

# LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT



RALPH M. TERRAZAS  
FIRE CHIEF

March 5, 2017

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS  
FILE NO. 17-031 R

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: *RMT* Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: LAFD DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

FINAL ACTION:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved w/Corrections	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied	<input type="checkbox"/> Received & Filed	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

## SUMMARY

Attached for the Board of Fire Commissioners review is the Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) Domestic Violence (DV) Action Plan, which was submitted to the Mayor's Office in March 2016. The Department's Plan was a result of Mayor's Executive Directive No. 12 (ED No. 12), entitled, "Domestic Violence Services," issued on October 1, 2015.

As a result of ED No. 12, each Department designated a liaison to serve on the Mayor's Working Group against DV. The goal of the group is to identify additional ways to support victims and expand prevention, education and awareness campaigns. Battalion Chief Elise Brodowy was designated as the LAFD's liaison.

DV or Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), is a pattern of abusive behavior in a relationship that is used by one partner to gain power and control over another intimate partner. On average, every 9 seconds someone in the United States experiences DV.

There are links between DV and Human Trafficking (HT). The use of power and control over victims are tactics that both batterers and traffickers use. Individuals who are trafficked can experience multiple victimizations including sexual exploitation, forced labor and domestic servitude. Los Angeles is listed as one of the top 20 cities in the U.S. for sex trafficking.

Fire/EMS personnel may be the only members of the health care system to come in contact with a DV or HT victim, as they often refuse transport, therefore avoiding medical care in the emergency room. As such, Fire/EMS personnel may be the only healthcare professionals in a position to recognize victims and make suggestions for appropriate interventions.

The LAFD's DV Action Plan contains information and recommendations, as well as goals and objectives, to enhance the services and support available to victims/survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking while maintaining member safety.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Board:

1. Approve the Department report.
2. Transmit the report to Mayor and City Council for necessary action.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Department, with the support of the Mayor's Office and ED No. 12, will continue to explore ways in which we can support and serve victims/survivors and identify steps to end the cycle of violence.

Board report prepared by Battalion Chief Elise Brodowy, Executive Officer, Administrative Operations Bureau.

### **Attachments**

LAFD Domestic Violence Action Plan  
City Councilwoman, 6<sup>th</sup> District Motion to Public Safety

# Los Angeles Fire Department – Domestic Violence Action Plan

## Introduction

The Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) preserves life and property, promotes public safety, and fosters economic growth through a commitment to prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery as an all risk life safety response provider. It is a career municipal department with 3350 sworn positions and 379 civilian positions,<sup>1</sup> serving a population of approximately 4 million within 470 square miles.

The LAFD provides services in the following areas: fire suppression, advanced and basic life support, and emergency medical services including hospital transportation, fire prevention, arson investigation, a joint regional training bureau, disaster preparedness, and marine and air operations divisions and specialized resources, such as hazardous materials squads, urban search and rescue, swift water rescue, and bicycle medic teams.

The LAFD handles approximately 464,416 incidents annually, which equates to approximately 1272 incidents per day. Among those annual statistics, approximately 226,548 incidents, roughly 620 per day, result in patient transports.

The vision of the LAFD is to provide exceptional fire protection and emergency medical services by being metric driven, technologically sophisticated, and community focused while reflecting the people we serve.

## Section 1: Supporting Survivors of Domestic Violence - Internally and Externally

### Analysis

The United States Department of Justice defines domestic violence (DV) as, “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. DV can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person”.<sup>2</sup>

There are also links between DV and Human Trafficking (HT). The use of power and control to dominate survivors are tactics that both batterers and traffickers use.<sup>3</sup> Individuals who are trafficked can experience multiple victimizations, including sexual exploitation, forced labor, and domestic servitude.<sup>4</sup>

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, on average nearly 20 people per minute experience DV in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men. 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of some form of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> Quarterly Fire Department Diversity Report. (Oct 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Office on Violence Against Women. (2015). *Domestic Violence*. U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <http://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>

<sup>3</sup> Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. (2004). *Domestic & Sexual Assault Advocate Handbook on Human Trafficking*.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2012). *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012*.

