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**TITLE 149  
LEGISLATIVE RULE  
GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON CRIME, DELINQUENCY AND CORRECTION**

OFFICE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
SECRETARY OF STATE

**SERIES 3  
PROTOCOL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**§149-3-1. General.**

1.1. Scope. -- This legislative rule establishes law enforcement response to domestic violence.

1.2. Authority. -- W. Va. Code §48-2A-9

1.3. Filing Date. -- May 11, 1998

1.4. Effective Date. -- May 11, 1998

**§149-3-2. Purposes.**

2.1. The principal purpose of this rule is to establish guidelines and procedures in compliance with state and federal law to be followed by law enforcement officers and other personnel involved in police response to domestic calls.

2.2. Other purposes and goals of this rule are:

2.2.1. To reduce the incidence and severity of domestic violence by establishing arrest and prosecution, rather than mediation, as the preferred means of police response to domestic violence;

2.2.2. To afford maximum protection and support to victims of domestic violence through a coordinated program of law enforcement and victim assistance;

2.2.3. To ensure that law enforcement services are as available in domestic violence cases as they are in other criminal cases;

2.2.4. To promote law enforcement officer safety by ensuring that law enforcement officers are as fully prepared as possible to respond to domestic calls; and

2.2.5. To help reduce police resources consumed in responding to domestic violence by reducing the number of police interventions required for any particular household.

### **§149-3-3. Definitions.**

3.1. For the purposes of this rule, unless specifically stated otherwise, the terms "officer", "law enforcement officer", or "police officer" refer to a chief, sergeant or member of any municipal police force or department, a sheriff, a sheriff's deputy, an appointed security officer of a state university or college, or the Superintendent, or an officer or member of the West Virginia State Police. Nothing in this rule should be construed to extend the authority of any law enforcement officer beyond the law enforcement officer's statutory jurisdiction.

3.2. As used in this rule unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

3.2.1. Credible corroborative evidence means evidence that is worthy of belief and corresponds with the allegations of one or more elements of the offense and may include but is not limited to the following conditions:

3.2.1.a. Condition of the alleged victim. -- One or more contusions, scratches, cuts, abrasions, swellings, or other signs of physical injury; missing hair; torn clothing or clothing in disarray consistent with a struggle; observable difficulty in breathing or breathlessness consistent with the effects of choking or a body blow; observable difficulty in movement consistent with the effects of a body blow or other unlawful physical contact;

3.2.1.b. Condition of the accused. -- Physical injury or other conditions similar to those set out for the condition of the victim which are consistent with the alleged offense or alleged acts of self defense by the victim;

3.2.1.c. Condition of the scene. -- Damaged premises or furnishings; disarray or misplaced objects consistent with the effects of a struggle; and

3.2.1.d. Other conditions. -- Statements by the accused admitting one or more elements of the offense; threats made by the accused in the presence of a law enforcement officer; audible evidence of a disturbance

heard by the dispatcher or other agent receiving the request for police assistance; written statements by witnesses.

3.2.2. "Family Violence" or "Abuse" means the occurrence of one or more of the following acts between family or household members:

3.2.2.a. Attempting to cause or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly causing physical harm to another with or without dangerous or deadly weapons;

3.2.2.b. Placing another in reasonable apprehension of physical harm;

3.2.2.c. Creating fear of physical harm by harassment, psychological abuse or threatening acts;

3.2.2.d. Committing either sexual assault or sexual abuse as those terms are defined in W. Va. Code §§61-8B-1 et. seq. and 61-8D-1 et seq.; or

3.2.2.e. Holding, confining, detaining or abducting another person against that person's will.

3.2.3. "Family or household member" means current or former spouses, persons living as spouses, persons who formerly resided as spouses, parents, children and stepchildren, current or former sexual or intimate partners, other persons related by blood or marriage, persons who are presently or in the past have resided or cohabited together or a person with whom the victim has a child in common.

3.2.4. "Domestic battery" -- If any family or household member unlawfully or intentionally makes physical contact of any insulting or provoking nature with another family or household member or unlawfully and intentionally causes physical harm to another family or household member.

