



# Apex Police Department General Order



<b>Title</b> Victim and Witness Assistance		<b>Order Number</b> 1109-20
<b>Effective Date:</b> August 26, 2020	<b>Amends:</b> 1109-17	
<b>CALEA Standard:</b> 55.1.1, 55.1.2, 55.2.1, 55.2.2, 55.2.3, 55.2.4, 55.2.5, 55.2.6	<b>Rescinds:</b>	
<b>Reference:</b>	<b>Pages:</b> 15	
<b>Forms:</b> F1109 – Victim’s Rights Notification Form F1109a – Chaney’s Champions Bear Request		

## Victim and Witness Assistance

### Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to describe the services and programs that department members will provide or recommend to the public who are victims or witnesses to serious crimes or suffer other severe personal hardships as a result of criminally injurious or damaging conduct. This type of assistance may be required with incidents including a death of any nature, physical or sexual assaults, robberies, burglaries, or any other incidents where a victim or witness is traumatized and in need of services.

### Policy

It is the policy of the Apex Police Department for employees to comply with the provisions of the Crime Victim’s Rights Act [North Carolina Criminal Procedure: Article 46, NCGS 15A-830 (Definitions), 15A-831 (Responsibilities of law enforcement agency), and 15A-825 (Treatment due victims and witnesses), Article 45, 15A-824 (Fair Treatment for Certain Victims and Witnesses)], which specifies the information and procedures that a law enforcement agency must give or make available to the victim of specified crimes. The department and its members will strive to provide fair and reasonable treatment to victims and witnesses of crimes pursuant to North Carolina law.

### Definitions

*Accused* – A person who has been arrested and charged with committing a crime. (**SOURCE:** NCGS 15A-830)

## Victim and Witness Assistance

*Arresting Law Enforcement Agency* – The law enforcement agency that makes the arrest of an accused. (**SOURCE:** NCGS 15A-830)

*Crime* – A felony or serious misdemeanor as determined in the sole discretion of the Wake County District Attorney, except those included in Article 46 of NCGS 15A-830, or any act committed by a juvenile that if committed by a competent adult would constitute a felony or serious misdemeanor.

*Investigating Law Enforcement Agency* – The law enforcement agency with primary responsibility for investigating the crime committed against the victim.

*Next of Kin* – A victim's spouse, children, parents, siblings, or grandparents. (**NOTE:** The term does not include the accused unless the charges are dismissed or the person is found not guilty.) (**SOURCE:** 15A-830)

*North Carolina Law Enforcement Assistance Program (NCLEAP)* – A non-profit corporation comprised of law enforcement officials and public servants from across North Carolina who are trained as peer counselors to assist law enforcement agencies and employees in the aftermath of a critical incident. Their mission is to respond to the actual needs of law enforcement officers, their families, and civilian staff. (**SOURCE:** NCLEAP).

*Victim* – A person against whom there is probable cause to believe a crime has been committed. (**SOURCE:** NCGS 15A-830)

*Witness* – A person who has been or is expected to be summoned to testify for the prosecution in a criminal action concerning a felony, or who by reason of having relevant information is subject to being called or is likely to be called as a witness for the prosecution in such an action, whether or not an action or proceeding has commenced.

## Procedures

### Victim/Witness Services – Community Service Perspective

1. The manner in which a victim or witness to a crime is able to cope with his/her experience depends in some measure on how he/she is treated immediately after the event. Often, a police officer is the first person to officially interact with a victim or witness after a crime. The department is in a unique position to help victims and witnesses cope with the trauma of a criminal act and to assist them in regaining a sense of security and control over their lives.
2. The department will aid those persons victimized by crime and violence by working to ease their participation in the criminal justice system and by providing compassion, support, and fair treatment to them in their time of crisis. The department is committed to making every reasonable effort possible to ensure that victims and witnesses receive professional service consistent with their investigative and prosecutor role.

## Victim and Witness Assistance

3. The department will make a thorough effort to ensure that the rights of people victimized by crime and violence are upheld, as provided by law.

### **Applicable Regulations (55.1.1)**

#### *Federal – Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Title II and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Section 504*

1. The ADA and Rehabilitation Act require that, with few exceptions, all first responders provide victims of crime who have a disability with an equal opportunity to benefit from and participate in all programs, services, and activities of the law enforcement agency.
2. Additionally, officers must provide for equally effective communication with victims who have a disability. Law enforcement is required to make “reasonable accommodations” to policies, practices, and procedures where needed to accommodate crime victims who have a disability.

