

§4012. Law enforcement agency responsibilities

1. Reports. A law enforcement agency shall report all incidents of abuse by adults of family or household members as required by the State Bureau of Identification under Title 25, section 1544. [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

2. Agency procedures. Law enforcement agencies shall establish procedures to ensure that dispatchers and officers at the scene of an alleged incident of abuse or violation of an order of protection are informed of a recorded prior incident of abuse involving the abused party and can verify the effective dates and terms of a recorded order of protection. [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

3. Officer training. Law enforcement agencies shall provide officers employed by them with an education and training program designed to inform the officers of the problems of family and household abuse, procedures to deal with these problems, the provisions of this chapter and the services and facilities available to abused family and household members. The amount and degree of officer training, beyond the distribution of information, must be determined by each local law enforcement agency. [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

4. Maine Criminal Code enforcement. A law enforcement officer at the scene of an alleged incident of abuse shall use the same standard of enforcing relevant Maine Criminal Code sections when the incident involves family or household members as when it involves strangers. [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

5. Arrest in certain situations. When a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe that there has been a criminal violation under section 4011 of a court-approved consent agreement or a protection order issued pursuant to this chapter or Title 15, chapter 12-A, or that a violation of Title 17-A, section 208-D, 208-E or 208-F has occurred, that enforcement officer shall arrest and take into custody the alleged offender. [PL 2021, c. 293, Pt. A, §22 (AMD).]

6. Officer responsibilities. When a law enforcement officer has reason to believe that a family or household member has been abused, the officer shall immediately use all reasonable means to prevent further abuse, including:

A. Remaining on the scene as long as the officer reasonably believes there is a danger to the physical safety of that person without the presence of a law enforcement officer, including, but not limited to, staying in the dwelling unit; [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

B. Assisting that person in obtaining medical treatment necessitated by an assault, including driving the victim to the emergency room of the nearest hospital; [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

C. Giving that person immediate and adequate written notice of that person's rights, which include information summarizing the procedures and relief available to victims of the family or household abuse; or [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

D. Arresting the abusing party with or without a warrant pursuant to section 4011 and Title 17-A, section 15. [PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

Beginning no later than January 1, 2015, in addition to the actions specified in this subsection, the law enforcement officer shall make a good faith effort to administer a validated, evidence-based domestic violence risk assessment recommended by the Maine Commission on Domestic and Sexual Abuse, established in Title 5, section 12004-I, subsection 74-C, and approved by the Department of Public Safety. The law enforcement officer administering this assessment shall provide the results of the

assessment to the bail commissioner, if appropriate, and the district attorney for the county in which the abuse took place.

[PL 2011, c. 680, §3 (AMD).]

7. Law enforcement agency policy. Every municipal, county and state law enforcement agency with the duty to investigate, prosecute and arrest offenders of this chapter and Title 17-A shall adopt a written policy on the enforcement of this chapter and the handling of domestic abuse cases in general.

[PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

8. District attorney prosecutorial policy. The Attorney General, in consultation with the prosecutors' association, shall develop a written policy regarding prosecution of domestic abuse cases under the provisions of Title 17-A. The district attorney for each of the several counties within the State shall adopt a written policy regarding prosecution of domestic abuse cases.

[PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. B, §2 (NEW); PL 1995, c. 694, Pt. E, §2 (AFF).]

9. Notification of attempted purchase of firearm. When the Department of Public Safety receives notification from a federal agency that a background criminal records check conducted under the system established pursuant to 18 United States Code, Section 922(t) indicates that a potential buyer or transferee is prohibited from receipt or possession of a firearm pursuant to a temporary or final protection from abuse order, the department shall make every reasonable effort to notify as quickly as practicable both the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order and another law enforcement agency with jurisdiction in the municipality in which that individual resides of the information received from the federal agency.

For the purposes of this subsection, notification may be made by the Department of Public Safety to the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order through a law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual resides. When the department makes notification through such a law enforcement agency, that agency then must make reasonable effort to notify as quickly as practicable the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order. If, when notifying a law enforcement agency, the department is informed by that agency that it cannot notify the individual intended to be protected by the protection from abuse order, the department must continue to make a reasonable effort to notify that individual as quickly as practicable, including through a different law enforcement agency within the county in which the individual resides.

[PL 2005, c. 671, §1 (NEW).]

10. Liability for damages. The State, a political subdivision of the State or a law enforcement officer is not liable for damage that may be caused by the failure or inability to inform an individual who is the subject of a protection from abuse order in accordance with subsection 9. This subsection does not prohibit the State or a political subdivision of the State from pursuing legally authorized disciplinary action.

[PL 2005, c. 671, §2 (NEW).]

11. Service of protection from abuse order. Every municipal, county and state law enforcement agency shall adopt a written policy on the service of protection from abuse orders that directs that every order issued under this chapter is served on the subject of the order as quickly as possible. Service of a protection from abuse order that is not in compliance with a policy adopted under this subsection does not affect the validity of the service or the order.

[PL 2011, c. 265, §1 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1995, c. 694, §B2 (NEW). PL 1995, c. 694, §E2 (AFF). PL 2005, c. 671, §§1,2 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 265, §1 (AMD). PL 2011, c. 680, §3 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 412, §9 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 293, Pt. A, §22 (AMD).

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