

IMPLEMENTING THE BLUEPRINT FOR SAFETY: SUPERVISORY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE

Once each agency's Blueprint policy is approved and implemented, regular quality control and compliance review is crucial to maintaining the Blueprint. Without regular monitoring and oversight, practice tends to drift. Consequently, agency supervisors have a key, ongoing role in sustaining the Blueprint. They monitor policy and practice via regular review of reports and other case documentation, authorize arrest, charging, or other decisions in certain circumstances, and, sometimes observe at the scene or another setting. Supervisory oversight of exceptions to policy helps reduce the likelihood that such exceptions will be used inappropriately and helps flag training needs and issues that may require policy clarification. Beyond this internal role, agency supervisors also contribute to monitoring, evaluating, and maintaining the Blueprint as a *collective* policy by participating in periodic interagency reviews. The Blueprint changes the way people work together across agencies. Rarely does a community build in a response that allows workers across agencies to review together how their collective response is working and its impact on the community. This is a core feature that distinguishes the Blueprint from other forms of coordinated community response.

RESPONSIBILITIES

For a snapshot of general supervisory and monitoring responsibilities in each agency, see Blueprint Monitoring – Key Activities, Appendix 27 in *Becoming a Blueprint Community*. More detailed tasks for agency supervisors at five major points of intervention are illustrated below. They include:

- 911 Emergency Communications
- Patrol
- Investigations
- Prosecution
- Probation and Bail

The supervisory tasks summarized here reflect those included in the Blueprint templates.¹ In the process of adapting the Blueprint for Safety to agency policy and practice, communities adjust the templates to reflect tribal or state law, agency and jurisdiction size, and other local conditions. A final, agency-specific version of supervisory roles and responsibilities will reflect each agency's needs and format. For example, in rural communities or smaller agencies, patrol and investigation functions and supervision may be combined

¹ Find the Blueprint policy templates and related protocols and training memos at *The Blueprint for Safety: An Interagency Response to Domestic Violence Crimes*, http://www.praxisinternational.org/bp_materials.aspx.

AGENCY SUPERVISION: 911 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

In addition to adhering to general agency policy, 911 Emergency Communications Center supervisors provide the support and oversight necessary to ensure a safety-oriented response to domestic abuse–related calls, using the protocols and training memos referenced and included in agency policy.

1. Implement the provisions of agency policy and protocol in accordance with the Blueprint for Safety.
2. Conduct regular reviews of 911 recordings of domestic abuse calls and provide feedback and guidance to call takers.
3. Conduct regular reviews of 911 CAD transcripts in relation to calls and provide feedback and guidance to dispatchers.
4. Maintain 911 recordings for at least ninety days (and longer if possible) and CAD transcripts indefinitely in a manner which allows later access by investigators, prosecutors, and defense attorneys.
5. Relay recordings of 911 calls and related documents to investigators, prosecutors, and defense attorneys as requested.
6. Notify the designated patrol supervisor when a domestic abuse call involves a law enforcement or other public safety officers, 911 personnel, public official, or other prominent member of the public.
7. Conduct regular reviews of the response to inquiries and requests made to records section personnel in domestic abuse cases.
8. Conduct periodic call and CAD reviews with a small interagency group
9. Provide an annual composite report based on reviews to Blueprint implementation team and agency administrators.

AGENCY SUPERVISION: PATROL

The success of the interagency approach hinges largely on what happens in the first hour of each case. The patrol officer’s role in laying a foundation for all subsequent interventions cannot be over-emphasized. Patrol supervisors, in turn, relay the department’s priorities and expectations, thereby reinforcing the interagency response and the patrol officer’s key role. This is accomplished by supervisors periodically attending domestic violence calls at the scene, reviewing reports on a daily basis, and providing more in-depth review of reports as needed to maintain the department’s report-writing standards and reinforce the importance of thorough patrol reports to the overall safety and accountability goals of the interagency approach.

In addition to following general agency policy, patrol sergeants and department command take the following actions in providing supervisory oversight in domestic violence–related cases.