#### *Federal – Justice for All Act of 2004*

1. Victims of crime have specific rights, including the right:
  - To be reasonably protected from the accused
  - To reasonable, accurate, and timely notice of any public court proceeding or any parole proceeding involving the crime, as well as of any release or escape of the accused
  - Not to be excluded from any such public court proceeding, unless the court after reviewing clear and convincing evidence, determines that testimony from the victim would be materially altered if the victim heard other testimony at that proceeding
  - To be reasonably heard at any public proceeding in the district court involving release, plea, sentencing, or any parole proceeding
  - To confer with the attorney for the government in the case, within reason
  - To full and timely restitution as provided in law
  - To proceedings free from unreasonable delay
  - To be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim’s dignity and privacy

#### *North Carolina Constitution*

1. Victims of crime have specific rights, including the right:
  - As prescribed by law, to be informed of and to be present at court proceedings of the accused
  - To be heard at sentencing of the accused in a manner prescribed by law, and at other times, as prescribed by law or deemed appropriate by the court
  - As prescribed by law, to receive restitution
  - As prescribed by law, to be given information about the crime, how the criminal justice system works, the rights of victims, and the availability of services for victims

## Victim and Witness Assistance

- As prescribed by law, to receive information about the conviction or final disposition and sentence of the accused
- As prescribed by law, to receive notification of escape, release, proposed parole or pardon of the accused, or notice of a reprieve or commutation of the accused's sentence
- As prescribed by law, to present their views and concerns to the Governor or agency considering any action that could result in the release of the accused, prior to such action becoming effective
- As prescribed by, law to confer with the prosecution

### *North Carolina Crime Victims' Rights Act (Article 46)*

1. According to this statute, law enforcement agency personnel will provide the AOC-CR-180B form to the victim, allowing the victim to choose whether or not they want further notifications about the criminal case. This form provides the rights and resources available to victims covered by the Crime Victims' Rights Act (CVRA).
2. As soon as practicable, but within 72 hours after identifying a victim covered by this statute, law enforcement agency personnel will make a reasonable effort to ensure each victim and witness within their jurisdiction is provided with the following:
  - The availability of medical services, as needed
  - The availability of Crime Victims' Compensation under NCGS Chapter 15B as well as the address and telephone number of the agency responsible for dispensing funds
  - The address and telephone number of the Wake County District Attorney's Office responsible for prosecuting the case
  - The name and telephone number of an investigating officer whom the victim may contact if the victim has not been notified of an arrest within six months after the crime was reported to the department
  - Information about the accused's opportunity for pre-trial release
  - The name and telephone number of a department employee whom the victim may contact to find out if the accused has been released from custody
3. As soon as practicable, but within 72 hours after the arrest of a person believed to have committed a crime covered by Article 46, the arresting law enforcement agency will inform the investigating law enforcement agency (if different) of the arrest.
4. As soon as practicable but within 72 hours of being notified of the arrest, the investigating law enforcement agency will notify the victim of the arrest.
5. As soon as practicable but within 72 hours after receiving notification from the arresting law enforcement agency that the accused has been arrested, the investigating law enforcement agency will forward to the district attorney's office that will be responsible for prosecuting the case, the defendant's name and the victim's name, address, date of birth, social security number, race, sex, and telephone number, unless the victim refuses to disclose any or all of

## Victim and Witness Assistance

the information; in which case, the investigating law enforcement agency will inform the district attorney's office. Information about the victim's choice to receive or not receive further notifications in the criminal case will be documented within the incident report and on form AOC-CR-180B.

### Treatment Due Victims/Witnesses and Responsibilities of the Agency (55.1.1)

1. Department employees will work to protect and defend the rights of victims whenever possible and will follow the guidelines of Article 45 of the Criminal Procedure Act under the NCGS that provide for the fair treatment of victims and witnesses.
2. In accordance with NCGS 15A-824, 15A-825, 15A-831, the department will fulfill statutory agency responsibilities relative to a victim to the extent reasonably possible and subject to available resources. This may include direct action by the department or referral to the appropriate statutory authority.
3. Upon receiving this information, the victim will indicate on form F1109 – *Victim's Rights Notification* (provided by the department) whether the victim wishes to receive further notices from the department. If the victim elects to receive further notices, the victim will be responsible for notifying the department of any changes in the victim's name, address, and telephone number.
  - The officer will indicate in the incident report that applicable victim information forms were provided to the victim.
  - When a victim is deceased, is mentally or physically incompetent, or when the victim is a minor, the victim's rights under this Article, other than the rights provided by NCGS 15A-834, may be exercised by the victim's "next of kin" or legal guardian. (**SOURCE:** NCGS 15A - 841)