Women and men in California, experience lifetime physical violence rates of 32.9% and 27.3% respectively. The charts below provide the estimated percentage and number of physical violence acts perpetrated by an intimate partner for both a 12-month period and a lifetime period for woman and men in the United States.<sup>5</sup>

**Table 4.7**

**Lifetime and 12 Month Prevalence of Physical Violence by an Intimate Partner — U.S. Women, NISVS 2010**

Behavior Experienced	Lifetime		12 Month	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
Slapped, pushed or shoved	30.3	36,164,000	3.6	4,322,000
Slapped	20.4	24,282,000	1.6	1,851,000
Pushed or shoved	27.5	32,783,000	3.4	4,028,000
Any severe physical violence	24.3	28,981,000	2.7	3,163,000
Hurt by pulling hair	10.4	12,416,000	0.8	897,000
Hit with a fist or something hard	14.2	16,923,000	1.1	1,289,000
Kicked	7.1	8,403,000	0.3	373,000
Slammed against something	17.2	20,467,000	1.5	1,843,000
Tried to hurt by choking or suffocating	9.7	11,605,000	0.9	1,121,000
Beaten	11.2	13,386,000	0.7	822,000
Burned on purpose	1.1	1,286,000	*	*
Used a knife or gun	4.6	5,519,000	*	*

<sup>1</sup>Rounded to the nearest thousand.

\*Estimate is not reported; relative standard error >30% or cell size ≤ 20.

**Table 4.8**

**Lifetime and 12 Month Prevalence of Physical Violence by an Intimate Partner — U.S. Men, NISVS 2010**

Behavior Experienced	Lifetime		12 Month	
	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>	Weighted %	Estimated Number of Victims <sup>1</sup>
Slapped, pushed or shoved	25.7	29,064,000	4.5	5,066,000
Slapped	18.3	20,717,000	2.7	3,103,000
Pushed or shoved	19.4	21,953,000	3.8	4,253,000
Any severe physical violence	13.8	15,581,000	2.0	2,266,000
Hurt by pulling hair	2.9	3,331,000	0.3	390,000
Hit with fist or something hard	9.4	10,695,000	1.4	1,555,000
Kicked	4.3	4,817,000	0.7	737,000
Slammed against something	2.7	3,004,000	0.4	459,000
Tried to hurt by choking or suffocating	1.1	1,259,000	*	*
Beaten	2.6	2,982,000	0.3	376,000
Burned on purpose	0.6	654,000	*	*
Used a knife or gun	2.8	3,121,000	*	*

<sup>1</sup>Rounded to the nearest thousand.

\*Estimate is not reported; relative standard error >30% or cell size ≤ 20.

<sup>5</sup> Injury Prevention & Control : Division of Violence Prevention. (2014). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/index.html>

Although a high rate of DV exists, it is rarely discussed. In recent years, DV awareness programs, such as the “No More” Campaign<sup>6</sup> (a national movement to end DV and sexual assault), has begun to raise awareness and create a community around the issue.

Previously, the LAFD participated in the, “No More” Campaign, through the use of fire station banners, apparatus stickers and license plate frames.



Additionally, the LAFD participates in the Safe House Program, which provides a temporary haven for any child or adult facing a potentially threatening situation in which they need a safe place to go. All fire stations are designated as such with the sign to the left posted at each Fire Station.

It is important for first responders, such as those in the LAFD, to recognize potentially abusive situations and assist in obtaining support for those affected by it. DV and HT are public health crises and emergency health care providers are in unique positions to identify potential DV and/or HT situations and make the appropriate notifications.