3.2.5. "Domestic assault" -- If any family or household member unlawfully attempts to commit a violent injury of another family or household member or unlawfully commits an act which places another family or household member in reasonable apprehension of immediately receiving a violent injury.

#### **§149-3-4. Protective Orders.**

4.1. Domestic violence protective orders are to be considered criminal in nature. Any and all law enforcement officers who are sworn law enforcement officers in the State of West Virginia are responsible for the initial service of all protective orders in order to ensure the most prompt service of the protective order. Service may be performed on any day including Sundays and holidays. No law enforcement officer(s) shall refuse to serve pleadings or orders in domestic violence protective order actions.

4.2. A protective order remains in effect for the period of time stated in the order except:

4.2.1. A protective order loses its effectiveness if a temporary circuit court order which does not extend the protective order is signed by a family law master or judge, or if a final order is signed by a judge, if:

4.2.1.a. The temporary or final order was entered in a divorce, separate maintenance or annulment action between the same parties; and

4.2.1.b. The temporary or final order was entered after the date of the issuance of the protective order.

4.2.2. Notwithstanding sections covered under Subsection 4.2.1., a magistrate may issue a temporary emergency protective order when a temporary divorce, annulment, or separation order is in effect as provided for by W. Va. Code §48-2A-3b.

4.2.3. A protective order's effectiveness is extended beyond the expiration date in the order if:

4.2.3.a. A divorce, separate maintenance or annulment action between the same parties has been filed while the protective order is still in effect by its own terms.

4.3. An order issued in any county in West Virginia is in effect in all counties in West Virginia.

4.4. Any valid protective order issued by the court of another state, territory, or tribe shall be given full faith and credit and enforced as if it is an order of this state.

**§149-3-5. Dispatcher Responsibilities.**

5.1. Dispatchers under the supervision of a police department or who serve multiple police departments should dispatch domestic calls in the same manner as any other call for police assistance, in accordance with the priority criteria prescribed by generally applicable department procedures. Whenever possible, the dispatcher should assign a back-up unit.

5.2. The dispatcher receiving a domestic call should attempt to elicit from the caller and should communicate to the responding law enforcement officer as much of the following information, in the following order of importance, as time and exigencies of the reported incident allow:

5.2.1. The nature of the incident;

5.2.2. The address of the incident, including the apartment number or the name of the business, as appropriate;

5.2.3. A telephone number where the caller can be called back;

5.2.4. Whether weapons are involved;

5.2.5. Whether an ambulance is needed;

5.2.6. Whether the suspect is present and, if not, the suspect's description, direction of flight, and mode of travel;

5.2.7. Whether children are at the scene;

5.2.8. Whether any party is using or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

5.2.9. Whether a protective order is in effect and whether an affidavit to enter the premises exists;

5.2.10. Whether a criminal warrant is outstanding on the suspect;  
and

5.2.11. Whether the suspect has been released on bail on a charge of a crime against a family or household member, including a family or household member who is a child, with any conditions on bail regarding contact with the victim or complainant.

5.3. If the caller is the victim, or if the caller is a witness to a domestic incident in progress, the dispatcher should keep the caller on the telephone and should relay ongoing information provided by the caller to the responding law enforcement officer(s). The dispatcher should tell the caller that help is on the way and when the caller can expect the police to arrive.

5.4. If the dispatcher has ready access to police department records that indicate whether the parties involved in the incident have been involved previously in domestic incidents or that indicate whether there is a protective order involving the parties in effect, the dispatcher should consult the records and radio any relevant information to the responding law enforcement officer(s).

5.5. If the dispatcher has reason to believe that the subject is on bail for a crime against a family or household member, including a family or household member who is a child, and if the dispatcher has ready access to magistrate court records that show whether there are conditions of bail, the dispatcher should consult the records and radio any relevant information to the responding law enforcement officer(s).

#### **§§149-3-6. Initial Law Enforcement Officer Response.**

##### **6.1. Approaching the scene.**

6.1.1. Whenever possible, two law enforcement officer(s) shall respond to a domestic call. The responding law enforcement officer(s) should approach the scene of a domestic incident as one of high risk.

