure that everything has been covered and all decisions and important information have been recorded. A sample Crime Incident Action Form is included with this guide. You can adapt it to fit the needs of your organization.

The interview should end with the officer using the Crime Incident Action Form to summarize the results of the interview and record action items and giving the victim the "Last Step in First Response" card with contact information. Last Step in First Response Cards can be ordered through The National Center for Victims of Crime website, www.ncvc.org



Case Example Crime Incident Action Form (Residential Burglary)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Offender	Victim
Name: Unknown	Name: John Lewis
Address:	Address: 233 Cypress Street
City: State: Zip:	City: Fairfax State: VA Zip: 22114
Phone:	Phone: 703-555-8331

Incident Location

EZ Park, 1 Main Street, Fairfax, VA 22114

Incident Summary

Victim parked car in back right corner of lot at approximately 7:20 a.m. Returned at 5:10 p.m. to discover car had been taken.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

Report will be processed by Property
Crimes Unit. Victim will contact Unit with
VIN number.

Services you can request include:

Crime prevention information from the
Crime Prevention Unit.

You can identify this case by:

Date and location of incident.

You can help the police by:

Tell the police about any suspicious activity in
and around the parking lot.
Providing any additional information,
descriptions or photos of missing vehicle.
Notifying police if your contact information
changes.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Police Department Property Crimes Unit - 555-0000

Police Department Crime Prevention Unit - 555-2200

Police Department Victim Services Unit - 555-1114

Police Department Vehicle Impoundment Lot - 555-5678

Local Victim Services Agency - 555- 7512

THEFT PROBLEM SOLVING PLAN**Police Department Tasks**

-
1. Compare the incident to other known incidents.
 2. Request that the Crime Prevention Unit contact the victim and the parking lot ownership to offer help with preventing future thefts.
-
-

Victim Options

-
1. Research safety devices and alternate parking arrangements.
 2. Contact Crime Prevention Unit.
 3. Notify parking lot administrator, employer and fellow employees of the crime.
-
-
-



Crime Incident Action Form (Automobile Theft)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Offender		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		

Victim		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		

Incident Location

Incident Summary

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

Services you can request include:

You can identify this case by:

You can help the police by:



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

THEFT PROBLEM SOLVING PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options



Endnotes

1. Pease, Ken. 1998. "Repeat Victimization: Taking Stock." Crime Detection and Prevention Series paper 90, Home Office Police Research Group. Available for download at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/prgpubs/fcdps90.pdf>.
2. Ibid.
3. Mayhew, Pat and Jan van Dijk.1997. "Criminal victimization in eleven industrialized countries: key findings from the 1996 International Crime Victims Survey." Onderzoek en Belied, #162.



Additional Resources

Pioneering work undertaken by the British Home Office Policing and Reducing Crime Unit (PRCU) informed this project and useful reports can be found on their website at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/prgpubs.htm>. Other information can be obtained by contacting the Home Office, Policing and Reducing Crime Unit.

Address: Clive House, Petty France, London, SW1H 9HD, U.K.

Telephone: 44 207 271 8225 / 8568 / 8341

Fax: 011 44 207 271 8344

email: prg@prg-homeoffice.demon.co.uk

For an excellent review of repeat victimization trends:

Bridgeman, Cressida and Hobbs, Louise. 1998. "Preventing Repeat Victimization: The Police Officer's Guide." Available from the Home Office by mail or fax.

For additional information about the Huddersfield project:

Anderson, David, Chenery, Sylvia and Pease, Ken. 1995. "Biting Back: Tackling Repeat Burglary and Car Crime." Available for download at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/prgpubs/cdp58bf.pdf>.

Anderson, David, Chenery, Sylvia and Pease, Ken. 1997. "Biting Back II: Reducing Repeat Victimisation in Huddersfield." Available for download at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/prgpubs/fcdps82.pdf>.

For additional information about the Killingbeck project:

"Arresting Evidence: Domestic Violence and Repeat Victimization" by Jalna Hanmer, Sue Griffiths and David Jerwood. 1999.
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/prgpubs/fprs104.pdf>



A technique called "cognitive interviewing" has proven to be very effective. Here are a few resources:

"Interviewing Victims and Witnesses of Crime" by R. Edward Geiselman and Ronald P. Fisher, National Institute of Justice, Research in Brief, December 1985.

"New Approach to Interviewing Children: A Test of Its Effectiveness," National Institute of Justice, Research in Brief, May 1992.

For a fascinating guide to domestic violence risk assessment and safety planning, see:

"A Guide to Domestic Violence Risk Assessment, Risk Reduction and Safety Plan," Metro Nashville Police Department,
<http://www.nashville.net/~police/abuse/stalking.htm>, 2000.

To learn more about the investigative process, including the role of patrol officers, investigators and victims, see:

The Criminal Investigation Process, Rand Corporation, Technical Report R-1776-DOJ, R-1777-DOJ, Santa Monica, California, 1975.

Solving Crimes: The Investigation of Burglary and Robbery by John Eck, Police Executive Research Forum, 1983, 1992.

For an overview of the current trends in police response to victims, see:

First Response to Victims of Crime, Office for Victims of Crime, 2000.



Law Enforcement's Promising Practices in the Treatment of Crime Victims, Office for Victims of Crime, 1997.

