Palmdale Station Unit Orders

• 13-02: Suspected Child Abuse Report (SCAR)

PALMDALE UNIT ORDER 13-02

TITLE: SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE REPORT (SCAR)

JOSHUA A. BARDON, CAPTAIN

MAY 8, 2024

PURPOSE:

To establish protocols, procedures and to define policies to ensure compliance with the mandates of the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, Penal Code 11164.

OVERVIEW:

Palmdale Station handles a large number of child abuse reports each year. The volume of calls may develop and dull our sense of urgency of these investigations. All personnel shall continue to adhere to Field Operations Directive 03-004, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, and this Unit Order does not replace or overrule that Directive.

PROCEDURES:

Watch Deputy's Responsibilities

The watch deputy shall assign all suspected child abuse reports as a call for service. The calls for service may be generated by a phone call, station walk-in, or eSCARS (electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System) referral. The watch deputy shall ensure all dispatched SCAR (Suspected Child Abuse Report) calls are handled in a timely manner.

NOTE: Response time minutes to SCAR calls begin when the call is entered into JDIC/CAD. The average response time accumulates as the Watch Deputy researches the eSCAR, prints the report, assigns the call, and dispatches a unit. To mitigate this loss in response time, the watch deputies shall clear the call with a 416 stat code (SCAR-Further Investigation Required) and re-enter the call.

All watch deputies will review and read the narrative of each SCAR to determine if it is a priority or duplicate SCAR. All SCARs shall be dispatched on each shift. At no time will a SCAR be in eSCARs longer than twenty-four hours. In the event the watch deputy receives a duplicate SCAR, a call will be entered for both SCAR's and the Watch Deputy shall immediately clear out one of the calls as a duplicate call and cross reference the tags.

All SCAR calls shall be entered in CAD as a routine call for service by dispatch. If the handling deputy is unable to handle a SCAR during his/her assigned shift, the SCAR along with an explanation will be presented to the Watch Commander by the handling deputy. The Watch Commander will use his/her judgement to determine whether to compensate the deputy with overtime or reassign the SCAR. If a SCAR is to be reassigned to another shift, the original handling deputy will clear the call and a new call will be typed in for the same SCAR. The deputy will clear it with a 416 stat code along with an explanation in the narrative.

The EM watch deputy will provide the Watch Commander with Non-Emergent SCARs that can wait to be sent out during AM or PM shift. These SCARs will be held at the discretion of the shift Watch Commander. Non-Emergent SCARS are those that do not require an immediate response by DCFS and/or a deputy. These can be SCARS written as a result of late disclosure or previously investigated crimes.

Before accepting a SCAR from another station or agency, the watch deputy shall make every attempt to verify before accepting the SCAR that the child to be contacted lives in Palmdale's jurisdiction.

If the watch deputy and Watch Commander determine that no call shall be dispatched for a SCAR because the SCAR clearly fails to establish a basis for investigation, the watch deputy shall clear the call for service in the CAD system with all the appropriate information and complete the top portion of the SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report. The watch deputy shall obtain an URN with a statistical code of 419. The Watch Commander shall sign and date the SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report in the Watch Commander's approval section.

In the event a watch deputy does not have a password for eSCARs, they will contact another Sheriff's Department station. They will provide the assisting watch deputy with the SCAR number that they received via the CAD system. They will request the assisting watch deputy to send a scanned copy of the original SCAR.

If the alleged abuse occurred in Palmdale Station's jurisdiction, but the child is currently in another jurisdiction, the watch deputy will attempt to contact the other jurisdiction and request a courtesy response to interview the child. If the other jurisdiction is unable or unwilling to respond, a Palmdale Station unit shall be dispatched.

The watch deputy shall only reroute the SCAR under the following conditions:

- Based on what is written on the SCAR itself (not an investigation), the location of the incident or the location of the child is in another station or agency's jurisdiction, or there is no location of incident; or

- Information necessary to respond and investigate is missing, and re-routing the SCAR may assist in obtaining the missing information.

Before rerouting a SCAR to another station or agency, the watch deputy shall make every attempt to verify that the child actually lives at the address listed in the SCAR that is in the other station or agency's jurisdiction. Give the agency or other station a courtesy call and put the contacted person's name and phone number in the rerouting area of the SCAR.

A rerouted SCAR does not require a SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report and/or an URN.

Responding Deputy's Responsibilities

A SCAR call shall be handled prior to any routine report calls for service and with the utmost priority.

A deputy shall thoroughly investigate the alleged abuse and neglect.

If the call was directed by an eSCAR, there is no set number of times a call should be generated if the child is not at the location. The key is “due diligence.” The deputy can:

- Use department resources and run the information of the parents
- Call the phone numbers on the SCAR
- Check with the neighbors, schools and the landlord
- Send a deputy at a different time of day
- Contact the reporting party
- Contact the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) social worker for updated case information

Actual physical examination of a child by the responding deputy is mandatory if physical or sexual abuse is reported. All children residing in the home shall be examined and documented in either an incident report (SH-R-49) or SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report (SH-R-626). Upon “suspicion” or “actual” abuse or neglect, an Incident Report shall be written and shall contain the information required by Field Operations Directive 03-004, Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act.

