



# Sarnia Police Services Board Policy

Issue Number:

**SPS-BP-LE-024**

<b>Subject:</b> <b>Domestic Violence Occurrences</b>	<b>Effective Date:</b> <b>September 14, 2023</b>
<b>Replaces:</b> <b>SPS-BP-LE-028</b>	<b>Distribution:</b> <b>All Members</b>
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<b>Approved By:</b> <b>Board Chair</b>	<b>Signature:</b> <i>Paul Wiersma</i>

## **A Legislative/Regulatory Requirements**

Section 29 of the Adequacy Standards Regulation requires a police services board to have a policy on investigations into domestic violence occurrences. In addition, section 12(1)(d) requires the Chief of Police to develop and maintain procedures and processes for undertaking and managing investigations into domestic violence occurrences.

The focus of these policies and procedures should be on domestic violence occurrences. For the purposes of this guideline, domestic violence occurrence means:

*Domestic violence is any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened, in an intimate relationship. Although both women and men can be victims of domestic violence, the overwhelming majority of this violence involves men abusing women.*

*These crimes are often committed in a context where there is a pattern of assaultive and controlling behaviour. This violence may include physical assault, and emotional, psychological and sexual abuse. It can include threats to harm children, other family members, pets and property. The violence is used to intimidate, humiliate or frighten victims, or to make them powerless. Domestic violence may include a single act of abuse. It may also include a number of acts that may appear minor or trivial when viewed in isolation, but collectively form a pattern that amounts to abuse.*

*Criminal Code offences include, but are not limited to homicide, assault, sexual assault, threatening death or bodily harm, forcible confinement, harassment/stalking, abduction,*

*breaches of court orders and property-related offences.  
Intimate relationships include those between the opposite-sex and same-sex partners.  
These relationships vary in duration and legal formality and include current and former dating, common-law and married couples.*

## **B Board Policy**

1. It is the policy of the Sarnia Police Services Board with respect to domestic violence occurrences that the Chief of Police will:
  - (a) In partnership with the police service's local Crown, Probation and Parole Services, Victim/Witness Assistance Programme (VWAP), Victim Services of York Region, municipalities, local Children's Aid Societies and other local service providers and community representatives responsible for issues related to domestic violence including women's shelters, work to establish and maintain one or more domestic violence review committees that cover the geographic areas that fall within the jurisdiction of the police service;
  - (b) Implement one or more of the models set out in ministry guidelines for the investigation of domestic violence occurrences and ensure that the police service has access to trained domestic violence investigators;
  - (c) Develop and maintain procedures for undertaking and managing investigations into domestic violence occurrences that address:
    - (i) Communications and dispatch;
    - (ii) Initial response;
    - (iii) Enhanced investigative procedures;
    - (iv) The mandatory laying of charges where there are reasonable grounds to do so, including in cases where there is a breach of a bail condition, probation, parole or a restraining order;
    - (v) The use of a risk indicators tool;
    - (vi) Children at risk;
    - (vii) High-risk cases and repeat offenders;
    - (viii) Occurrences involving members of a police service;
    - (ix) Post-arrest procedures;
    - (x) Victim assistance; and
    - (xi) Safety planning;
  - (d) Ensure that the police service's response to domestic violence occurrences are monitored and evaluated; and
  - (e) Ensure that officers and other appropriate members receive the appropriate ministry-accredited training.