

BLOOMFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



VOLUME:

CHAPTER:

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SUBJECT: HANDLE WITH CARE

BY THE ORDER OF:

Samuel A. DeMaio, Public Safety Director

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

N/A

Effective Date:

December 11, 2020

SUPERSEDES ORDER #:

PURPOSE The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to maintain procedures for the *Statewide Handle with Care Program* in accordance with *New Jersey Attorney General Directive 2020-09*.

POLICY It is the policy of the Bloomfield Police Department to participate in the *Statewide Handle with Care Program* in accordance with *New Jersey Attorney General Directive 2020-09*.

In no way does this SOP supersede this agency's SOP on *Alternate Care for Arrestee's Dependents*.

PROCEDURES

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Child or children refers to any student, regardless of age, enrolled in pre-school through twelfth grade at either a public or private school.
- B. Community violence is interpersonal violence committed in public areas by individuals not intimately related to the victim. Examples of community violence include but are not limited to fights among gangs or other groups, bullying, and shooting.
- C. Point of contact refers to a school employee identified by the head of the school or Board of Education. This individual will be responsible for receiving all *Handle with Care Notices* for children enrolled in that school and for disseminating the *Handle with Care Notices* to the child's teacher(s).
- D. Traumatic event shall be broadly construed and includes but, is not limited to the following incidents when a child is a victim or witness:
 - 1. The arrest of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;

2. A search warrant executed at the child's residence;
3. A drug/alcohol overdose of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;
4. Suicide or attempted suicide of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;
5. An incident of domestic violence;
6. Physical/sexual abuse;
7. Community violence;
8. A bullied child or a child who is bullying others;
9. Forced displacement from the residence;
10. Involvement with the Department of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P);
11. House fires;
12. Any other incident where a child is identified at the scene or in an investigation as being exposed to trauma or a critical incident (e.g., crime/drug activity, violence or abuse within the household); or
13. The sudden death of an immediate family member or guardian of the child of which the police are made aware.

II. GENERAL

- A. It is necessary to maintain a program in order to:
 1. Identify when a child has been exposed to a traumatic event or other type of critical incident; and
 2. Make notification to the child's respective school by sending a standardized notice form to a designated point of contact within the school
- B. The Director of Public Safety or his/her designee shall maintain a current list of email addresses of all school principals (or other school administrator designated by the principal) within the Township of Bloomfield. This list shall be maintained on DMS.
- C. The *Handle with Care Notice* requires only the following basic, non-specific information:
 1. Name of the school the child attends;

2. Name of this agency;
3. Date and time of the incident;
4. Date of referral; and
5. Name of the child, age, and grade.
6. No other information shall be written on the notice form.

NOTE: although officers may not press for this information for the *Handle with Care Notice*, officers are not restricted from determining any information regarding a child or a child's school that may be relevant to a criminal investigation to ensure the child's health or safety, or to address a concern of imminent danger.

- D. When a member of this agency responds to, investigates, or is aware of a traumatic or critical incident when a school-age child (grades K thru 12) is present, the responding officer shall complete an Incident report in the CAD system and include all information in Section C. 1-6 listed above. The report shall then be turned over to Youth Aid Division via the CAD System. Youth Aid Personnel are responsible for completing the Handle with Care Form on the CAD System.
- E. Once the notice form is completed by Youth Aid Division Personnel, the Detective assigned shall immediately email the form to the child's school principal (or other school administrator designated by the principal), note the email transmission in the corresponding incident report, and forward a copy of the notice form to records for maintenance with the case file. Immediate means prior to the next school day or prior to the child arriving at school, whichever is sooner.
 1. Situations could arise when Youth Aid Personnel sends the *Handle with Care Notice* to a school where they reasonably believe a child to be enrolled but, it is returned because the child does not go to that institution. In these rare cases, Youth Aid Personnel must make a good faith effort to ascertain the correct school of enrollment and provide the *Handle with Care Notice* to that school as soon as possible
 2. Youth Aid Personnel shall maintain a copy of the *Handle with Care Notice* and the email (or fax transmission report) with the appropriate case file. If there is no related case file, officers shall create a CAD record and then maintain the *Handle with Care Notice* and email (or fax transmission report) with that file.
 3. Any investigative report related to the incident shall never be shared in conjunction with, or in replacement of, the *Handle with Care Notice*. Should there be any additional

communication between the law enforcement agency and the school, the officer must be cautious not to disclose any details that would violate the privacy interests of any of the parties involved.

- F. Some children may attend schools in areas outside of this agency's jurisdiction. In such cases:
1. The officer shall follow the same procedures listed above under *General Section D*. Youth Aid Personnel shall complete the *Handle with Care Notice* and send it immediately to the local law enforcement agency where an affected child's school is located.
 2. The receiving local law enforcement agency is responsible for sending the completed *Handle with Care Notice* to the school's appropriate point of contact but shall not share with the school any related investigative or incident reports.

HANDLE WITH CARE NOTICE

To: _____ From: _____
(Name of school) (Agency)

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Date of referral to the child's school: _____

PLEASE HANDLE THE CHILD WITH CARE:

Child's information:

Name: _____ Age: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____



Name of sending officer: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Do not include any information other than the information requested on this form. Details of the incident are prohibited to protect the privacy of the parties involved.