If the child abuse call was not directed by an eSCAR and the allegation of child abuse is physical or sexual abuse, the deputy must cross-report to DCFS providing the date, time, incident number (tag) and Uniform Report Number (URN) of the incident. If the deputy determines that general neglect or emotional abuse exists or the deputy believes the children would benefit from services offered by DCFS, the deputy may contact the DCFS hotline.

WIC 305 gives deputies the authority to take child abuse victims into protective custody. However, deputies cannot “place” a child who is taken into protective custody; a placement must be done by DCFS.

If the handling deputy determines no crime has occurred, the SCAR will be cleared by pulling an URN with a 419 statistical code, and the deputy shall complete the SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report. If the handling deputy is unable to contact any of the parties, the deputy shall complete the SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report without drawing an URN and clear the call with a 416 statistical code. The deputy shall notify the Watch Deputy that the SCAR will need to be re-dispatched, and return all paperwork, including the SCAR Clearance Narrative/Check-Off Report and a printout of their incident record.

Due to the volatile nature of Domestic Violence Incidents, there is an inherent risk of physical and/or emotional abuse or neglect to any and all children residing or present, in the home of the incident. Deputies responding to incidents of Domestic Violence shall make every attempt to assess and interview all children in the home for incidents of abuse. If a child hears or sees a Domestic Violence incident, the child shall be listed in the Incident Report as a witness, their statement included, and a notification to DCFS, providing the date, time,

incident number and URN of the incident, shall be made. If the child is touched (examples, in the victim's arms when the victim is injured, hit by flying objects, injured by suspect slamming a door, etc.), the child shall be listed in the Incident Report as a victim, their statement included, and a notification to DCFS, providing the same information as previously stated shall be made. For all arrests, the deputy shall complete the Arrested Person's Children form.

When investigating SCARs deputies should be cognizant of any another type of crime that may have occurred or not reported (i.e. non-criminal domestic violence, battery, use of narcotics, etc.).

If children are **not** present during a Domestic Violence incident or any other crime that occurred in the home which may include a history of Domestic Violence and the deputy believes the children would benefit from services offered by DCFS, the deputy may contact the DCFS hotline.

JURISDICTION:

Law enforcement and DCFS conduct separate, but parallel, investigations. Law enforcement conducts a criminal investigation and DCFS investigates the social aspect of the case. Deputies should not rely on DCFS to conduct any part of their investigation. If during their interview, a deputy discovers that the incident occurred in another jurisdiction, the deputy shall write a courtesy report.

MISCELLANEOUS:

When interviewing a child at school, the deputy must advise the child that they have the right to have a school staff member (adult) present during the interview.

The identity of all people who report child abuse or neglect is confidential.

Both sworn and non-sworn members of the department are mandated reporters pursuant to 11166 PC.

Watch Commanders shall check the status of uncleared SCARs at least once per shift and ensure that all SCARs are handled in a timely and complete manner. Any SCAR over twenty-four hours old will be explained in the Watch Commander log.

• 24-01: Sheriff Station Clerk I/II Duties

PALMDALE UNIT ORDER 24-01

TITLE: SHERIFF STATION CLERK I/II DUTIES

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JOSHUA A. BARDON

OPERATIONS CAPTAIN

RICK CARTMILL

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPTAIN

JULY 15, 2024

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this order is to establish unit expectations and duties for the Palmdale Station Records Unit.

SCOPE:

This order applies to all Sheriff Station Clerks assigned to the Palmdale Station Records Unit

WORK SCHEDULES:

Clerks are assigned to a 5/40 (or 4/10 when its conducive for the unit); 5/10 schedules are Sunday through Thursday or Tuesday through Saturday and 4/10 schedules are Sunday through Wednesday or Wednesday through Saturday; For the purpose of training new clerks and maintaining specialized collaterals so the unit may comply with mandated audits, the Supervising Sheriff Station Clerk will select a clerk as a trainer and/or to handle specialized collaterals. For the purpose of schedule balancing when the unit is short staffed or when a trainer is needed to work alongside the supervisor, additional schedules (such as split week schedules for balancing shift ends or Monday – Friday schedules for trainers) will be required and set at the Supervising Sheriff Station Clerk's discretion.

GENERAL DUTIES:

The Palmdale Station Records Unit Sheriff Station Clerks are responsible for assisting deputy personnel by providing routine clerical staff support functions which includes performing inquiries, processing incoming reports and citations, and entering data into the LARCIS and JDIC law enforcement systems. Additional duties include aiding the jailers with the completion of bookings and assisting the public via phone.