1. Implement the provisions of agency policy in accordance with the Blueprint for Safety.
2. Monitor responding officers’ on-scene activities and compliance with policy by periodically appearing on the scene of domestic calls and assessing the patrol response.
3. Review patrol reports for accuracy and completeness using a case review worksheet (Practice Assessment Guide, Appendix 22-7 in *Becoming a Blueprint Community*) or similar checklist.
4. Respond to patrol officers’ requests to approve decisions to not arrest in misdemeanor cases where probable cause has been established.

5. Respond to department employee–involved domestic violence calls by ensuring that a supervisor of higher rank than the involved officer is dispatched to the scene.
6. Ensure that patrol officers receive and are introduced to domestic violence response policies and protocols and related appendices and training memos.
7. Conduct periodic reviews of patrol reports with a small interagency group.
8. Provide an annual composite report based on reviews to Blueprint implementation team and department command staff.

AGENCY SUPERVISION: INVESTIGATION

Supervisory oversight of domestic violence investigations ensures that this link in the interagency response works to its fullest potential. Oversight reinforces thorough evidence collection, attention to risk and danger, and strategies that minimize the need for a victim to confront the offender. Oversight emphasizes proper investigation and documentation to accurately charge a case. In addition to the responsibility of the supervising investigators who follow up on patrol reports, the commander of the investigative unit in charge of domestic violence cases also assists patrol supervisors in maintaining the quality of patrol reports and helps maintain connections between the department and other intervening agencies.

In addition to following general agency procedures, the investigative unit supervisor takes the following actions in providing supervisory oversight in domestic violence–related cases:

1. Implement the provisions of agency policy in accordance with the Blueprint for Safety.
2. Monitor investigative files to determine if all necessary actions were taken in the investigation, and direct any necessary follow-up.
3. Prepare a report outlining whether patrol reports sent to the investigative unit comply with the patrol report protocol.
4. Meet every other month with division commanders to discuss quality and compliance of patrol reports with the protocol and refer reports to commander for review and redrafting if necessary.
5. Meet quarterly with the city and county attorney’s offices to discuss and review problematic cases.
6. Meet quarterly with probation and prosecution to ensure the History of Domestic Violence Summary is being created and updated in accordance with protocols (see The Blueprint for Safety Approach to Risk, Appendix 9 in *Becoming a Blueprint Community*).
7. Prepare a quarterly case tracking report to be sent to the assistant chief of the investigative division.
8. Consult with investigators on individual cases.
9. Review Blueprint policies, protocols, and training memos with new investigators assigned to the unit within 30 days of their assignment.
10. Update policies and protocols each year pursuant to legislative, statutory changes.
11. Conduct periodic reviews of investigation reports with a small interagency group.
12. Meet with the prosecutor’s office, patrol supervisors, community advocates, and victim/witness to discuss and review problematic cases.

AGENCY SUPERVISION: PROSECUTION

Charging Decisions

The Supervising prosecutor(s) take the following actions to implement and maintain the Blueprint for Safety:

1. Review three files per prosecutor semiannually for policy and protocol compliance.
2. Meet quarterly with law enforcement, the supervisor of the victim witness program, and the supervising attorney of the other prosecuting jurisdictions to discuss cases that have been declined and the thoroughness of investigations.
3. Be available to meet with law enforcement as requested to review individual cases that have been declined for prosecution.
4. Approach domestic violence–related cases in ways that minimize dependence on the victim and maximize other sources of information. Stay mindful of intimidation and coercion directed at victims to prevent participation in prosecution.
5. Know the implications of the Crawford and Davis decisions and strategies to maximize non-victim sources of information in light of those decisions.
6. Know the doctrine of forfeiture by wrong-doing and strategies for applying it in domestic violence cases, including training law enforcement on needed evidence gathering.
7. Expand the focus of attention to illegal behavior after officers' arrival.
8. Develop access to multiple sources of information in addition to the victim.
9. Hold quarterly meetings with law enforcement, the supervisor of the victim witness program, and the supervising prosecutors from relevant prosecutorial jurisdictions to review the thoroughness of investigations, discuss declined cases, and address any concerns that either investigators or prosecutors identify as needing resolution.
10. Periodically, select five cases at random and complete a case review with law enforcement, supervising prosecutor, and the law enforcement officer and prosecutor responsible for each reviewed case.
11. Work with local law enforcement to train law enforcement on relevant legal issues and investigation techniques that support minimizing dependence on victims of domestic violence.