### Interpreters

1. Employees will make every effort to ensure they communicate effectively with people who speak English as their second language, are deaf, or hard of hearing.
  - If the need for an interpreter arises, the officer will contact the Communications Center and the Telecommunicator will attempt to locate an on-duty, department interpreter possessing the necessary language proficiency. (**NOTE:** All department interpreters and their language proficiency are noted on the department's Assignments-Staffing Table)
  - If no department interpreter possessing the necessary language proficiency is available, the Telecommunicator will make contact with an appropriate interpreter through the Language Line.
2. Family members of the person may be able to assist with communication; however, for any court-related purpose, a qualified/certified interpreter should be used. (**NOTE:** For trial,

## Victim and Witness Assistance

hearings, or a formal court proceeding, this is the responsibility of the Wake County District Attorney's Office.)

3. Additionally, the Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is required by NCGS 8B to maintain a list of interpreters who are licensed and available for interpreting in judicial, administrative, and legislative proceedings.
4. Information about services offered and access to the Sign Language Interpreter and Transliterators Directory can be found on the following websites:
  - <http://dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/division/interpreter/interpreter.html>
  - <http://www.ncrid.org> (North Carolina Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf)

## Critical Needs of Victims

1. The following is a list of critical needs for victims: (**SOURCE:** Enhancing Law Enforcement Response to Victims):
  - *Safety* – Protection from perpetrators and assistance in avoiding re-victimization
  - *Support* – Assistance to enable participation in justice system processes and repair of harm
  - *Information* – Concise and useful information about justice system processes and victim services
  - *Access* – Opportunity to participate in justice system processes and obtain information and services
  - *Continuity* – Consistency in approaches and methods across agencies through all stages of the justice process
  - *Voice* – Opportunities to speak out on specific case processing issues and larger policy questions
  - *Justice* – Receiving the support necessary to heal and seeing that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions

## Victim/Witness Services, Generally

1. The Victim/Witness Assistance Program is managed through the department's Criminal Investigation Division and is under the supervision of the Division Commander who will:
  - During the case review process, determine if a victim or witness might need additional assistance, referral, or follow up
  - Monitor local and state victim and witness legislation and make recommendations, through the chain of command to the Chief of Police for revisions to policies and/or procedures
  - Ensure that services made available to the public are also provided to any employee in the event that such assistance becomes necessary

## Victim and Witness Assistance

- Act as a liaison with the Wake County District Attorney's Office, the North Carolina Crime Victims Compensation Commission, and other agencies that provide services to victims and witnesses
1. The Victim/Witness Assistance Program can provide victims with referral to short-term counseling or social service agencies, court process information, accompaniment at court proceedings, and assistance in obtaining Domestic Violence Protection Orders (50B, 50C, etc.).
    - Services may include:
      - Providing information and guidance to victims and witnesses regarding the criminal justice system (i.e. case status, protection orders, property recovery, etc.)
      - Initiating contact with the family of a victim, witness, or suspect to determine if referral and/or support are needed, when appropriate
        - Cases appropriate for this service may include high profile cases and/or serious felonies
      - Accompanying victims and witnesses to line-ups and court proceedings, when appropriate
      - Referring victims and witnesses to social agencies for counseling or other assistance, as appropriate
      - Conducting personal contacts at the victim's home or hospital, when appropriate
      - Coordinating with the Evidence/Property Clerk and appropriate personnel for the return of property/evidence to victims, when possible
  2. Department employees will not:
    - Act as counselors and will not provide direct counseling services
      - Employees will assist victims and witnesses with information and referral to appropriate governmental and/or community agencies
    - Provide personal transportation, housing, or other assistance (i.e. off-duty, personal vehicle or housing, etc.) directly to a victim or witness
  3. A department Chaplain is available for response, guidance, and assistance when necessary. Notifications to a Chaplain remain within the discretion of the on-duty supervisor and/or Watch Commander and are not required, but should be considered for traumatic events, suicides, serious/fatal vehicle wrecks, death notifications, etc.
  4. All information relating to victims and witnesses, including their role in case development, is considered confidential and will only be disclosed as necessary in the course of official business or as required by statute or other law.
  5. The department's Victims Advocate is available for response, guidance, and assistance in domestic violence related cases and other cases as needed. (**NOTE:** After-hours assistance of the Victims Advocate will be at the discretion of the on-call Criminal Investigations Supervisor.)

