



**CHEVY CHASE  
VILLAGE  
POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

  
Police Chief: John Fitzgerald

**GENERAL ORDER: 5-24.1 VICTIM AND WITNESS ASSISTANCE**

DATE: 1/14/2021    Pages: 2    ◇    New    ◆    Amended

DISTRIBUTION:    Sworn Personnel

**I. POLICY**

- A. All victims and witnesses have a right to be treated with dignity, *respect and sensitivity*, and all members of the Department (sworn and non-sworn) *shall* treat these persons accordingly.
- B. *On a Department member's own initiative or upon request of a victim or witness*, personnel *shall* provide contact information/referrals to appropriate criminal justice and/or social service programs *which support victims and witnesses*.

**II. ALL DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES SHARE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DELIVERY OF VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

- A. Department employees will provide reasonable and appropriate assistance to victims/witnesses as dictated by the circumstances and the degree of need.
- B. *Officers are responsible for providing initial information and assistance to crime victims and witnesses as described in this general order when they respond to reports of crime*.
- C. Department employees are encouraged and authorized to refer victims/witnesses to other criminal justice agencies and/or governmental and non-governmental agencies *that may assist the victim/witness*.

**III. OFFICERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. **General**. *Officers shall do the following basic things whenever they make initial contact with crime victims or witnesses:*
- Identify themselves by name;*
  - Provide their business card along with the report number;*
  - Explain what they will do to investigate the crime and, if the County Police is responsible for follow-up investigation, explain that process to the victim/witness.*
  - Encourage the victim or witness to call our main number or to email the officer if they have further questions or information.*

**B. Hate crimes, domestic violence, assault/other crimes against the person, burglary, etc.** *Whenever an officer takes a report of a crime that has a more severe impact on a person than a theft or other minor property crime, officers will do the following (in addition to the items outlined in paragraph III.A. above):*

- Provide the person with the victim/witness rights and services pamphlet;*
- Explain the victim's rights and advise them of useful phone numbers as appropriate, such as:*
  - Crisis Center (240-777-4000);*
  - State's Attorney's Office (240-777-7300);*
  - District Court Commissioner (301-610-7217);*
  - Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (301-352-4574);*
  - Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center (877-842-8461)*
- Inform the victim that both the County Police and the State's Attorney's Office have victim/witness assistants, and provide the victim with the contact numbers for those offices:*
  - MCPD 2D Victim/Witness Coordinator: 240-773-5715*
  - State's Attorney's Office: 240-777-7300*
- Explain the process for obtaining a protective or peace order, if appropriate, and provide a peace order/protective order pamphlet to the victim.*

**C. Threats or Intimidation**

- If an employee learns that a victim or witness has been threatened with violence or has been the target of intimidation, the employee shall immediately notify the Chief and the Lieutenant.*
- A Department supervisor will promptly notify the State's Attorney's Office and any other relevant law enforcement agency of a credible instance of threats or intimidation.*
  - The Department will seek to place appropriate charges or advocate for such charges if the offense did not occur within the Village.*

---

3. Based on the specifics of the threat, the Department will determine what measures to take, what agencies should be involved to respond to the threat, and what advice to provide to the victim/witness.

4. Officers will:

- Ensure the person knows how to call the police (301-654-7300 or 911);
- Explain the laws related to telephone misuse, harassment and stalking; and
- Encourage the victim to enroll in VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday); details are in the victim rights pamphlet.

D. Arrest and Post-Arrest

1. Officers will make a good-faith effort to notify victims/witnesses of the following:

- a. the arrest of the offender;
- b. the charges placed;
- c. the custody status of the offender if known; and
- d. the court date if known.

This directive voids the previous version dated 3/12/2008.