Fire/EMS personnel are the only health care professionals that enter the environment where victimization occurs and are thus more likely to see evidence of domestic and/or sexual violence than the emergency department clinicians. This is especially true when called to the home for a problem not directly related to abuse. Additionally, survivors of DV frequently refuse ambulance transport, thereby avoiding medical care in the ER. In such situations, Fire/EMS personnel are the only health care professionals in a position to recognize DV and make suggestions for appropriate intervention.<sup>7</sup>

DV is the leading cause of injury to women in the United States, exceeding accidents, rape, and all other injuries combined. The cycle of violence can be ended when there is intervention, education, and support. While focusing on the victim's medical needs, first responders need to use their powers of observation to be able to read between the lines and be alert to clues of DV or HT.

A recent study was done to research the interaction between field EMS personnel and survivors of DV/IPV. The findings of the study showed that EMS personnel often have “a misunderstanding of victim dynamics” and confusion around why survivors stay in abusive relationships. The researchers concluded that the key to better services for DV survivors is providing mandated ongoing training and education to first responders. Educating first responders leads to survivors being treated with more sensitivity, respect, and understanding.

When the LAFD comes across DV or HT patients in the pre-hospital setting, in addition to taking care of any medical issues and or traumatic injuries, they are also in a position to provide emotional care and support immediately.

<sup>6</sup> <http://nomore.org>

<sup>7</sup> Barkley Burnett, L. (2016). Domestic Violence Treatment & Management. *Medscape*.

Currently, Tennessee is the only state in the United States that mandates DV awareness training for EMS personnel. Kentucky also mandated this training in the past, but it has since been repealed. Karen Ohme, one of the lead researchers on the report from the Institute of Family Violence Studies, stated that learning how to treat survivors of DV is not a “one and done approach.” She added that Federal and State governments have to make an actual investment in EMS to make sure that first responders have the resources and training to ensure the health and safety for all.<sup>8</sup>

In 2012, the American College of Emergency Physicians stated that DV is a serious public health hazard that emergency medical services personnel will encounter. Providing DV awareness training to EMS personnel will give them the necessary tools to properly identify, treat, and refer patients who are survivors of DV.

Additionally, HT is also considered a serious public health crisis, which warrants the need for EMS personnel to receive HT awareness training. Los Angeles is listed as one of the top 20 cities with the highest volume of sex trafficking in the United States.

The LAFD DV liaison, Battalion Chief Nikki Brodowy, sought to find DV as well as HT awareness training for EMS first responders within California, however very limited training opportunities were identified. One training program identified for EMS First Responders related to DV is through the online continuing education service, *Wild Iris Medical Education, Inc.*

The DV education program covers a broad range of objectives, including:

- Understanding the dynamics associated with different types of DV
- Recognizing the signs and symptoms of DV
- Actions to protect DV survivors, as well as children in the home
- Appropriate methods to document suspected DV
- Healthcare implications

There were limited opportunities discovered for HT awareness training, specifically for Fire/EMS responders. Most HT awareness training is directed towards law enforcement.

## Goals

1. Ensure that all members within the LAFD receive mandatory training in Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence awareness, on an annual basis, to enhance the care of DV survivors, as well as to enhance the safety of responders and survivors.

### *Recommendations:*

- All LAFD first responders take the 3-hour on-line course from *Wild Iris Medical Education, Inc.*
- Seek funding for the training program. Total cost = \$60,300 (\$18 per member X 3350 members).

<sup>8</sup> Hatch, J. (2016). How One Change In Policy Could Help Victims of Domestic Violence. *Huffpost Women*. Retrieved from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/first-responders-domestic-violence-study\\_us\\_5697cca4b0b4eb759d6a73](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/first-responders-domestic-violence-study_us_5697cca4b0b4eb759d6a73)

2. Ensure that all members within the LAFD receive mandatory training in Human Trafficking awareness, on an annual basis, to better assist victims and aid our law enforcement partners with early detection and intervention methods.

*Recommendations:*

- All members complete the free online training program - [Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Awareness Training Module](#). This program includes an interactive component to test knowledge.
- All members watch [Homeland Security's Human Trafficking Training](#), a public awareness video, which helps first responders identify possible survivors of human trafficking.
- All members review the [First Responder Human Trafficking "Coffee Break" Training](#).

