

BLOOMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

THREATS AGAINST POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES

Reviewed by: Lt. Timothy Stanesa	Effective Date: August 21, 2002
Authorized by: Chief Randall McKinley	Revision Date: November 10, 2009

PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOP is to provide guidelines for assessing threats made against Bloomington Police Officers (active or retired), non-sworn employees, and/or their families when such threats arise out of the performance of the officer's or non-sworn employee's official duties. Further, this SOP establishes a structured response to those threats which are determined to be objectively credible and viable.

Threatening a public official, including family members, is a class 3 felony under 720 ILCS 5/12-8 for a first offense and a class 2 felony for a second or subsequent offense. While pursuing an investigation into such threats against Bloomington Police Officers, non-sworn employees, and/or their families the Department will strive to protect potential victims from harm resulting from such threats. Therefore, the following procedure will be followed when a threat is made against a Bloomington Police Officer, non-sworn employees, and/or a member of that person's family.

PROCEDURE

The City shall immediately notify the officer or non-sworn employee of any threat, of which the City becomes aware, against that person and/or a family member(s). All such threats, whether written, oral, direct, indirect or otherwise, arising out of the performance of their official duties as police officers or non-sworn employees shall be thoroughly and expeditiously investigated.

A preliminary threat assessment will be conducted by a CID staff officer as soon as possible after the threat has come to the attention of the City. The CID staff officer will make a recommendation to an Assistant Chief, based upon then currently available information, whether to classify the threat as credible and viable or not. The CID staff officer will consider the basis of the threat, including hearsay accounts, the motive behind the threat, the opportunity to carry out the threat, and the ability to carry out the threat. Due to safety concerns, the preliminary recommendation may be oral, but will be reduced to written form as soon as practical.

An Assistant Chief, based upon the CID staff recommendation and any other pertinent information, will determine whether and to what extent a threat to human safety exists. This determination is fluid in that newly evolving information and circumstances may either increase or decrease the risk to human safety. Upon classifying the threat level, an Assistant Chief will determine the appropriate Departmental response in accordance with this policy. As the follow-up investigation develops or remedial action is taken, the Department's response may vary as the perceived risk increases or decreases.

Should the affected officer or non-sworn employee disagree with the decision of an Assistant Chief on the classification of the threat and the Department's response, he or she may appeal that decision to the Chief of Police at any time. The Chief of Police shall review all available information in a timely manner and make the final determination as to the classification and the Department's response.

All threats against employees shall be documented and classified as either:

1. Credible and viable; or
2. Not credible and viable.

Any threat deemed not credible and viable will be cleared with no further action.

All threats classified as credible and viable shall be further categorized as:

1. High risk; or
2. Low risk.

Criteria used to evaluate the credibility and viability of threats shall include, but is not limited to any or all of the following:

1. Existence and nature of previous criminal arrests and convictions;
2. Existence of previous nolle prosequi cases;
3. Probable drug use by the offender(s);
4. Information gleaned from other law enforcement sources that would indicate a known history of violence;
5. Direct threats either oral, written, electronic or otherwise;
6. Affiliation of the offender with street gangs;
7. The frequency of threats made against employees;
8. The offender's possession of a valid FOID card;
9. Admissions by the offender to others regarding intentions to harm an officer, an officer's family or to damage an officer's property;
10. The offender's motive;
11. The opportunity for the offender to carry out the threat; and
12. The ability of the offender to carry out the threat.

Employees identified as being at high risk shall be afforded the opportunity to receive any or all of the following safety measures at the discretion of an Assistant Chief. These remedies will be provided at no cost to the employee so long as the employee is deemed at high risk and the measures are objectively reasonable considering the nature of the threat.

1. An officer or officers posted at the affected officer's residence;
2. An officer or officers posted at the place of employment of the affected employee's spouse or significant other, so long as such posting is permitted by the employer;
3. An officer or officers posted at the school of the affected employee's children, so long as such posting is authorized by the appropriate school officials;
4. A portable alarm system temporarily installed at the home of the employee;
5. Additional entrance locks professionally installed by a licensed locksmith at the employee's residence;
6. Additional exterior security lighting installed at the employee's home by a licensed electrician;

7. Hotel accommodations for the affected employee and his immediate family, to be paid by the city, at a hotel which falls under the guidelines established by city policy for travel reimbursement;
8. Meal expenses for the employee and his family to be paid by the department at the current per diem rate;
9. Leave time, with no diminution of benefit to the employee, in order to facilitate security enhancements; and
10. Any other objectively reasonable steps necessary to adequately ensure the safety of the employee, his significant other, dependents, and property.

Permanent installation of locks, light fixtures, supporting hardware and related items at the residence of an employee will not be authorized by the Department unless agreed to by the property owner. Furthermore such permanent improvements become the property of the employee or landlord and are subject to appropriate taxes which shall be the responsibility of the employee or landlord.

An employee identified as being at low risk shall be afforded any reasonable accommodations that the Chief of Police, or his designee, believes are necessary to ensure the safety of that employee and his family.

The City agrees that sworn full time police officers will be employed when posted for security reasons at an affected employee's property whenever possible.

Once an investigation has been completed or sixty (60) days have past, whichever comes first, the investigation shall be sanitized to remove sensitive information. An electronic database shall then be maintained and will be accessible to all Bloomington Police Officers twenty four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. The individual record shall include a picture of the person(s) making threats against officers, non-sworn employees, and/or their families (if such photograph can be obtained), a summary of all investigations concerning threats against police officers, and any information identifying coconspirators. This database shall be "read only". Any updated information shall be submitted to CID staff and will be entered into the database by the Intelligence or Crime Analysts.