

July 3, 2018

LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

RALPH M. TERRAZAS
FIRE CHIEF

May 21, 2018

BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS
FILE NO. 18-053

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON LAFD DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION PLAN

FINAL ACTION: ☐ Approved
☐ Denied

☐ Approved w/Corrections
☐ Received & Filed

☐ Withdrawn
☐ Other

SUMMARY

As directed by the Board of Fire Commissioners (Board) the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) is providing an update to Board Report 17-031 R, the Domestic Violence (DV) Action Plan, which was presented to the Board on March 21, 2017. The Department's Plan was a result of Mayor Eric Garcetti's Executive Directive No. 12 (ED No. 12), entitled, "Domestic Violence Services," issued on October 1, 2015.

The initial plan contained information and recommendations as well as goals and objectives to recognize potentially abusive domestic situations and assist in providing support for those affected by it.

In some DV or Human Trafficking (HT) situations Fire/EMS personnel may be the only members of the health care system to come into contact with a victim, as they often refuse transport, therefore avoiding medical care in the emergency room. As such, with proper training, Fire/EMS personnel are in a position to recognize these victims, provide care and make suggestions for appropriate interventions.

This update provides an overview of the achievements that have been made since the initial report and recommendations to ensure DV/HT training, specific to the needs of EMS first responders continues to be provided to all LAFD personnel on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:
Receive and file.

DISCUSSION

The number one goal of the DV Action Plan was to ensure that all LAFD first responders receive basic awareness training in Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking.

Topics covered for Domestic Violence included:

- What is Domestic Violence
- Understanding the cycle of violence
- Why do victims stay and why do batterers batter
- The impact of DV on children in the home
- A review of child abuse reporting procedures
- Maintaining situational awareness and member safety
- Methods to document and track suspected DV

Topics covered for Human Trafficking included:

- What is Human Trafficking
- The types of trafficking and the prevalence
- Understanding victim dynamics
- Recognition and notification procedures for underage victims

A group of subject matter experts (SME) from outside the LAFD provided the training. The SME's utilized came from the Los Angeles Police Department's Human Trafficking Unit as well as Journey Out and Rainbow Services which are both non-profit victim services groups. To date, all LAFD first responders have been provided with the initial DV and HT Awareness Training.

All Chief Officers and Captains were trained live during their continuing education programs (COCEP and OCEP) in February 2017 and June 2017, respectively.

All other members received the training via our on line training system (Target Solutions) in August and September 2017. This video training was made possible with the help of MySafe:LA, who filmed and edited a live training session which also included DV and HT survivor stories.

To ensure that all new firefighters hired on/or after September 2017 receive mandatory DV/HT Awareness training, the videos are assigned to the probationary firefighters upon completing the Drill Tower and are to be completed during their first few months in the field.

Additionally, the Department provides an 8-hour "Domestic Violence for Dispatchers" course to better assist our call takers who are responsible for the receipt of domestic violence calls as well as their management until field units arrive on scene.

Other goals within the Department's Action Plan included developing a tracking system for suspected DV and HT victims and enhancing the notifications made to the appropriate agencies when suspected victims are encountered. The Department has initiated efforts to accomplish these goals.

In regards to a tracking system, two check boxes were added to the patient's medical report (ePCR) and all members have been directed to check one of those boxes when they encounter a suspected victim of DV or HT. Upon checking one of these boxes, the

correct 24-hour victim hotline number will pop up, which our members can provide to the patient of suspected abuse.

For the year 2017, there were 115 patients with the suspected DV box checked and 10 patients with the suspected human trafficking box checked. The DV/HT training was completed midway through 2017; therefore our data is limited at this time.

In order to enhance child abuse reporting notifications, in addition to the initial awareness training our members received in 2017, the Department developed a Department Bulletin on Human Trafficking Awareness and Procedures. The procedures developed included notification to LAPD as well as notification to the Department via a written memorandum (memo) through channels. In 2017, we received 10 written memos for suspected human trafficking incidents. Due to the low numbers of memos received, the Departmental notification process is being simplified via the creation of an app on our intranet portal that will allow members to fill out a survey after each incident versus writing a formal memo through channels (See attachment).

Future Goals and Recommendations:

- Complete and distribute the Departmental Bulletin on Treating Suspected DV Patients.
- Increase member awareness of the tracking process for suspected DV/HT patients via Info notices, EMS Captains, and EMS Training Unit.
- Provide updated DV and HT training for all members utilizing the EMS Training Unit as well as outside subject matter experts.
- Continue to track suspected DV and HT patients treated and determine the best use of the data to better address DV and HT in the City.
- Consider public awareness training during Bureau Public Safety Advisory Board meetings.
- Continue to collaborate with the Los Angeles City's Domestic Violence Alliance, LAPD as well as the Mayor's Coalition of DV Liaisons.

Raising Awareness in the Community

In 1997, all City and County Fire Stations were designated as Safe Houses, which included signs posted outside each location to notify the public that each site was a Safe Zone. This information was included in the initial DV Action plan. Currently, the Department is working with Los Angeles County (County) and their First Responder Protocol (FRP), which is seeking to rebrand and build upon the Safe House program. This rebranding would include changing the current Safe House program to include children and teenagers (Youth) at risk of being victims of commercial sexual exploitation or other forms of child abuse.

Should a youth access a safe zone, the First Responder Protocol would be initiated. This protocol includes a 90-minute response by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and/or the Probation Department and a specialized Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation (CESC) advocate. If youth arrive at the station and are not suspected

of sexual exploitation then DCFS would initiate their standard response.

The County hopes to initiate the expansion of the Safe House program and add the Safe Youth Zones signage by the end of summer 2018. Along with the sign placement, an awareness campaign to ensure that the public is notified of the revitalized and expanded Safe House program will be initiated. This campaign will include training videos, posters, bumper stickers, a youth CSEC prevention/intervention curriculum, and other means to notify the public.

CONCLUSION

Prior to 2017, no Department member had ever received formal training provided by the Department on DV or HT. Since the implementation of Domestic Violence (DV) Action Plan, all LAFD first responders have been provided with training in DV and HT Awareness. The Department has also implemented methods to gather data of suspected victims to which the Department responds. As we move forward and secure more data, we will determine how it can best be utilized to combat DV and HT within the City.

The Department, with the support of the Mayor's Office and ED No. 12, will continue to explore ways in which to 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.

Attachment

Suspected Human Trafficking Notification

Refer to Department Bulletin 17-04 - Human Trafficking Awareness and Procedures.
Information submitted will be viewed by the AOPS XO only for purposes of cumulative data collection.

*** Required**

1. Name and Assignment of person reporting *

2. Unit Identification

3. Date of Incident *

Example: December 15, 2012

4. Time of incident*

Example: 8:30 AM

5. Location/address of suspected victim *

6. Type of Human Trafficking Suspected *

Mark only one oval.

☐ Sex Trafficking

☐ Labor

7. Do you suspect that the victim is under 18

Mark only one oval.


☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Provide the reason you suspected possible human trafficking*

9. Provide the ePCR No. if medical incident**10. Actions taken by LAFD****11. If patient was transported - provide hospital name****12. Description of the suspected victim****13. Description of the suspected trafficker****14. Was law enforcement notified***Mark only one oval.*☐ Yes☐ No**15. Name and Unit Number of LAPD Officer contacted**

16. What information was reported to LAPD**17. Did you check the box marked "suspected human trafficking" on the ePCR***Mark only one oval.*☐ Yes☐ No**18. Any other information you would like to add**

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