

Harrisonburg Police Department

Implementation Plan

Summary

The Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) would develop a Sexual Assault and Violence Against Women Enhanced Enforcement Team (SAVE Team) targeting violent crimes against women (VCAW) to (1) to develop or strengthen and implement HPD policies, protocols, and best practices relating to the investigation of VCAW; and (2) to train Patrol and Criminal Investigations officers to more effectively recognize and respond to such crimes, including rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and dating violence; with special attention to victims among the city's underserved populations which include Hispanic/Latinos (18% of population), African-Americans and other Blacks, limited-English immigrants from 40 countries, and college-age women.

Implementation

Data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicate that the vast majority of rapes and sexual assaults involving women ages 18-24 go unreported. It is probable the reporting rate in Harrisonburg is at least roughly similar. Data limitations preclude accurate assessment of the number and rate of these incidents along with domestic violence, dating violence and stalking crimes affecting members of our underserved populations.

To increase the detection and prosecution of VCAW, the SAVE Team would implement more robust data collection and analysis to enable development of evidence-based policies, procedures and training; integrate the activities of multiple HPD divisions involved in detecting and apprehending offenders, and coordinate HPD efforts with other community agencies and resources serving VCAW victims.

Then SAVE Team would comprise an experienced Lead Investigator/Program Coordinator from the Criminal Investigations Division, a representative from the Patrol Division whose officers have first contact with victims of crimes, a representative of the Records Division, and a crime analyst from the Administrative Bureau.

The organizations with which the SAVE Team would coordinate include the office of the Commonwealth Attorney for the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, and the Victim-Witness advocate; the Collins Center, which provides sexual assault crisis services, treatment, and education and prevention services, legal aid, and SART Response Team; First Step, which provides help to victims of domestic violence;

Sentara-RMH, the health and medical services provider with SANE capability; and James Madison University and Eastern Mennonite University.

The Lead Investigator would coordinate implementation of the program as outlined in the Goals and Objectives and Timeline. The Lead's mandate would include investigating VCAW and overseeing investigations by other officers to assure implementation of best practices and maintain quality control; maintaining policies and protocols to best practices standards; identifying VCAW training needs and resources and arranging delivery of training; identifying data requirements and processes necessary to support assessment of program efficacy and reporting requirements; and serving as HPD liaison with collaborating agencies and organizations.

Timeline for Implementation

2016

Quarter 1: Select Lead Investigator, Secure MOUs with each collaborating agency and organization; Issue Police Chief's directive to staff regarding purposes, goals and objectives; Investigator assume lead in VCAW investigations; Submit required reports.

Quarter 2: Review VCAW policies and protocols; research DCJS model policies and other sources of best practices; Survey collaborating agencies and organizations to identify areas of cooperation, avoid duplication of effort, and facilitate collaboration; Create or update HPD General Orders and Standard Operating Procedures and disseminate to all personnel and cooperating groups; Submit required reports.

Quarter 3: Identify and take advantage of advanced training opportunities for Lead Investigator; Coordinate with Training Division to create and present VCAW instructional module for Patrol and CID officers; Research methodologies for increasing HPD ability to reach and build trust among victimized women, especially in underserved populations.

Quarter 4: Identify data requirements essential for assessing efficacy of the program; coordinate with both Records Division and Crime Analyst to establish supplemental data collection processes; Review program to date to identify any modifications necessary and prepare plan for remedial measures; Submit required Quarterly and Annual reports.

2017

Quarter 1: Review prior year reports and data and complete statistical analysis to establish baseline for assessing program progress and effectiveness; Monitor VCAW

investigations and provide necessary feedback to officers; Design and implement survey to gather data from victims' perspectives on adequacy of response, efficacy of HPD efforts on victims' behalf; adequacy of case outcome. Submit required reports.

Quarter 2: Monitor VCAW case handling and provide feedback to officers as necessary; Review program with coordinating agencies and organizations to assess progress; Prepare and disseminate public information about the program's purpose, how it benefits the community and VCAW victims, with information encouraging victims not to fear reporting VCAW; Complete surveys of victims; Submit required reports.

Quarter 3: Identify and take advantage of advanced VCAW training for Lead Investigator or other officers; Present VCAW instructional manual to new officers not previously trained; Monitor VCAW case handling and provide necessary feedback to officers; Complete surveys of victims; Submit required Reports;

Quarter 4: Monitor VCAW case handling and provide necessary feedback to officers; Submit required reports.

2018

Quarter 1: Review incident reports and supplemental forms from previous year, from initial contact through final adjudication offenders; Prepare statistical analysis of program to evaluate progress against goals and objectives; Monitor VCAW case management and provide feedback to officers as necessary; Analyze victim survey from prior year to gauge efficacy of HPD services to victims; Submit required reports.

Quarter 2: Monitor VCAW case handling and provide feedback to officers as necessary; Review program with coordinating agencies and organizations to assess progress; Prepare and disseminate public information about the program's purpose, how it benefits the community and VCAW victims, with information encouraging victims not to fear reporting VCAW; Complete surveys of victims; Submit required reports.

Quarter 3: Identify and take advantage of advanced VCAW training for Lead Investigator or other officers; Present VCAW instructional manual to new officers not previously trained; Monitor VCAW case handling and provide necessary feedback to officers; Complete surveys of victims; Submit required Reports;

Quarter 4: Monitor VCAW case handling and provide necessary feedback to officers; Submit required reports. Prepare Summary Analysis of 3-year effort and prepare recommendations for maintenance of program going forward. Submit required reports