## Victim and Witness Assistance

### Employee Services

1. Each Division Commander is responsible for ensuring that appropriate services are provided to employees and their families following traumatic events, serious injuries, or line of duty deaths.
  - Supervisors will monitor their staff following any traumatic event encountered during the scope of the employee's duties (i.e. response to a crisis situation) or in the employee's personal life that may affect his/her ability to carry out his/her duties appropriately.
  - If encountered, the supervisor will notify the Chief of Police through the chain of command, and will consider what services might be appropriate for the employee.
  - These services may be provided through department or community resources, the Town of Apex Employee Assistance Program (EAP), or another service acceptable to the employee.
  - A Chaplain is available to assist department staff.
  
2. North Carolina Law Enforcement Assistance Program (NCLEAP)
  - NCLEAP provides services to law enforcement agencies, officers, and civilian staff to assist with critical incident stress management. Information and access to services can be obtained from:
    - The NCLEAP website – [www.nc-leap.org](http://www.nc-leap.org)
    - Email to [info@nc-leap.org](mailto:info@nc-leap.org)
    - Phone at (336) 345-2089

### Victim Notification – Release from Incarceration

1. Victims can be notified when the offender in their case has been released from incarceration. Victims interested in this notification should be referred to the following organizations:
  - The North Carolina Statewide Automated Victim Assistance & Notification (SAVAN)
  - North Carolina Department of Correction
  - Wake County Sheriff's Office – Detention Center

### Victim Compensation

1. The North Carolina Crime Victims Compensation Commission provides for compensation to victims of crime. A victim wishing compensation must complete the North Carolina Department of Public Safety Victim Compensation Application.
  - The form is available from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) website.
  - Assistance with the program can be obtained from DPS or the Wake County District Attorney's Office.

## Victim and Witness Assistance

### Procedures for Victim/Witness Assistance

1. Responding officers will determine, upon investigation, whether a victim or witness needs (and will accept) immediate assistance from a counselor or advocate.
  - If it is determined that the victim/witness does not require immediate assistance, officers will provide information on available governmental and/or community resources.
2. The investigating officer will refer victims and witnesses to appropriate services during the initial contact/investigation. The follow-up investigator will conduct additional assessments and make further referrals as indicated. Investigators will be available to victims and witnesses with a need for special intervention, such as incidents involving homicide, suicide, domestic violence, abuse and neglect involving children and elderly persons, and sexual crimes. (55.1.1)
  - Department employees will ensure the confidentiality of records and files of victims/witnesses and their role in case development to the extent consistent with applicable statutes and department directives. Information related to victims and witnesses of crimes will be contained in the master case file and will be secured according to current directives. (55.1.1)
  - When appropriate, the Criminal Investigation Division Commander, or his/her designee, will inform the media and public of the department's Victim/Witness Assistance Program. Additionally, information will be made available through presentations, pamphlets, brochures, or other methods where appropriate. (55.1.1)
  - The department, through the Criminal Investigation Division, will maintain a relationship with the Wake County District Attorney's Office and other victim/witness service agencies and organizations to ensure the consistency and appropriateness of victim/witness efforts and to be kept informed of the activities of other area agencies in similar endeavors. (55.1.1)
3. An on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander will ensure those who have experienced a traumatic event, are also referred to a government or community resource that might provide assistance.
4. Supervisors will monitor officer performance concerning response to victims to ensure that we are delivering the appropriate service level. Supervisors who review reports should look for documentation of appropriate victim response.

### Levels of Victim/Witness Assistance

1. The single point of contact for victim/witness services 24-hours per day is the Communications Center. (55.2.1 (a))
  - Emergency assistance is available by calling 911.