To find out how victim satisfaction is affected by police response, see:

"Victim Assessment of the Police Response to Burglary: The Relative Effects on Incident, Police Action, Outcome and Demographic Variables on Citizen Satisfaction" by David Hirschel, Richard Lumb, and Russell Johnson, *Police Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1998.

"The Efficacy of Expectancy: Disconfirmation in Explaining Crime Victim Satisfaction with the Police" by Meghan Stroshine Chandek and Christopher O.L.H. Porter, *Police Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1998.



Crime Incident Form (Domestic Violence)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		
Place of employment:		
Vehicle:		

Victim		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		

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Arrests yes no unknown *If yes, list charges:*

Convictions yes no unknown *If yes, list sentences:*

Restraining order/Order of protection yes no *If yes, provide information:*

Owns firearms yes no unknown

Incident summary:

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

You can help the police by:

You can identify this case by:

Services you can request include:



Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options



First Response Checklist Card (Domestic Violence)

Set Expectations	<p>Police should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim information. <input type="checkbox"/> Offender information. <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan. <p>Victim should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Role in investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Next steps. <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for help and information. <input type="checkbox"/> How to minimize risk. <input type="checkbox"/> What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Who was involved. <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Possible ways to prevent another incident. <input type="checkbox"/> How to aid the investigation and deterrence. <input type="checkbox"/> Where to get help. <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Crime Incident Action Form.

First Response Checklist Card (Domestic Violence)

Set Expectations	<p>Police should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim information. <input type="checkbox"/> Offender information. <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan. <p>Victim should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Role in investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Next steps. <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for help and information. <input type="checkbox"/> How to minimize risk. <input type="checkbox"/> What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Who was involved. <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Possible ways to prevent another incident. <input type="checkbox"/> How to aid the investigation and deterrence. <input type="checkbox"/> Where to get help. <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Crime Incident Action Form.



Crime Incident Form (Residential Burglary)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		
Place of employment:		
Vehicle:		

Victim		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		

--	--	--	--

Arrests yes no unknown *If yes, list charges:*

Convictions yes no unknown *If yes, list sentences:*

Restraining order/Order of protection yes no *If yes, provide information:*

Owns firearms yes no unknown

Incident summary:

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

You can help the police by:

You can identify this case by:

Services you can request include:



Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options



First Response Checklist Card (Residential Burglary)

Set Expectations	<p>Police should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim information. <input type="checkbox"/> Offender information. <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan. <p>Victim should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Role in investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Next steps. <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for help and information. <input type="checkbox"/> How to minimize risk. <input type="checkbox"/> What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Who was involved. <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Possible ways to prevent another incident. <input type="checkbox"/> How to aid the investigation and deterrence. <input type="checkbox"/> Where to get help. <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Crime Incident Action Form.

First Response Checklist Card (Residential Burglary)

Set Expectations	<p>Police should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Victim information. <input type="checkbox"/> Offender information. <input type="checkbox"/> Safety plan. <p>Victim should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Role in investigation. <input type="checkbox"/> Next steps. <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for help and information. <input type="checkbox"/> How to minimize risk. <input type="checkbox"/> What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Who was involved. <input type="checkbox"/> What happened. <input type="checkbox"/> Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Possible ways to prevent another incident. <input type="checkbox"/> How to aid the investigation and deterrence. <input type="checkbox"/> Where to get help. <input type="checkbox"/> 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Crime Incident Action Form.



Crime Incident Form (Automobile Theft)

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		
Place of employment:		
Vehicle:		

Victim		
Name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:		

--	--	--	--

Arrests yes no unknown *If yes, list charges:*

Convictions yes no unknown *If yes, list sentences:*

Restraining order/Order of protection yes no *If yes, provide information:*

Owns firearms yes no unknown

Incident summary:

PROCESS OVERVIEW

In general, this case will proceed as follows:

You can help the police by:

You can identify this case by:

Services you can request include:



Within the next 24 hours, you will be contacted by:

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

5-DAY SAFETY PLAN

Police Department Tasks

Victim Options



First Response Checklist Card (Automobile Theft)

Set Expectations	Police should know: ___ What happened. ___ Victim information. ___ Offender information. ___ Safety plan. Victim should know: ___ Role in investigation. ___ Next steps. ___ Who to contact for help and information. ___ How to minimize risk. ___ What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	___ Who was involved. ___ What happened. ___ Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	___ Possible ways to prevent another incident. ___ How to aid the investigation and deterrence. ___ Where to get help. ___ 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	___ Complete Crime Incident Action Form.

First Response Checklist Card (Automobile Theft)

Set Expectations	Police should know: ___ What happened. ___ Victim information. ___ Offender information. ___ Safety plan. Victim should know: ___ Role in investigation. ___ Next steps. ___ Who to contact for help and information. ___ How to minimize risk. ___ What to expect in the future.
Understand the Incident	___ Who was involved. ___ What happened. ___ Has anything like it happened before.
Safety Planning	___ Possible ways to prevent another incident. ___ How to aid the investigation and deterrence. ___ Where to get help. ___ 5-Day Safety Plan.
Review and Record Information	___ Complete Crime Incident Action Form.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
1100 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

To obtain details on COPS programs, call the
U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1.800.421.6770

Visit the COPS internet web site at the address listed below.

www.cops.usdoj.gov