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# GENERAL ORDER

FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

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SUBJECT: GANG INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

NUMBER: 530.6

CANCELS ORDER DATED: 7-1-99

DATE: 10-1-10

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## I. PURPOSE

Gang activity is very dynamic, often violent, and rarely confined to a particular neighborhood or patrol district. This criminal activity is highly mobile and routinely crosses jurisdictional boundaries. While individual police districts may have a localized gang problem, it is imperative that the Department's gang intelligence effort be centralized, represent all police districts, and be linked to neighboring jurisdictions to maximize the effectiveness of information sharing. This general order establishes the policies and responsibilities applicable to the Gang Investigations Unit.

## II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Fairfax County Police Department to dedicate all necessary resources and methods to prevent gang-related crime through education, prevention, and intervention. The Gang Investigations Unit shall provide investigative and enforcement support to departmental entities associated with gang activity of any kind. The Gang Investigations Unit shall collect and maintain a central repository of regional and local gang intelligence for investigatory support. Located within the Patrol Bureau's Youth Services Division, the Gang Investigations Unit is a standing element of the Department and supports its overall community policing philosophy.

Using the identified links between various events as an investigative resource, the Gang Investigations Unit tracks and classifies gang-related activity in order to solve crimes, to establish the frequency and source of gang-related activity, and to measure the impact of gang activity on the community. Unless otherwise prescribed, gang information shall be routinely disseminated by the Unit to enhance officer safety and to provide a basis for devising patrol or investigative tactics.

## III. DEFINITIONS

A. Gang: A gang is defined as a group of people who form an allegiance for a common purpose, who engage in criminal activity, and conform to one or more of the following traits:

1. share a common group name;

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2. share common symbols, tattoos or graffiti;
  3. share a common style of dress;
  4. frequently congregate, or lay claim to, a geographic location; and,
  5. associate together on a regular or continuous basis.
- B. Gang Member: Gang membership may involve very different levels of commitment and participation. The type of commitment and participation needs to be delineated to establish a level of membership of each identified participant. A person will be identified as a gang member based on meeting any two of the following criteria listed below. If a person is to only meet one of the following criteria, the person will be identified as a "suspected gang member."
1. An individual admits membership to a group which meets the criteria of a gang.
  2. A reliable informant identifies an individual as a gang member.
  3. An informant of previously untested reliability identifies an individual as a gang member, and it is corroborated by independent information.
  4. An individual resides in, or frequents a particular gang's area and adopts their style of dress, use of hand signs, symbols or tattoos, and/or associates with known gang members.
  5. An individual has been arrested in the company of identified gang members for offenses which are consistent with gang activity.
- C. Gang Associate: Even though an individual does not meet the above criteria, this individual shall be identified as a gang associate if strong indications imply that there may be a close relationship with a gang.
- D. Gang Activity: A police incident will be preliminarily classified as "Gang Activity" (second event) if any of the following criteria are present:

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1. When an officer reasonably suspects the incident is gang-related and the suspicion is based on the officer's experience and/or training, or if the suspects, victims or participants are identified as, or believed to be, gang members.
2. When a reliable informant identifies an incident as gang-related.
3. When an informant of untested reliability identifies an incident as gang-related and the connection is corroborated by other independent information.
4. Whenever an officer reasonably suspects that a serious incident may motivate a delinquent group to form a common alliance for self-protection, retaliation or any other motivation which propels them into the level of an emerging gang.
5. When any gang member or associate is charged with any criminal violation, regardless if the crime was gang motivated or not, a second event, "Gang Activity," shall be listed on the Incident Report.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Gang Investigations Unit

1. The fundamental role of the Gang Investigations Unit is one of gathering and disseminating criminal gang information to patrol officers and all investigative entities. These functions require good communication and a close working relationship with all operational units of the Department. Additionally, the Gang Investigations Unit shall routinely target specific gang activity and conduct pro-active patrol and enforcement efforts. This unit shall accomplish this mission through the following activities:
  - a. Review all gang-related case reports forwarded by Station Gang Coordinators.
  - b. Case follow-up of selected reports from which gang intelligence might be gained through additional interviews and pursuance.

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- c. Provide direct assistance to any departmental entity requesting intelligence or other gang-related case support.
- d. Provide appropriate and timely notification to station commanders of current district-level gang activity or intelligence regarding future gang activity.
- e. Provide educational support in gang-related topics to the Department and gang awareness programs in the community.
- f. Departmental liaison assignment of a Gang Investigations Unit detective with Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to assist with deportation of criminal illegal aliens.
- g. Dissemination of monthly Gang Activity Summary, Officer Safety Bulletins, and other useful gang-related information.
- h. Maintain call-out roster for DPSC of Gang Investigations Unit supervisor and detectives for after-hours response to gang activity as requested by patrol supervisors, Duty Officers, or Criminal Investigations Bureau personnel.
- i. Respond to gang-related incidents and assist with interviews and on-scene investigation at the direction of the investigative authority.
- j. In the event of a Gang Investigations Unit call-out for a case that will ultimately involve the Major Crimes Division either through immediate response or follow-up investigative responsibilities, the Gang Investigations Unit supervisor shall immediately contact the Major Crimes supervisor to advise them of the call-out. The Major Crimes supervisor shall determine if an immediate response by the Major Crimes Division is warranted.
- k. Conduct formal case follow-up on any case TOT'd to the Gang Investigations Unit with the approval of the Gang Investigations Unit supervisor.