6.1.2. The law enforcement officer(s) should obtain all available information from the dispatcher before arriving at the scene and should notify the dispatcher upon arrival.

6.1.3. Unless the circumstances of a particular incident require different measures, the law enforcement officer(s) should follow the approach procedures set out in the remainder of this section. The law enforcement officer(s) should:

6.1.3.a. Approach the scene inconspicuously. The law enforcement officer(s) should not use sirens or lights in the immediate area of the scene of the incident;

6.1.3.b. Park away from the immediate scene of the incident;

6.1.3.c. Keep a safe exit route in mind;

6.1.3.d. Be alert for the employment of weapons from doors, windows, or nearby vehicles;

6.1.3.e. Be alert for persons moving away from the immediate scene of the incident; and

6.1.3.f. Employ other standard precautionary measures for approaching high risk incident scenes.

## 6.2. Initial contact.

6.2.1. The responding law enforcement officer(s) should identify himself or herself, explain the law enforcement officer's presence, and request entry into the home or business. The law enforcement officer(s) should ask to see the person who is the subject of the call. If the person who called the police is someone other than the subject of the call, the law enforcement officer(s) should not reveal the caller's name.

6.2.2. The law enforcement officer(s) may enter and conduct a search of the premises relevant to the incident if written or verbal consent has been given to do so. If a domestic relations protective order is in effect, written consent to enter may have been given by the victim and be on file. The law enforcement officer(s) shall limit the search to a search for other suspects, victims, witnesses or evidence connected with the alleged domestic incident.

6.2.3. If refused entry, the law enforcement officer(s) should be persistent about seeing and speaking alone with subject of the call. If access to the subject is refused, the law enforcement officer(s) should request the dispatcher to contact the caller if the caller is the subject of the call. If the law enforcement officer(s) leaves the scene, the law enforcement officer(s) should drive by and observe frequently. If the law enforcement officer(s) remains to observe, the law enforcement officer(s) should move to public property (the street) and observe the premises.

6.2.4. In some circumstances, forced entry is necessary and appropriate. Forced entry may be appropriate when the residence area shows signs of a fight or scuffle; or when a person from inside the residence calls for assistance or is yelling; or when a person from inside is visible and the law



enforcement officer(s) observes that the person is wounded, injured or is otherwise in need of assistance.

### 6.3. Establishing Control of Scene.

6.3.1. Once at the immediate scene of the incident, the responding law enforcement officer(s) should establish control by:

6.3.1.a. Identifying potential weapons in the surroundings;

6.3.1.b. Separating the victim and the accused when circumstances are appropriate;

6.3.1.c. Assessing injuries (including inquiry about possible internal injuries), administering first aid, and/or notifying emergency medical services;

6.3.1.d. Identifying all occupants and witnesses on the premises;  
and

6.3.1.e. Separating occupants and witnesses from the victim and accused and keeping them out of hearing range (to avoid compromising their witness status).

### 6.4. On-scene investigation.

6.4.1. The law enforcement officer(s) should conduct an investigation using the same procedures that the law enforcement officer(s) would use in any other on-scene criminal investigation. While conducting the investigation the law enforcement officer(s) should attempt to establish the existence of credible corroborative evidence.

6.4.2. The law enforcement officer(s) should ensure the victim's safety and privacy by interviewing the victim in an area apart from the accused, witnesses, and bystanders if possible.

6.4.3. In questioning the victim, the law enforcement officer(s) should use supportive interview techniques. The law enforcement officer(s) should ask the victim about previous domestic incidents, and their frequency and severity. The law enforcement officer(s) should not tell the victim what action the law enforcement officer(s) intends to take until all available information has been collected.

6.4.4. The law enforcement officer(s) should interview the victim and/or any witnesses (including all child witnesses) as fully and as soon as circumstances allow, taking down names, addresses, and other relevant information. When interviewing the victim and/or any witnesses (including all child witnesses) the law enforcement officer(s) should determine whether the victim and/or any witnesses (including all child witnesses) allege facts which constitute all of the elements of assault or battery. If so, the law enforcement officer(s) should inquire whether the victim and/or any witnesses are willing to sign a statement containing those facts. The law enforcement officer(s) should also inquire about past abuse or other crimes to aid the law enforcement officer(s) in evaluating the dangerousness of the accused. The law enforcement officer(s) should proceed with the investigation even in the absence of a statement from either a victim and/or any witnesses (including child witnesses).