## Victim and Witness Assistance

- Non-emergency assistance or information is available by calling the published non-emergency number.
2. Telecommunicators will judge the characteristics of the call to determine if an emergency or non-emergency response is indicated and will process the call in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure C216 – *Processing Calls from Victims and Witnesses* and any other applicable written directives. (55.2.1 (a)) (55.2.1 (b))
- When taking a call from a victim or witness for information or services, the Telecommunicator will determine if an unreported crime is in progress or has occurred, and will dispatch police officers accordingly.
  - If the request is related to a crime that has already been reported and there is not an immediate need for the services or intervention of police officers, the Telecommunicator will refer the victim/witness to the officer or investigator who is handling the case.
    - If there is a need for immediate service or intervention, the Telecommunicator will dispatch police officers accordingly.
    - If there is a need for immediate information that the Telecommunicator cannot provide, the Telecommunicator will notify an on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander who will handle the request for information.
  - If the victim/witness needs specific advocate services, the Telecommunicator will notify the Criminal Investigation Division Commander or the on-call Criminal Investigations Supervisor who will review the request and provide assistance, if appropriate.
  - If the information provided by the caller indicates a separate incident has occurred (i.e. witness intimidation, tampering with a witness, etc.), the Telecommunicator will dispatch police officers accordingly and will consider it a separate incident.
3. Callers will be provided with the telephone numbers for the appropriate services such as: (55.2.1 (b))
- Wake County District Attorney Office
  - Crisis referral hot lines, including a 24-hour number for counseling and assistance
  - Local mental health services
  - Salvation Army
  - United Way – 211 Program
  - North Carolina Department of Public Safety
  - Other agencies/organizations that provide appropriate assistance

### **Assistance to Threatened Victim/Witness (55.2.2)**

1. If a victim or witness has been threatened or expresses specific, credible reasons for fearing intimidation or further victimization, the circumstances will be fully investigated and documented according to current directives.

## Victim and Witness Assistance

- An on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander will be notified and will determine if the case will be investigated by the Patrol Division or if the case should be referred to an investigator, if one is already assigned.
2. If the victim/witness is in another jurisdiction, an on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander will ensure that contact is made with the appropriate law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in a timely manner, to advise them of the situation and request that reasonable precautions are taken. The results of this contact will be documented in the incident report or a supplemental report and the assigned Apex Police Department investigator, if any, will be notified.
  3. The investigating officer will inform the Wake County District Attorney's Office of the threats received by the victims/witnesses and will document the notification in the case report or supplement.

### **Victim/Witness Assistance during Preliminary Investigation**

1. Officers will provide victims/witnesses information pertaining to the North Carolina Crime Victim Rights and Crime Compensation Act during the preliminary investigation, including:
  - Giving information to victims/witnesses about applicable services, including counseling, medical attention, compensation and/or emergency financial assistance, and victim advocacy (55.2.3 (a))
  - Advising victims/witnesses what to do if the suspect and/or suspect's companions or family threatens or otherwise intimidates them (55.2.3 (b))
  - Informing victims/witnesses of the report number and explaining the steps involved in the subsequent processing of the case (55.2.3 (c))
  - Providing a telephone number that victims/witnesses may call to report additional information about the case or to receive information regarding the status of the case (55.2.3 (d))

### **Victim/Witness Assistance in Follow up Investigation**

1. Officers will provide appropriate victim/witness services during the follow-up investigation, including:
  - In order to determine if the victim's/witness's needs are being met, provide a status on the investigation and determine if the victim/witness has any further information and attempt a second or subsequent contact with the victim/witness in serious crimes, or as directed by a supervisor (55.2.4 (a))
  - Assist the victim/witness during court proceedings as the need arises and explain the procedures involved in the prosecution of the victim's/witness's case and the victim's/witness's role in those proceedings, if it will not jeopardize successful prosecution of the case (55.2.4 (b))
  - Whenever possible and determined to be necessary for the investigation, schedule lineups, interviews, and other required appearances at the convenience of the

## Victim and Witness Assistance

victim/witness and, if necessary, provide transportation for the victim/witness (55.2.4 (c))

- If requested, provide a person to act as a victim advocate, if available, during lineups or similar proceedings (55.2.4 (e))
- Provide secure waiting areas during pre-arrest, arrest, and post-arrest procedures and ensure that the victim/witness does not come into close proximity to suspect or associates, unless necessary for the investigation
- Instruct the victim/witness to call 911 if threatened by the suspect or the suspect's companions or family, or contact the follow-up investigator if being harassed, threatened, or intimidated
- Assist in the returning of property belonging to the victim/witness as promptly as possible when it is no longer needed for evidence or as directed by the court (55.2.4 (d))
- Notify the victim when an arrest has been made involving an assigned case
  - Provide the charges and defendant's current custody status, when known
  - Instruct the victim to call the jail to check on the defendant's ongoing custody status
- Maintain the confidentiality of the victim/witness to the fullest extent possible

### **Victim/Witness Assistance during Arrest/Post Arrest Processing (55.2.5)**

1. The investigating or arresting officer will make an effort to promptly notify the victim/witness of the following, if known:
  - When arrest is made
  - When charges are placed
  - Custody status of the arrested
  - Any known court dates
2. The requirements of this section may be met by the Victim/Witness Programs of other agencies, including by the Wake County District Attorney's Office or by the SAVAN process.
3. Notification is not required on Failure to Appear (FTA) warrants.

