

TASK FORCE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Need for Improved Collection and Availability of Domestic Violence Data

Speaker: Michele Waldner, Executive Director, New Horizons

The DPS-230, the form with which domestic violence offense data is collected, needs to be improved, in order for officials and policy makers to make decisions based on reliable information.

1. The current DPS-230 form, which police officers use to submit family violence offense reports to the Department of Public Safety, is out of date and ill-suited to properly describe the relevant facts of each case.
 - a. The form has not been updated since 2007;
 - b. It only provides the reporting officer with one space in which to record information regarding the criminal offense, weapons used and type of injury during the incident. This is problematic because in cases where both parties are arrested or injured, the officer has no chance to connect each response to the party to which it refers;
 - c. It lists a limited number of potential offenses, and does not include relatively common DV crimes, such as strangulation.
2. In addition, officers are not provided with a clear and concise checklist of the items that they are required to provide to victims according to CT law. In order to help officers perform their duties more efficiently, this list should be made readily available to them, and one way to accomplish this would be to include it within the DPS-230 itself.

In addition, state agencies need to work together to ensure that consistent statistics are available from all sources.

1. During the course of the Task Force meetings, it became apparent that not only was it difficult to obtain reliable domestic violence statistics from any one source, but the numbers reported often varied greatly depending upon which agency provided them. As such, consistent domestic violence data should be readily available to stakeholders so that important policy decisions can be made using the best possible information.
2. We understand that different state agencies collect domestic violence offense data for different purposes, and therefore have different collection policies, but once the various collection and tabulation has been taken place, *all* of the information should be available from any of the relevant agencies. This would require improved collaboration between the departments, and will result in more reliable data for everyone.

Thankfully, the Task Force has recognized these concerns and taken meaningful steps to address the current problems with domestic violence data collection.

1. We fully endorse the recommendations of the Task Force regarding the creation of a working group to revise the DPS-230 form.
2. We also support the proposed role that the Family Violence Model Policy Governing Council will play in evaluating the accuracy of domestic violence data and improving information sharing across state agencies.

CTL NUMBER - OFFICE USE ONLY

Family Violence Offense Report

State of Connecticut
Department of Public Safety

Submit this form to DPS only if an arrest was made
(Print or type all entries. See other instructions on the reverse side of this form.)

1. Arrest Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		2. If Zero Reporting, Enter Period Covered (MM/YY)		3. Case Number		4. Local PD Name		5. Offense Town Code		6. Offense Date		7. Offense Time	
OFFENSE CODES A. Homicide B. Assault C. Kidnapping D. Sexual Assault E. Criminal Mischief F. Risk of Injury G. Breach of Peace H. Disorderly Conduct I. Other/Violation Court Order				8. Enter letter(s) to indicate type(s) of offense(s): _____				9. Enter the NUMBER of weapons used by type A. _____ C. _____ B. _____ D. _____					
WEAPONS CODES A. Firearm B. Knife C. Other Dangerous Weapon (specify) _____ D. Hands, Fists, Feet, etc. C. No Apparent Physical D. Fatal				10. Enter a letter for the most serious type of injury to any victim or "C" if none: _____ D. Other relative NOT residing in the home E. Persons who are presently living together, have lived together, or ever had a child together. F. Persons in, or who have recently been in, a dating relationship.				11. STATUS CODES * Only when arrested for actual family violence V. Victim * O. Offender * B. Both/All					
INJURY CODES A. Serious Physical Injury B. Minor/Physical Injury				RELATIONSHIP CODES: A. Spouse B. Former Spouse C. Other relative residing in the home				12. Last Name					
13. First Name				14. MI				15. SEX					
16. DOB				17. Relationship of VICTIM to Offender code (enter, if status is V Victim or B Both/All)				18. Liquor/Drugs Involved? Enter for all persons involved Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown <input type="checkbox"/>					
19. Prior Court or Foreign Orders? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown				20. A Child under 18 years old was: <input type="checkbox"/> A. Involved <input type="checkbox"/> B. Present <input type="checkbox"/> C. N/A				21. Remarks (optional)					
22. Officer's Name & Rank				23. Badge Number				24. Date of Report					
25. Supervisor's Signature & Rank													

Instructions

- Box 1: Check "Yes" if an arrest was made as a result of this incident.
- Box 2: For local police agencies only: If, at the end of any month, a police department has not submitted an offense report for which an arrest was made, that agency shall submit a "zero report" by completing only boxes 2, 4, 5 and 24-25 on an otherwise blank form. In block #2 enter the month and year using two digits for the month and four digits for the year, i.e., 01/00 represents January 2000.
- Boxes 3-5: Self explanatory.
- Box 6-7: If an offense is ongoing, choose a date and time that the offense is reported to have begun.
- Box 8: Self explanatory, except threatening, harassment, and reckless endangerment can be reported as either a breach of peace or as disorderly conduct. Report codes for EACH type of offense present in the offense.
- Box 9: Enter the NUMBER of each type of weapon used, although it is not necessary to quantify each body part (hand, fist, foot, tooth, etc) used. If "other dangerous weapon" is selected, write in the object used.
- Box 10: If more than one victim, use the injury code which best describes the most serious type of injury sustained by any victim.
- Box 11: Status: enter V for victim, O for offender and B for both when both or all parties were arrested. Do not include those persons arrested for related charges, such as interfering. Persons identified as offenders or both must have been arrested for violence against domestic members.
- Boxes 12-16: Self explanatory. If DOB is unknown enter the age or approximate age.
- Box 17: Describe the relationship of the VICTIM to the offender. If more than one offender, describe the closest relationship to any offender. Enter relationship when both/all parties are arrested as victim/offenders (status code "B").
- Box 18: Indicate for each participant whether drug/alcohol usage is believed to be involved.
- Box 19: Indicate whether a prior court order(s), including foreign order(s), applies to the offense participants.
- Box 20: A child is someone under 18 years old who is not functioning in an adult relationship, e.g., not a parent, live-in or boyfriend/girlfriend.
- Box 21: Use REMARKS to explain entries that appear confusing, e.g., same last names but unrelated parties.
- Boxes 22-25: Self explanatory.

IF AN ARREST IS MADE:

Local Police Officers

Send the completed original form (*white copy*) to Department of Public Safety, Crimes Analysis Unit, 1111 Country Club Road, Middletown, CT 06457.
The second copy (yellow) is directed to the State's Attorney of the appropriate court.
Retain the pink copy in local agency files.

State Police Troopers

Send the completed original form (*white copy*) to Department of Public Safety, Crimes Analysis Unit, 1111 Country Club Road, Middletown, CT 06457.
Second copy (yellow) is directed to the State's Attorney of the appropriate court.
The third copy (pink) is sent to Reports & Records with the investigation report.
Make two photocopies, one for the troop incident file and one for the arresting trooper's files.

IF NO ARREST IS MADE:

Local Police Officers

Keep all three copies in department files.

State Police Troopers

Send original to Reports & Records.
Retain second and third copies in troop incident files.

Distribution of Forms