6.4.5. The responding law enforcement officer(s) should interview the accused as fully as circumstances allow to inquire about the nature of the dispute. The law enforcement officer(s) should be alert to possible incriminating statements.

6.4.6. In the collection of evidence and taking of statements, the law enforcement officer(s) shall protect the constitutional rights of the accused in accordance with current laws and statutes of the State of West Virginia and of the United States.

6.4.7. Children should be interviewed in a manner appropriate to the child's age. Signs of trauma and any apparent healing wounds on the child should be noted by the law enforcement officer(s).

6.4.8. If the accused has fled the scene, the law enforcement officer(s) should solicit information as to the possible whereabouts of the accused (place of employment, relatives, friends, etc.).

#### 6.5. Enforcing Any Protective Order.

6.5.1. If the dispatcher has not advised the law enforcement officer(s) of the existence of a protective order or conditions of release on bail set in a crime against a family or household member, including children, the law enforcement officer(s) should ask the victim whether there is such an order or such bail conditions. If so, ask the victim if he/she can produce a copy of the protective order or bail document or identify the county and court or magistrate from which the order or document was issued. The law enforcement officer(s) should attempt to contact the local law enforcement department specified by the victim to verify the existence of a valid protective order or contact the magistrate court to verify the conditions of release on bail. The law enforcement officer(s)

shall enforce all orders from the magistrate court or any court regardless of certification. Where the accused has been served with the protective order or has actual notice of the protective order, then the law enforcement officer(s) shall follow the arrest authorization provisions as summarized in Subsections 7.2.3. through 7.2.5. of this rule.

6.5.2. Where the suspect has not been served and has not had actual notice of the order, if the law enforcement officer(s) has a copy to serve upon the suspect, the copy shall be served. If the law enforcement officer does not have a copy to serve, then the law enforcement officer(s) shall give the suspect actual notice of the provisions of the order by stating the provisions of the order to the suspect. If the accused, after having been served with, or given actual notice of, the order then refuses to comply with the order, the law enforcement officer(s) shall follow the arrest provisions as summarized in Subsections 7.2.3. through 7.2.5. of this rule.

6.5.3. When the law enforcement officer(s) observes any violations of a known bail condition in cases of crimes between family or household members including a family or household members who are children, the law enforcement officer(s) shall arrest the accused for violations of the bail conditions. This may include the presence of the accused at the home of the victim.

6.5.4. The law enforcement officer(s) shall enforce all protective or similar type orders that have been issued by a circuit judge, magistrate, or family law master of this state, and from courts of another state, territory, or tribe.

#### 6.6. Further On-Scene Investigation.

6.6.1. The law enforcement officer(s) shall collect and preserve all physical evidence reasonably necessary to support prosecution, including evidence substantiating the victim's injuries, evidentiary articles that substantiate the attack (weapons, torn clothing, etc.), and evidence recording the crime scene. The law enforcement officer(s) should ensure that photographs are taken of visible injuries on the victim and of the crime scene. All physical evidence shall be collected, noted in reports, and vouchered as in other criminal investigations. See Section 3-12. of this rule for reporting and data collection requirements.

6.6.2. The law enforcement officer(s) should encourage the victim to seek medical attention for injuries that do not require emergency treatment at the scene. The law enforcement officer(s) should inquire about injuries of the

victim that are concealed by clothing or otherwise not readily apparent. The law enforcement officer(s) should advise the victim to have photographs taken if injuries appear later.

### **§149-3-7. The Arrest Decision.**

7.1. The responding law enforcement officer(s) should arrest the accused whenever arrest is authorized. If the law enforcement officer(s) decides not to arrest the accused, he or she must include in the report of the incident a detailed explanation of the reasons why an arrest was not made.