SPECIFIC EXPECTATION OF DUTIES:

I. RECORDS UNIT EXPECTATIONS

- Clerks are expected to handle the unit solo; Clerks will be assigned to handle both the jail bookings and the URN task for incoming reports when they are scheduled as the solo clerk for their shift, when their shift partner unexpectedly calls out or when assigned by their supervisor (regardless of how many clerks are present as others may be assigned to mandatory and time sensitive special collaterals or assignments).

- When there is more than one clerk on schedule, all should remain present in the unit to assist with the

workload; there must be at least one clerk in the unit at all times to answer phones and assist deputies and jailers.

- When there's a need to leave the unit (ex. lunch break, scanning, picking up reports, etc.), communication must be made to assigned shift partners or if working solo to the watch sergeant and operator.

- Personal phone calls during working hours are not allowed except for emergency situations to ensure the office phones are answered promptly without distraction.

- Punctuality and attendance are imperative as the Records Unit requires 24-hour attention and should never go without staff coverage.

- Timekeeping accepts time in 30-minute increments. If you are late, under 30 minutes, there is no policy on making up time as Sheriff Station Clerks I/II are not on a flex schedule. Any time after your scheduled working hours is considered late. Late arrivals will be documented by means of a telephonic variance slip in 30-minute increments or in writing for arrivals less than 30 minutes as this time cannot be made up.

- If you have an unscheduled absence, call in at least two hours before your scheduled start time to provide ample time to seek voluntary coverage or provide notice to those left working solo.

- Requests for subsequent time off outside of mandatory vacations and protected leaves are not automatically approved and will be honored based on the unit needs/staffing; Review of requests will be performed closer to when coverage behind such absences can be confirmed (which will be no earlier than 10 days prior to the requested date).

II. URN PROCESSING (FOR INCOMING REPORTS) EXPECTATIONS

- Log incoming reports, utilize check off sheets to ensure the accuracy of reports, perform entry verifications and second party checks, process a minimum of 3 pickups when assigned only the URN for the shift and at least 1 pickup when solo.

- Log incoming citations (book cites and forward to the handling unit).

- LARCIS, scan, fax, and/or mail In-custody reports, SVB assigned reports, and courtesy reports immediately upon receipt.

- Enter all serialized property/vehicles/firearms/missing persons in a timely manner (according to DOJ required deadlines).

III. JAIL BOOKING PROCESSING EXPECTATIONS

- Log bookings, enter "add charges", check for a CII# and livescan in order to immediately begin running criminal history checks.

- Monitor the booking tray and the JDIC teletype machine every 10-15 minutes for incoming bookings,

add charges, court supplemental/transfer lists, and teletypes such as livescan, homeland security, FBI, etc.

- Ensure all bookings are completed within 30 minutes and have the necessary documents (holds, abstracts, etc.).
- Process court supplemental/transfer lists immediately upon receipt.

ADDITIONAL WORK TO BE INCORPORATED DURING THE SHIFT

- Answer the phones promptly.
- Monitor the JDIC teletype machine every 10 minutes for hit confirmations, locates, etc.
- Assist specialized units during afterhours.
- Address work trays (LARCIS data entry of reports, booking and releasing of traffic and warrant citations, JDIC entry of incoming vehicle reports, updating release of vehicle holds, processing incoming/outgoing mail, clearance letters, supplemental loss reports, and fax requests).
- Handle warrant inquiries (request, confirm, reactivate, provide abstract, etc.)
- Assist shift co-workers and overlapping shift co-workers with second party checks, deputy assists, extensive data entries and heavy phones.

3-01/050.10 - Performance to Standards

Members shall maintain sufficient competency to properly perform their duties and assume the responsibilities of their positions. Members shall perform their duties in a manner which will tend to establish and maintain the highest standard of efficiency in carrying out the functions and objectives of the Department.

Incompetence may be demonstrated by:

- A lack of knowledge of the application of laws required to be enforced;
- An unwillingness or inability to perform assigned tasks;
- Failure to conform to work standards established for the member's rank or position;
- Failure to take appropriate action on the occasion of a crime, disorder or other condition deserving police attention;
- Absence without leave; and/or
- Unnecessary absence from an assigned area during a tour of duty.

3-01/050.05 Performance of Duty

While on duty, employees shall be governed by the following rules:

Employees shall devote their time and attention to the service of the County and the Department, and shall direct and coordinate their efforts in a manner which will establish and maintain the highest standard of efficiency.

3-01/050.45 PUNCTUALITY

A member shall be punctual in reporting for duty at the time and place designated by his supervisor. Habitual failure to report promptly at the specified time shall be deemed neglect of duty.

Los Angeles County Code 6.20.120

An employee may have an absenteeism problem when he/she has three or more separate incidents/absences in one month; has two or more separate absences in one month that are next to the employee's RDO's; has one or more Unauthorized Absences in one month; has been late two or more times in one month; has more unexpected absences in one calendar year than the employee earns in Sick Leave in one calendar year.