### **Outreach Program**

#### *Chaney's Champions*

1. An organization that donated custom-made, teddy bears to the department for employees to give to children experiencing a crisis or other type of traumatic event (i.e. domestic incident, traffic crash, death, etc.).
  - The goal of the program is to remember Chaney and provide comfort to children in distress.

## Victim and Witness Assistance

2. Teddy bears are made available primarily in the Patrol and Criminal Investigation Divisions, but are available to all employees.
3. The employee giving a child a teddy bear will:
  - If possible and appropriate, obtain permission from the parent, guardian, etc. and take a photo of the child, bear, and employee
    - The photo will be sent to Chaney's family and potentially posted on social media
  - Complete form F1109a – *"Chaney's Champions" Bear Receipt*
  - Include a complete description of the circumstances in which the child received the teddy bear, the date and time, applicable incident report/NC Crash Report number, as well as the sex and age of the child
  - Attached any related reports
  - Forward the completed form, photo, and reports to the Office of Chief of Police
    - Upon receipt of a completed form, and for each subsequently completed form, the employee will receive another teddy bear
    - The Administrative Coordinator will prepare a letter on behalf of the Apex Police Department detailing the reason the child received the teddy bear and send it and the photo to the *"Chaney's Champions" Organization*
    - All completed form F1109a - *"Chaney's Champions" Bear Receipt* will be maintained and filed accordingly by the Office of Chief of Police

## Next of Kin Notification (55.2.6)

1. The department is, at times, called upon to notify citizens of the death, injury, or serious illness of a person. It is the policy of the department to honor such requests whether they come from a citizen or another law enforcement agency.
2. The following procedures will be followed when delivering a "next of kin" notification:
  - Notifications to next of kin of deceased, seriously injured, or seriously ill persons, regardless of reason (i.e. accident or non-accident), from this or another agency will be forwarded to an on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander
  - Prior to the notification, the on-duty supervisor or Watch Commander will attempt to gather as much information as possible about the situation and subject
  - Notifications initiated by the department will be made by department personnel in the jurisdictional limits and up to a reasonable distance from the limits of the Town of Apex
  - Notifications initiated by another agency will be made within the jurisdictional limits of the Town of Apex only
    - Requests for a notification outside those limits will be referred to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction
  - Notifications to next of kin of deceased, seriously injured, or seriously ill persons will be carried out promptly and in a considerate manner
  - When possible, the on-duty supervisor will make these notifications
  - When possible, these notifications will be made in person, in a private location

## Victim and Witness Assistance

- The notifying officer will, whenever appropriate, attempt to obtain assistance from a department Chaplain, other clergy, relatives, or close friends
- Officers making notifications will ensure, to the extent possible, that the message was understood and that follow-up communication, if necessary (i.e. to another law enforcement agency that requested the notification, etc.), is made as soon as possible
  - Officers should remain until the follow-up communication is made, if possible
- Attempts to notify next of kin should be exhausted prior to such information being released to the news media
  - Only the department's Public Information Officer (PIO) is authorized to release this information
- The notifying officer will ensure that a friend, neighbor, or family member is present or immediately available before leaving the notified party
- The next of kin will be assisted in contacting the medical authorities or the requesting outside agency to obtain necessary information
  - The officer will determine what, if any, additional assistance is necessary

## Training

1. Field Training Officers (FTOs) will ensure newly sworn police officers assigned under their supervision and control are familiar with victim/witness rights and needs, and on the levels of service available from the department and other agencies.

## Review of Victim/Witness Services (55.1.2)

1. Every year the Criminal Investigations Division Commander, or his/her designee, will conduct a documented review of victim/witness assistance needs and available services within the Apex area. The review will include, at a minimum:
  - Review of methods and operational practices
  - Legal updates relating to victims and victim/witness services
  - An overview of the extent and major types of victimization within the department's service area
  - A listing of victim assistance needs and the related community services available within the service area
  - To the extent possible, identification of all unfulfilled needs and the selection of those needs, which are appropriate for the department to meet
  - Recommendations for improvement or policy changes
2. The review will be completed and submitted to the Chief of Police through the chain of command no later than January 31st of the year following the period subject to the review.

Text in "Green" denotes a significant change in policy

**BY ORDER OF:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John W. Letteney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

John W. Letteney  
Chief of Police