


FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT  GENERAL ORDER	SUBJECT: ASSISTANCE TO ABUSED OR NEGLECTED JUVENILES		NUMBER: 608
	EFFECTIVE DATE: June 13, 2025	REVIEW: June 2029	
RESPONSIBLE ENTITY: MAJOR CRIMES BUREAU			<input type="checkbox"/> New Directive <input type="checkbox"/> Replaces: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: 06-13-25
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:	CALEA N/A <hr/> VLEPSC ADM 14.01 OPR 04.01		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish guidelines and procedures for officer encounters with juveniles believed to be abused or neglected.

II. POLICY

The safety and welfare of juveniles is of paramount importance to all members of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD). Accordingly, officers shall coordinate their efforts to promote juvenile welfare with other agencies, to include the Department of Family Services (DFS), the Juvenile and Domestic Relations (JDR) Court, and Child Protective Services (CPS). CPS serves as the lead County agency for civil investigations of child abuse or neglect and protects victims from further harm, while the Major Crimes Bureau (MCB) serves as the lead for any associated criminal investigations of child abuse or neglect.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Abused or Neglected Juvenile:** Legal status that occurs whenever a parent(s) or other person(s) responsible for the care of a juvenile (1) creates, inflicts, threatens, or allows another to create, inflict, or threaten a juvenile with physical or mental injury (other than by accident), (2) creates substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of a juvenile's bodily or mental functions, (3) fails to provide necessary health care for a juvenile in their care, (4) abandons a juvenile in their care, (5) commits or allows to be committed a sexual act upon a juvenile, or (6) leaves a juvenile without proper care or guardianship by means of either unreasonable absence or their own mental or physical incapacity.
- B. **Juvenile:** Any individual who is less than eighteen (18) years of age.

IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. **Initial Reports:** Reports of alleged juvenile abuse or neglect made to the Department of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) will be screened to determine if the matter warrants a police response and/or CPS referral.
- B. **Officer Response:** Officers shall respond to any circumstance where information indicates the life or health of a juvenile may be in imminent danger, the juvenile has been abandoned, or a criminal offense has been reported. CPS requests to DPSC for police assistance in investigations of potential juvenile abuse or neglect shall be handled on a priority basis.

V. INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

- A. Officers who are dispatched to calls involving, or who discover juvenile abuse or neglect, shall proceed as follows:
 - 1. Officers shall notify CPS via the hotline or, where on-call CPS personnel are required via DPSC, whenever they discover that a juvenile is (1) a victim of violence by a possible caregiver (ex: parent, guardian, teacher, babysitter, coach), (2) abandoned or left alone in either a car or residence, (3) is present in a home with illegal drugs or narcotics, (4) witnesses a domestic assault, or (5) is the victim of sexual abuse.
 - 2. Any suspected juvenile abuse or neglect where there is no imminent danger to the juvenile shall be reported to the CPS hotline (703-324-7701). Referrals to CPS may also (preferably) be accomplished via email at DFSCPSPoliceReports@fairfaxcounty.gov.
- B. **Protective Custody:** Officers who encounter a juvenile in circumstances constituting an imminent danger to the juvenile's life or health, or where they have been abandoned, shall consult with CPS for guidance, and may take the juvenile into protective custody [under the Code of Virginia](#) without prior approval from the juvenile's parent(s) or guardian(s) if a JDR court order is not immediately available.
 - 1. Whenever officers enact protective custody, they shall notify their supervisor immediately who will advise CPS. Officers shall remain at the scene or re-locate as needed until CPS personnel can arrive. Officers shall assist CPS as needed to ensure their investigation proceeds without interference or safety risk.

Note: Officers shall contact CPS where a parent or guardian is arrested and any dependent juvenile is without proper supervision or care.

- C. **Medical Attention:** Any injured individual shall be offered access to medical treatment for their injuries, or, where immediate medical attention is required, transport via Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to the nearest medical facility for treatment. Investigating officers should accompany or follow all victim(s) to a hospital and assisting officers should preserve crime scenes until members of the FCPD Crime Scene Section can respond to the scene. Where an incident involves suspected sexual abuse and no other medical treatment is immediately required, officers shall notify their first-line supervisor who shall request the assistance of both CPS and MCB.
- D. **Interviewing a Juvenile Victim:** Unless specifically requested by MCB personnel, officers shall not interview suspected juvenile victims of sexual or physical abuse. Where officers are requested to interview a juvenile victim, officers should only seek to obtain minimal facts from the victim, ensure body-worn camera and in-car video systems are de-activated, and never use objects such as toys to obtain intricate details. Officers may conduct their preliminary interviews with third parties to ascertain facts and circumstances of the incident and should ensure juvenile interviews occur with either responding detectives or CPS personnel.
- E. **Documentation:** Investigating officers shall document their findings in an incident report in the current Records Management System (RMS) and reviewing supervisors shall forward the report to MCB for prompt follow-up. Copies of incident reports involving suspected cases of juvenile abuse or neglect shall also be forwarded to the DFS and CPS at DFSCPSPoliceReports@fairfaxcounty.gov or fax (703-324-2267). Officers shall also note in their report that a copy was forwarded to CPS.

1. Incidents Requiring Notification to DFS:

- a. Abuse or neglect of a child committed by an adult who is not the parent, guardian, babysitter, or other individual responsible for care of the child.
- b. Delinquency.
- c. Truancy, unless due to parental neglect.

2. Incidents Requiring Info Copies to be Sent to DFS:

- a. Any case of suspected child abuse.
- b. Conflict arising between a parent and child with no indication of abuse.
- c. Domestic conflict confined to parents only and no abuse or neglect directed towards the child.

VI. MAJOR CRIMES BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Child Abuse or Neglect Cases:** MCB shall be contacted and consulted regarding juvenile physical and sexual abuse cases, and shall assist DFS or CPS upon request or whenever necessary to conduct a criminal investigation pursuant to conduct resulting from juvenile abuse or neglect. If a MCB detective is not available, a patrol officer shall respond to process and preserve evidence. MCB-Child Abuse Squad shall be responsible for handling investigations of juvenile sexual or physical abuse resulting in serious and/or life-threatening injury (ex: fractures, burns, severe bruising, etc.). Domestic violence cases not meeting this criterion shall be investigated by a responding officer or Domestic Violence Detective.

VII. LEGAL REFERENCES

- A. [Va. Code Ann. § 63.2-100](#), Definitions.
- B. [Va. Code Ann. § 63.2-1507](#), Cooperation by state entities.
- C. [Va. Code Ann. § 63.2-1509](#), Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report.
- D. [Va. Code Ann. § 63.2-1517](#), Authority to take child into custody.

General Order 608 becomes effective on the above date and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.

ISSUED BY:



Chief of Police

APPROVED BY:



County Executive