3. Develop the ability within the electronic Patient Care Report (ePCR) to track the number of suspected DV and HT incidents the LAFD responds to for enhanced data collection within the City and train all personnel on the required data entries for accuracy and consistency.
4. Ensure first responders within the LAFD make notifications to the appropriate agencies when DV or HT is suspected and assist the victims/survivors with the offer of appropriate supportive services.

*Recommendations:*

- Develop separate Departmental Bulletins (DB) on DV and HT Awareness and Procedures specific to Fire/EMS first responders.
5. Consider inviting LAPD's DV Liaison, as well as, LAPD's HT Detectives to each Bureau's Public Safety Committee meeting, to train the communities on DV and HT.
  6. Develop and or procure DV and HT resources for the Fire/EMS personnel to carry.

*Recommended resources to include:*

- [Los Angeles Violence Prevention Resource Directory](#)
  - Los Angeles County DV Hotline – (800) 978-3600
  - National DV Hotline – (800) 799-7233
  - HT Tip line – (866) 347-2423
  - National HT Hotline - (888) 373-7888
  - DB on Human Trafficking Awareness and Procedures
  - DB on Domestic Violence Awareness and Procedures
7. Collaborate with DV and HT experts and survivor service organizations to develop interactive training videos/learning tools on DV awareness and HT awareness for Fire/EMS first responders.

*Recommendations:*

- Contract with individuals or an organization to film, edit and create the interactive component of a DV learning tool. This could cost up to \$125,000 to create.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Three quotes received showing the various training video options and costs

## Accountability & Measurement

### Key Metrics - External Customers

LAFD members should be able to recognize and document suspected DV and/or HT they encounter while on the job while maintaining safety at all times. Measures to achieve this goal could include:

- The number of referrals to DV services
- The number of recorded instances of DV encountered when responding to calls
- The number of DV survivors served
- The number of LAFD calls made to LAPD's Human Trafficking Unit
- Creation of DV and HT resource cards

### Key Metrics - Internal Members

To address the well being of its own members, the LAFD has an obligation to take a stand against DV by supporting members who have experienced it<sup>10</sup>, as well as identify and address the perpetrators of DV within the LAFD. To this end, the LAFD could track the following:

- Creation and implementation of training program for LAFD personnel
- Measures taken to support survivors of DV within the LAFD
- Number of recorded instances of DV perpetrated by sworn members
- Measures taken to address perpetrators of DV within the LAFD

Currently, the following penalties pertain to members of the LAFD that engage in unbecoming behavior, with specific statutes regarding DV for a first offense, second offense, and third offense. These penalties must be adhered to so that the City understands that the LAFD does not condone DV, and is willing to address members who engage in DV.

UNBECOMING CONDUCT (CRIMINAL, NOT INCLUDED IN OTHER CATEGORIES)			
S1 Committed a felony*	E	E	E
S2 Committed a misdemeanor in conflict with job duties -(i.e. shoplifting)	A-D	D-E	E
S3 Vandalism	A-E	D-E	E
VIOLENCE - WORKPLACE OR DOMESTIC			
I1 Involved in physical altercation with Department member, or member of public.	A-C	C-D	E
I2 Threatened a member of the Department, or member of the public.	A-C	C-D	B-E
I3 Threatened a member of the Department, or member of the public with great bodily harm.	A-E	C-E	E
I4 Committed an act of domestic violence	B-E	E	E
I5 Failed to comply with a court order	A-C	D-E	E

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V - Verbal Warning      A - Reprimand to 5 Day Suspension      B - 6-10 Day Suspension  
C - 11-15 Day Suspension      D - 16-30 Day Suspension      E - Board Of Rights (Suspension- Termination)

\* No Statute  
\*\* 10 Years Statute

**NOTE:** Unless indicated otherwise, misconduct violations have a 5-year statute

11/8/08

<sup>10</sup> Los Angeles City Council. (1998). Policy in Support of Employee Victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse. *City of Los Angeles*.

