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*Domestic Conflict Unit, Calgary Police Service*

Theme: Risk Assessment

The Calgary Police Service is located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. In concert with other agencies and the citizens of Calgary, the Calgary Police Service strives to preserve the quality of life in our community by maintaining Calgary as a safe place to live, work and visit. Domestic Conflict Unit is one of the units of the Calgary Police Service that is charged with responding and investigating domestic violence crimes. Domestic Conflict Unit works closely with community partners.

*Critical Elements*

- All cases with domestic violence charges are assessed by the DCU assessors. The DCU can then make decisions with respect to the team assignment where those files will be managed.
- The assessment incorporates all background information: history of domestic violence, mental health and addiction and uses standardized tools related to spousal abuse, intimate partner violence and/or sexual assault.
- The DCU assessors receive proactive resolution and threat assessment training to support their use of tools and inform professional judgement which also factors in decision-making.
- DCU assessment is highly reliable as assessors have access to a wide range of information sources (e.g., local police database, Canada-wide RCMP database, probation database, etc.)
- DCU assessment also includes a team review component, where staff sergeants from each unit or team review and provide opinions with respect to the assignment of files.
- Working with community partners is essential when addressing a complex issue such as domestic violence. Arrest alone will not fix the problem.
- Information sharing among partners (and agreements to support the process) are critical to the success of the work.
- Using a broad definition of domestic violence, including, in addition to partner violence, other types of relationships. This requires specialization and different types of teams (e.g., Elder Abuse Response Team, Habitual Offender Program, High Risk Management Initiative, Emergency Protection Order Team).
- As part of the court team DCU is closely involved with Calgary's specialized Domestic Violence Court, which hears domestic violence offences.
- Centralized and thorough assessment allows DCU to direct the files to various teams and projects as appropriate.
- DCU has recently moved to a community policing section, reflecting the fact that domestic violence is a problem for the police as well as the community as a whole.