7.2. Under current West Virginia law, arrest is authorized below in the following circumstances:

7.2.1. When the law enforcement officer(s) has probable cause to believe that the suspect has committed a felony;

7.2.2. When the law enforcement officer(s) observes the commission of a felony or a misdemeanor;

7.2.3. When the law enforcement officer(s) observes the violation of a valid protective order including the suspect's presence at a location prohibited by the protective order issued by a circuit judge, magistrate, or family law master of this state, and from courts of another state, territory, or tribe, and the law enforcement officer(s) has actual knowledge that a valid protective order exists or that the valid protective order has been legally extended, the law enforcement officer(s) shall arrest the suspect provided the accused was served with the order or had actual notice of the order and its contents;

7.2.4. When the law enforcement officer(s) observes any violation of a bail condition including the presence of the accused at the home of the victim in violation of the condition set in cases of crimes between family members, including family or household members who are children;

7.2.5. When the accused is alleged to have committed domestic assault and/or domestic battery as earlier defined in Subsections 3.2.4. and 3.2.5. of this rule, or when the accused is alleged to have committed a violation of a valid protective order, or legal extension of such protective order issued from a circuit judge, magistrate, or family law master of this state, and from courts of another state, territory, or tribe, a law enforcement officer(s) has authority to arrest the alleged perpetrator for the offense(s) when:

7.2.5.a. The law enforcement officer(s) has observed credible corroborative evidence that the offense(s) has occurred; and

7.2.5.b. The law enforcement officer(s) has received, from the victim or a witness, a verbal or written allegation of facts constituting a violation of a domestic assault or domestic battery or violation of a valid protective order.

7.2.5.c. The law enforcement officer(s) has observed credible evidence that the accused committed the offense(s);

7.2.6. When a misdemeanor or felony not included among those specified in Subsections 7.2.2. through 7.2.5. of this rule has been committed and the law enforcement officer(s) or another person obtains or has previously obtained an arrest warrant; and

7.2.7. When a *capias* has been issued, or when a circuit judge has signed an attachment order.

7.3. The law enforcement officer(s) should not consider the following factors in making the arrest decision:

7.3.1. The marital status of the parties;

7.3.2. The ownership or tenancy rights of either party;

7.3.3. Verbal assurances that the violence will stop;

7.3.4. A claim by the accused that the victim provoked or perpetuated the violence;

7.3.5. Speculation that the victim will not follow through or cooperate with criminal prosecution (whether based on prior incidents involving the same victim, the victim's hesitancy about pursuing prosecution, or any other factor);

7.3.6. The disposition of any previous police calls involving the same victim or accused;

7.3.7. Speculation that the arrest may not lead to a conviction;

7.3.8. The existence or nonexistence of a current protective order (except insofar as the violation of the order requires arrest);

7.3.9. Concern about reprisals against the victim;

7.3.10. Adverse financial consequences that might result from the arrest;

7.3.11. That the incident occurred in a private place; or

7.3.12. The racial, cultural, social, political, or professional position, or sexual orientation of either the victim or the accused.

7.4. It is the law enforcement officer's and/or prosecuting attorney's responsibility to decide whether an arrest should be made unless the law enforcement officer is required to make an arrest for violation of a valid protective order and/or a violation of the terms and conditions of bail on a charge of a crime against a family or household member. The law enforcement officer(s), therefore, should not consider the victim's opposition to arrest and should emphasize to the victim, and to the accused as well, that the criminal action thus initiated is the state's action, not the victim's action.

7.5. If a law enforcement officer(s) receives complaints of domestic or family violence from two or more opposing persons, the law enforcement officer(s) shall evaluate each complaint separately to determine who was the primary aggressor. If the law enforcement officer(s) determines that one person was the primary aggressor, the law enforcement officer(s) need not arrest the other person believed to have committed domestic or family violence. In determining whether a person is the primary aggressor the law enforcement officer(s) should consider, among other things:

7.5.1. Prior complaints of domestic or family violence;

7.5.2. The relative severity of the injuries inflicted on each person;

7.5.3. The likelihood of future injury to each person; and

7.5.4. Whether one of the persons acted in self-defense.

7.6. A law enforcement officer(s) shall not:

7.6.1. Threaten, suggest, or otherwise indicate the possible arrest of all parties to discourage requests for intervention by law enforcement by any party; or

7.6.2. Base the decision to arrest on:

7.6.2.a. The specific consent or request of the victim; or

7.6.2.b. The law enforcement officer's perception of the willingness of a victim or witness to the domestic or family violence to testify or otherwise participate in a judicial proceeding.