BAIL AND PRE-TRIAL RELEASE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Supervising prosecutors will conduct a quarterly review of a random sample of cases to ensure that bail amounts and conditions of pre-trial release account for the context and severity of the offense, the danger that the defendant poses to the victim, and the safety needs of the victim and the public.
2. The review will also involve violations of conditions of bail to ensure that sure, swift and appropriate consequences for violations have been requested

NEGOTIATED PLEA AGREEMENTS AND SENTENCING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Supervising prosecutors will provide or arrange for training as applicable to prosecutors, law enforcement, probation, and the judiciary on topics related to successful intervention in domestic violence-related cases.
2. Supervising prosecutors will conduct a quarterly review of negotiated pleas in domestic abuse-related cases to ensure that they account for the context and severity of the offense, the danger that the defendant poses to the victim, and the safety needs of the victim and the public.
3. Supervising prosecutors will conduct a quarterly review of sentencing recommendations in domestic abuse-related cases to ensure that they account for the context and severity of the offense, the danger that the defendant poses to the victim, and the safety needs of the victim and the public.
4. Supervising prosecutors will conduct a quarterly review of cases in which a violation of probation involved violence, threat of violence, intimidation or coercion to ensure that immediate steps were taken to revoke the defendant's probation.
5. Provide training as applicable to prosecutors, law enforcement, probation, and the judiciary on the following topics related to successful intervention in domestic violence-related cases:
 - a. Risk factors
 - b. Role of thorough and complete investigation in establishing a sufficient evidentiary base to negotiate an appropriate plea agreement
 - c. Case preparation and evidence-gathering that reduces dependence on the victim
 - d. Presentence investigations that include thorough consideration of risk

AGENCY SUPERVISION: PROBATION

The presentence investigation (PSI) writer is charged with providing as full a picture as possible of the kind of violence, the frequency and severity of violence, and, when possible, the circumstances under which the offender is using the violence. This picture enables the differentiated response to the various types of domestic violence cases before the court.

Close supervision of domestic violence offenders coupled with sure and swift response to violations helps reduce repeat violence. The probation officer is the linchpin in connecting possibilities for help in an accessible and meaningful way for the probationer. The supervising probation officer is also the only practitioner in the system that develops an ongoing relationship with the offender. As such, probation officers are the best-positioned to relay and reinforce the messages intended by the overall response; namely, that change is possible, being accountable is the first step toward change, continued abuse will not be tolerated, and there is a network of help available. Probation supervisors have a key role in providing the environment, support, and oversight that makes this response possible.

In addition to adhering to general agency policies, probation supervisors take the following actions in supervising the probation response to domestic violence offenders:

1. Implement the provisions of agency policy in accordance with the Blueprint for Safety.
2. Ensure that the following elements are established and provided in the probation response to domestic violence cases:
 - a. Availability of accessible programs for offenders on probation in domestic abuse-related cases

- b. Efficient and timely access to records by supervising probation agents
 - c. Language interpretation services
 - d. Quality control specific to all domestic abuse–related policies and protocols
 - e. Training on the Blueprint for Safety (agency policy and collective policy)
 - f. A combination of hiring practices and/or training that results in probation agents that develop a complex understanding of domestic violence
3. Conduct periodic interagency reviews of cases involving presentence investigations and probation supervision (e.g., quarterly reviews of 5 to 10 PSI reports per PSI writer; 2 to 5 cases from each supervising probation officer).
 4. Meet with the prosecutor’s office, community advocates, and law enforcement to discuss and review problematic cases.
 5. Randomly select and review 10 probation supervision cases that have been prioritized as involving high risk domestic violence offenders.

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