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- I. Regularly meet with police officials from other jurisdictions for the purpose of sharing gang intelligence and gang activity information.
  - m. Coordinate investigations, enforcement operations, and intelligence sharing with members of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force.
2. The Gang Investigations Unit shall maintain a computerized gang intelligence system to track gang member contact region-wide. The Gang Investigations Unit supervisor shall serve as the administrator of this system and shall approve all entries and deletions, ensuring compliance with all state and federal regulations. Gang Investigations Unit detectives shall enter all known gang contacts including links with vehicles, weapons, locations, and known associates. Gang intelligence information from other participating jurisdictions shall also be made accessible through this system. Station-based Gang Coordinators shall assist with data entry by updating the computer information with gang contacts from their individual stations. Officers, investigators, and detectives may access this information through Station Gang Coordinators or by contacting the Gang Investigations Unit directly.
- B. District Stations
1. District Station Commanders
- Station commanders shall make every effort to ensure that station personnel work in close coordination with Gang Investigations Unit personnel. This shall include, but not be limited to:
- a. Selection and appointment of a Station Gang Coordinator.
  - b. Review all reports, bulletins, and intelligence summaries of district gang activity.
  - c. Ensure that district gang intelligence is being properly

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investigated, reported, and communicated for County-wide intelligence purposes.

- d. Coordinate any station-level gang enforcement initiatives with the Gang Investigations Unit.
- e. Communicate any gang-related concerns or needs to the Youth Services Division commander.

2. Patrol and Criminal Investigations Section (CIS) Supervisors

The patrol supervisor plays a critical role in the communication of gang intelligence information and the coordination of field investigative activities. These responsibilities include:

- a. Review of all investigative reports for properly capturing gang activity as a reportable event.
- b. Ensuring that gang-related information gathered by their officers is promptly delivered to the Station Gang Coordinator and forwarded to the Gang Investigations Unit.
- c. Immediate notification to the Gang Investigations Unit (via DPSC supervisor) of a gang-related incident in which victims, suspects or witnesses are interviewed.

3. Station Gang Coordinators

The Station Gang Coordinator shall be selected and appointed by the district station commander. In addition to this officer's regular patrol assignment (ie. bike officer, patrol officer, SRO, etc.), the Station Gang Coordinator is the primary communications link between the district station and the Gang Investigations Unit. This position may also be combined with other station-based intelligence functions at the discretion of the station commander. The specific responsibilities for this officer include:

- a. Review all available information on district gang activity from patrol officers, school resource officers, shopping center units,

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Criminal Investigations Section detectives, and any other potential source of gang information.

- b. Verify and forward information from field reports to the Gang Investigations Unit for inclusion in the regional database.
- c. Assist station personnel and Gang Investigations Unit detectives with follow-up investigations on gang-related case reports whenever possible.
- d. Make information pertaining to gang activity, gang members, suspected members, and their associates in the district available to all sworn personnel in a timely basis.
- e. Attend all monthly gang coordinators meetings, or if excused, provide an alternate.
- f. Provide training on identifying gang members and gang graffiti within their patrol district.
- g. Provide educational seminars on gang activity to civic groups, schools, and businesses located in their district station areas.

C. Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB)

- 1. Supervisors and detectives of the Criminal Investigations Bureau (CIB) shall communicate and work closely with the Gang Investigations Unit to investigate and apprehend criminal gang members and prepare the strongest possible case for court conviction. To this end, the following procedures shall be followed:
  - a. The Major Crimes supervisor shall inform the Gang Investigations Unit supervisor, as soon as reasonably possible, of cases involving gang-related suspects, victims, or activities. Likewise, the Gang Investigations Unit supervisor shall inform the appropriate Major Crimes supervisor, as soon as reasonably possible, of any involvement in criminal investigations which will likely result in CIB follow-up investigative responsibilities.

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- b. The Major Crimes supervisor shall, as soon as reasonably possible, notify the Gang Investigations Unit supervisor in the event of a CIB call-out for a crime that involves gang-related suspects, victims, or activities. The Gang Investigations Unit supervisor will determine if an immediate response by the Gang Investigations Unit is warranted.
- c. CIB shall maintain command of crime scenes requiring the response of both Major Crimes and the Gang Investigations Unit. The Gang Investigations Unit supervisor shall report directly to the Major Crimes-supervisor who will coordinate investigative assignments. In the absence of the CIB supervisor, Gang Investigations Unit detectives shall coordinate all investigative proceedings with the lead CIB detective.
- d. In the event of a complex criminal investigation such as a gang-related homicide, Gang Investigations Unit detective(s) may be assigned to the appropriate CIB section on a temporary basis to assist with the case. The Gang Investigations Unit detective(s) working in this capacity shall work under the supervision of the Major Crimes supervisor and serve as a liaison with the Gang Investigations Unit.

V. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS REFERENCE

VLEPSC

ADM.	OPR.
11.01	04.01
14.01	
20.01	
21.01	

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This general order becomes effective October 1, 2010 and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to this subject.

ISSUED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Handwritten signature of M. M. Ashe in cursive script.

Chief of Police

Handwritten signature of the County Executive in cursive script.

County Executive