7.7. In addition to any other report required, a law enforcement officer(s) who does not make an arrest after investigating a complaint of domestic or family violence or who arrests two or more persons for a crime involving domestic or family violence must submit a written report setting forth the grounds for not arresting or for arresting both parties.

7.8. The law enforcement officer(s) shall arrest for the commission of a crime. The law enforcement officer(s) should confiscate all weapons used or brandished in the commission of the crime, including those firearms held in violation of a valid protective order prohibiting possession of a firearm, and those weapons shall be held as evidence for prosecution: Provided that this section does not authorize a search of the premises unless a search warrant has been obtained or consent was given by the occupant of the premises.

7.9. Notwithstanding the issue of violation of the state law, the possession of a firearm by a person subject to a valid protective order is a violation of federal law and should be referred to federal authorities.

7.10. Notwithstanding the issue of violation of the state law, the crossing or causing the crossing of a state line or territory or tribal boundary to violate a valid protective order is a violation of federal law and should be referred to federal authorities.

7.11. Notwithstanding the issue of violation of the state law, the crossing or causing the crossing of a state line or territory or tribal boundary to commit domestic violence is a violation of federal law and should be referred to federal authorities.

#### **§149-3-8. Effectuating the Arrest.**

8.1. Any person arrested pursuant to Subsection 7.2. of this rule, shall be taken before a magistrate within the county in which the offense charged is alleged to have been committed in a manner consistent with the provisions of Rule 1 of the Administrative Rules for the Magistrate Courts of West Virginia.

8.2. The risk is high in domestic violence cases that the accused will return to the victim's residence or the scene of the violence. If the suspect has fled the scene, the law enforcement officer should initiate procedures to pursue and apprehend the suspect as promptly as possible if the suspect's presence in the vicinity represents a continuous threat to the safety of the victim and/or other members in the household. If a warrant is necessary, the law enforcement officer should obtain and execute the warrant as soon as practical.

8.3. When the suspect is a minor (under 18 years of age), the provisions of this rule are fully applicable, except that the law enforcement officer should arrest and process the juvenile pursuant to W. Va. Code §49-5-1 et. seq.

**§149-3-9. Procedure when Arrest is not Authorized or, if Authorized, is not Made.**

9.1. If an arrest is not authorized because of the absence of probable cause to believe that a crime was committed, or if arrest is authorized but not made (for reasons to be detailed in the incident report), the law enforcement officer(s) should:

9.1.1. Explain to the victim the reasons that an arrest is not being made;

9.1.2. Advise the victim of the applicability of criminal laws, procedures for filing a criminal complaint, the availability of a petition for a protective order, the procedures for filing a petition, and the remedies an order can contain;

9.1.3. Encourage the victim to contact the nearest available domestic violence program for information regarding counseling and other services available to victims of domestic violence;

9.1.4. Advise the victim or victims that upon request of the victim or victims the law enforcement officer(s) will provide transportation for or facilitate transportation of the victim or victims to a shelter or the appropriate court where there is reasonable cause to believe that the victim or victims have suffered or are likely to suffer physical injury; and

9.1.5. Provide transportation for or facilitate transportation of the victim or victims upon the request of the victim or victims to a shelter or the appropriate court where there is reasonable cause to believe the victim or victims has suffered or is likely to suffer physical injury.



9.2. The law enforcement officer(s) should not become involved in the disposition of personal property, the ownership of which is in dispute. In the absence of an arrest, the law enforcement officer(s) should remain neutral and be concerned primarily with maintaining the peace and safety of those persons present.