<sup>11</sup> LAFD Penalty Guidelines for Sworn Members. (2008).

## Section 2: Raising Awareness in the Community

### Education and Awareness Regarding Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking

#### Analysis

In the mid 1990's, the LAFD participated in the "No More" DV Advertising Campaign. Inclusion in a similar campaign with other City Departments would assist in bringing DV education, awareness and prevention resources to our communities. According to the California Department of Justice, in 2007, 119 people were killed in California (34 of which occurred in Los Angeles County) as a result of DV. The 34 DV-related deaths in Los Angeles County translate into one person being killed every 11 days.

In regards to HT, on September 29, 2016, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a partnership between the DHS Blue Campaign - the unified voice for DHS's efforts to combat HT - and six Los Angeles Agencies including the Los Angeles' Police and Fire Departments as well as Airport Police, Port Police, Department of Building and Safety, and the Department of Housing Investment and Community Development. The focus of this partnership is to provide Blue Campaign training and awareness materials throughout the metropolitan area to raise public consciousness of HT. Unfortunately, Los Angeles is known as one of the largest hubs for HT in the Country.

#### Goals

1. DV Campaign – Community Facing
  - Re-institute the "No More" DV Campaign, to include banners for all fire stations, pamphlets to hand out and stickers/magnets for Department apparatus.
2. Develop and/or procure informative pamphlets to hand out at the Fire Stations, community meetings and other identified opportunities to provide public information and awareness. These pamphlets should include facts about DV and HT within the City, as well as, information on the various resources, services and shelters available for survivors.

#### Accountability & Measurement

##### Key Metrics

- Number of advertising spaces used for DV and HT awareness
- Percent advertising/marketing dollars used for DV and HT awareness
- Location of advertising spaces (internal space and external space)
- Creation and implementation of an interactive training program for LAFD personnel
- Creation of DV and HT resource cards

## MOTION

The physical and emotional scars of domestic violence can cast a long shadow. Too many individuals, regardless of age, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, circumstance, or race, face the pain and fear of domestic violence. During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we shine a light on this violation of the basic human right to be free from violence and abuse, pledge to ensure every victim of domestic violence knows they are not alone, and foster supportive communities that help survivors seek justice and enjoy full and healthy lives.

Over the past two decades, rates of domestic violence against females have dropped by nearly three-quarters -- but there is still much work to do to build on the progress we have made. Nearly 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have suffered from domestic violence by an intimate partner.

As part of Mayor Garcetti's Executive Directive #12, all departments were called to employ strategic approaches to ensure that every resident is free to live, learn and thrive in safety and security. As part of the Mayor's Working Group Against Domestic Violence, departments are called to coordinate, implement and evaluate efforts to prevent domestic violence, as well as ensuring that the City's policies and programs support the most robust domestic violence prevention and intervention services possible.

Our Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) personnel act as the first responders to many field calls for assistance. When a call comes in to 911 Dispatchers requesting assistance with an injury, often LAFD Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) personnel may arrive alone to provide emergency medical support. Because they are there to provide medical support, without proper training, they may not know what signs to look for to determine how the individual received their injury. Our first responders should be equipped with the proper training and protocol to not only identify incidents of domestic violence, but to also direct the victim to the appropriate resources.

I THEREFORE MOVE that LAFD report on the types of training 911 Dispatchers, EMT and Firefighters receive to learn how to identify, track and respond to domestic violence incidents while in the field along with a financial analysis of the required resources needed to comply with Executive Directive #12 within 60 days.

I FURTHER MOVE that LAFD work with the CAO and CLA to identify funds in an upcoming Financial Status Report to support any training necessary for LAFD personnel on how to properly handle incidents of domestic violence while on calls in the field.

PRESENTED BY:

*Nury Martinez*  
NURY MARTINEZ  
Councilwoman, 6<sup>th</sup> District

SECONDED BY:

*AK*

ORIGINAL

*[Signature]*  
OCT 11 2016