2009 - 3 DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES MULTI-AGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (MART)

PURPOSE OF ORDER

The purpose of this order is to establish guidelines for the appropriate use of Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Multi-Agency Response Team (MART) personnel during pre-planned search warrant operations.

SCOPE OF ORDER

This order applies to all Bureau personnel.

ORDER

The Bureau has collaborated with MART to assist Bureau personnel by responding to child endangerment or neglect incidents encountered during search warrant operations.

This order applies to all pre-planned search warrant operations and in any situation where time allows for a MART investigator to be requested before warrant service. Since the majority of search warrants issued by this Bureau involve firearms or illegal drugs, the following guidelines shall be followed to ensure the safety of minors residing with gang members:

- Advance notification to before a warrant operation is the most effective way of ensuring a rapid response. Team sergeants shall incorporate MART notification into routine pre-service administrative procedures. In cases involving fewer than three locations, MART shall be notified and placed on call or asked to respond at their discretion.

- If, upon service, minors are found in the presence of unsecured firearms, narcotics, or in any condition that poses a threat to their health and safety, a MART investigator shall be asked to respond.

- For operations involving three or more search locations, a MART investigator shall be requested and asked to stage at the command post.

Assistance to DCFS:

- Personnel may be asked to assist DCFS with evidence gathering, such as video or digital photos. Evidence to support DCFS does not fall under the chain of evidence procedures of the Sheriff's Department. Personnel may take additional video and digital photos, not for criminal prosecution, and provide it directly to DCFS workers for Dependency Court.

DCFS Services May Include:

- Taking children into protective custody,

- Formulating a "protective plan" for the family,

- Placing the child with relatives,
- Ordering adult gang members to vacate the home while keeping the family and children in place,
- Monitoring gang families and providing conditional services.

DCFS has lower thresholds for detaining children than law enforcement. Acts of endangerment that rise to the level of a crime must be documented by Bureau personnel in the appropriate first or supplemental report.

Review and Reporting Responsibilities:

- Detectives and sergeants should remain vigilant when reviewing crime reports involving gang-related violence and children.
- If a specific gang residence becomes the target of multiple acts of violence, DCFS personnel should be consulted ~~in order~~ to determine whether or not the children residing at the location are endangered.

A working agreement defining roles and responsibilities has been approved between the Department and DCFS.