#### **§149-3-10. Other On-Scene Assistance to Victims and Dependents.**

10.1. Whether or not an arrest is made, the responding law enforcement officer(s) should not leave the scene of the incident until the situation is under control and the likelihood of immediate violence has been eliminated. The law enforcement officer(s) should stand by while victims or other persons desiring to leave gather necessities for short-term absences from home, such as clothing, medication, and necessary documents.

10.2. Whether or not an arrest is made, the responding law enforcement officer(s) is required by W. Va. Code §48-2A-9b to notify the victim orally or in writing of the availability of a shelter, including its telephone number, or other services in the community and of civil and criminal remedies.

10.3. If an arrest is made or an arrest warrant obtained, the law enforcement officer(s) should:

10.3.1. Advise the victim of what procedure will happen next, including the probability that the accused will be in custody for only a short period of time; and

10.3.2. Obtain from the victim information to be included in the arrest report indicating any special conditions of bail that should be requested at the initial appearance before the magistrate (i.e., places where the suspect should be specifically prohibited from appearing).

10.4. Any law enforcement officer(s) responding to an alleged incident of abuse shall inform the parties to the incident of the availability of the possible remedies provided by the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (W. Va. Code §48-2A-1 et. seq.) and the possible applicability of criminal laws.

10.5. Any law enforcement officer(s) responding to an alleged incident of abuse shall, in addition to providing the information required in Subsection 10.4. of this rule, provide transportation for or facilitate transportation of the victim, upon the request of the victim, to a shelter or the magistrate court when there is

reasonable cause to believe that the victim has suffered or is likely to suffer physical injury.

#### 10.6. Elder victims or physically dependent victims.

10.6.1. When a victim of domestic violence is elderly or physically dependent, the accused is the sole caretaker and an arrest is indicated, or when the victim of domestic violence is the sole caretaker of an elder or of a physically dependent person and the victim can no longer provide care (as, for example, when the victim is hospitalized), the responding law enforcement officer(s) should determine whether the elder or physically dependent person is physically endangered, either as a result of the abuse, a pre-existing medical condition, or the absence of a caretaker. If the elder or physically dependent person is physically endangered and mentally alert, the law enforcement officer(s) should ask the elder or physically dependent person for the name of a relative or friend who can be contacted immediately to assist the elder or physically dependent person. The law enforcement officer(s) shall facilitate transportation of the elder or physically dependent person to a relative or friend, if one can be found.

10.6.2. If there is no one available to assist the elder or physically dependent person, or if the elder or physically dependent person appears not to be mentally alert, the law enforcement officer(s) should make an emergency referral to Adult Protective Services. The law enforcement officer(s) should remain at the residence until the Adult Protective Services worker arrives, or should transport the elder or physically dependent person to a medical facility or other appropriate place where the elder or physically dependent person can wait for the worker.

10.6.3. In addition to providing the notification required by other provisions of this rule, the law enforcement officer(s) should advise the elder or physically dependent person of the availability of protective services through Adult Protective Services.

#### 10.7. Child victims and dependents.

10.7.1. When the victim of abuse is a minor child, the law enforcement officer(s) should arrest the accused if the law enforcement officer(s) observes the commission of a crime and shall report to Child Protective Services, as required by W. Va. Code §49-6A-2 et seq. If the child is physically injured, the law enforcement officer(s) should facilitate the transportation of the child to the nearest hospital for treatment. The law enforcement officer(s) should provide the victim notification, as described in this rule, to an adult caretaker of the child who is not the perpetrator of the abuse.

10.7.2. If the accused is arrested and was the sole caretaker of a child, and/or if the victim is the sole caretaker of a child and can no longer provide care (as, for example, when the victim is hospitalized), or in cases where both caretakers are arrested, the law enforcement officer(s) should determine whether there is a responsible relative who can care for the child and, if so, should contact that relative and await the relative's arrival. If no responsible relative is available, the law enforcement officer(s) should contact Child Protective Services and remain at the residence until a protective services worker arrives or should take the child into custody pursuant to the Child Welfare Law. (W. Va. Code §§ 49-5-8 and 49-6-9)

### **§149-3-11. Processing the Accused.**

11.1. A person arrested for violation of a protective order should be charged with any crimes properly charged as a result of the incident in which the violation occurred.

