

SPECIAL ORDER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Title
Handling of Sexual Abuse Cases

Series / Number
SO - 07

Effective Date
April 11, 2000

Distribution
A

Related to
G.O. 304.6 (Investigations of Sex Crimes)
G.O. 305.1 (Handling of Juveniles)
G.O. 401.1 (Field Reporting System)

I. Background.....Page 1

II. Procedural Guidelines.....Page :1

I. Background

Sexual abuse cases are extremely sensitive and delicate in nature. Since the decentralization of the Sex Squad, the responsibility for investigating sexual abuse cases is allocated to the district detectives. There are few cases where the Youth and Preventive Services Division (YPSD) takes over the investigation. Therefore, this order is written to clarify the process as to what the Violent Crime Unit (VCU) Detectives are responsible for as opposed to what the YPSD detectives are responsible for in sexual abuse cases. This order specifically entails sexual abuse referrals involving juveniles and addresses the paperwork involved in all sexual abuse cases.

II. Procedural Guidelines

A. Handling of Sexual Abuse Referrals Involving Juvenile Victims Under the Age of Sixteen.

1. Responsibilities of Youth and Preventive Services Division
 - a. Effective immediately, the YPSD will be the conduit for sexual abuse referrals involving juveniles, reported from any outside entities, such as the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and the D.C. Public Schools system.
 - b. When the YPSD receives a report of sexual abuse involving a juvenile, they shall:
 - (1) Immediately log the pertinent information in the logbook.

- (2) Contact the respective district's detectives' office. If notification cannot be made to the detective's office, the District Watch Commander shall be notified. It will then be the responsibility of the District Watch Commander to notify a district detective.
 - (3) Log in the date and time that the report was picked up.
 - (4) Once contacted by District Detectives, upon finalization of the investigation, YPSD will enter the information into the logbook and notify referring agency of the outcome.
2. Responsibilities of the VCU detective's office shall include:
- a. Ensure that the detectives pick up the case from the YPSD immediately.
 - b. Immediately begin an investigation, to include contacting the referring agency to set up an interview.
 - c. Upon determination that the crime against the minor is an intra-family offense, or the perpetrator lives with or will continue to have access to the child, immediately notify YPSD. The YPSD detective will respond immediately to the location where the child resides to determine if the child or any other children in the home are in imminent danger and must be removed.
 - d. Fill out a PD Form 251.
 - e. Upon determination that the sex crime against the minor is not an intra-family offense, or the alleged perpetrator does not pose a threat or danger to the child, notify YPSD but continue to handle the case.
 - f. Contact the Youth and Preventive Services Division within 48 hours of receiving the report to inform them of the investigating detective's name.
 - g. When a medical examination is performed, wait for the determination of medical findings and include them in an investigative report.

- h. Transport minor victims of sex abuse to the hospital, CFSA (DHS), or the Child Advocacy Center (CAC).
- i. Within seven (7) days, the detective will contact the Youth and Preventive Services Division to provide an update on the case.
- j. Notify the Youth and Preventive Services Division of the outcome, upon finalization of the investigation. This information is also to be entered into the logbook.
- k. Maintain communications with the referring agency during the course of the investigation.
- l. All sex allegations involving minors under 12 years of age, must be handled in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding currently in existence with the CAC.

B. Reporting Sexual Abuse Allegations

- 1. Responsibilities of Reporting Officers
 - a. In all cases, whenever a member responds to a call for service or is notified regarding an allegation of sexual abuse, a PD Form 251 and PD Form 252 will be completed, documenting the allegations. Care should be given on the PD Form 251 not to disclose identifiers of the complainant. First and last initials shall be used in the name category, age range only shall be given (i.e., 30-35), street blocks will be used rather than specific addresses (i.e., 400 block of Alphabet St.), and phone numbers shall be omitted. The PD Form 251 should include only basic information – a brief description of what happened, where and when - so the complainant is not forced to be repetitive in such sensitive cases.
 - b. The PD Form 252 will then be used to disclose all the pertinent information.
 - c. Reporting officers will continue to make notifications per General Order 401.1 (Field Reporting) and 305.1 (Handling Juveniles).

This special order shall not supercede or replace pertinent investigative techniques included in existing general orders, such as preserving the crime scene and maintaining the presence of suspects and witnesses. This special order will remain in effect until incorporated into the appropriate general order.

// SIGNED //
Charles H. Ramsey
Chief of Police

CHR:NMJ:rsk