11.2. The accused shall be taken before a magistrate in the county in which the offense charged is alleged to have been committed in a manner consistent with the provisions of Rule 1 of the Administrative Rules for the Magistrate Courts of West Virginia for initial appearances in criminal cases.

11.3. The arresting law enforcement officer(s) may inform the magistrate or court of any circumstances surrounding the arrest of the accused which would have an effect on conditions of bail, provided that the amount and conditions of bail are a judicial decision that rests solely with the magistrate or court.

### **§149-3-12. Reporting.**

12.1. A Domestic Violence Incident Report as required by W. Va. Code §48-2A-9 must be completed by the law enforcement officer(s) responding to any call covered by this rule.

12.2. Data collection.

12.2.1. All written reports on the same person should be kept together or cross-referenced so that repeat domestic violence can be monitored.

12.2.2. The written report, or another document (such as an index card) or computer entry generated from the written report, should become a domestic violence tracking report.

12.2.3. To the extent possible, the domestic violence tracking report should be accessible to dispatchers and law enforcement officers.

149-3

Senate Bill No. 300

(By Senator(s) Ross, Anderson, Bowman,  
Macnaughtan, Boley and Buckalew)

[Introduced January 30, 1998; referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary.]

10 A BILL to amend and reenact section three, article nine,  
11 chapter sixty-four of the code of West Virginia, one  
12 thousand nine hundred thirty-one, as amended, relating  
13 to authorizing the governor's committee on crime,  
14 delinquency and correction to promulgate a legislative  
15 rule relating to the protocol for law enforcement  
16 response to domestic violence.

17 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:*

18 That section three, article nine, chapter sixty-four  
19 of the code of West Virginia, one thousand nine hundred  
20 thirty-one, as amended, be amended and reenacted, to read  
21 as follows:

22 **ARTICLE 9. AUTHORIZATION FOR MISCELLANEOUS AGENCIES AND**  
23 **BOARDS TO PROMULGATE LEGISLATIVE RULES.**

1 §64-9-3. Governor's committee on crime, delinquency and  
2 correction.

3 (a) The legislative rule filed in the state register  
4 on the twenty-eighth day of ~~August~~ July, one thousand nine  
5 hundred ~~ninety-six~~ ninety-seven, authorized under the  
6 authority of section nine, article two-a, chapter forty-  
7 eight of this code, modified by the governor's committee on  
8 crime, delinquency and correction to meet the objections of  
9 the legislative rule-making review committee and refiled in  
10 the state register on the ~~twenty-fourth~~ seventh day of  
11 ~~October~~ January, one thousand nine hundred ~~ninety-six~~  
12 ninety-eight, relating to the governor's committee on  
13 crime, delinquency and correction (protocol for law-  
14 enforcement response to domestic violence, 149 CSR 3), is  
15 authorized.

16 (b) The legislative rule filed in the state register  
17 on the twenty-eighth day of August, one thousand nine  
18 hundred ninety-six, under the authority of section three,  
19 article twenty-nine, chapter thirty of this code, modified  
20 by the governor's committee on crime, delinquency and  
21 correction to meet the objections of the legislative  
22 rule-making review committee and refiled in the state  
23 register on the twenty-fifth day of February, one thousand

1 nine hundred ninety-seven, relating to the governor's  
2 committee on crime, delinquency and correction (basic  
3 training academy, annual in-service and biennial in-service  
4 training standards, 149 CSR 2), is authorized.

5

6 NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to authorize the  
7 Governor's Committee on Crime, Delinquency and Correction  
8 to promulgate a legislative rule relating to the Protocol  
9 for Law-enforcement Response to Domestic Violence.

10

11 Strike-throughs indicate language that would be  
12 stricken from the present law, and underscoring indicates  
13 new language that would be added.

99/4  
149-3

1 Bill-Gov

**H. B. 4166**

2

(By Delegates Hunt, Linch, Compton, Jenkins,  
Faircloth and Riggs)

3

4

[Introduced January 30, 1998; referred to the  
Committee on the Judiciary.]

5

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8

9

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4/16/66



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