

## Agency Member Domestic Violence Allegation

### Facilitator:

You are a supervisor on the overnight shift (0000hrs to 0800hrs). At approximately 1:00 a.m., two officers are dispatched to a home in a residential neighborhood to meet with a female involved in a domestic dispute. The dispatcher states the female has left her residence and went to a friend's house two blocks away where she will meet the officers. The dispatcher does not reveal any additional details about the incident and instructs the responding officers to check their in-car computers or call dispatch for more information.

What are your thoughts?

Scenario Update: You immediately take notice of the dispatcher's request and pull up the call on your own computer. The information reveals the complainant is married to an officer employed by your agency and is alleging that they were involved in a physical altercation this evening.

*(Facilitator Note: If no in-car computers are present in the agency, use an appropriate alternate method such as calling the dispatcher).*

### FLS Response:

1. *Should you respond to this call with the officers?*
  - a. *Yes, a supervisor should respond.*
2. *Should the sergeant meet with the officers prior to the call? Why?*
  - a. *Yes. If the female is no longer in immediate danger, advise the officers to meet with you before responding to see the complainant.*

*When meeting with the officers, the FLS should:*

1. *Inform the officers that they are responding to a situation involving an agency member and their spouse. Some of the officers may not know the involved officer or recognize the names provided.*
  - a. *Do any of the responding officers have a close personal relationship with the involved officer?*
  - b. *Would you have any concerns about that or not?*
2. *Order all responding officers to start their body-worn cameras (if applicable) prior to arrival and keep them on throughout the contact with any potential victims.*
  - a. *This will minimize any potential allegations that you or the responding officers "coached or coaxed" the spouse into changing or recanting their account of the event.*
3. *Advise the officers to conduct interviews in your presence, if possible.*

4. *Ensure all the responding officers understand there is an expectation that they will adhere to all applicable local, state, and federal laws, and agency policies and procedures regarding domestic disputes and domestic violence.*

Scenario Update: When you and the other officers arrive at the address, everyone observes that the female has a small lump with a cut over her left eye and visible red marks on her neck and face. The female immediately informs the officers that her spouse is a patrol officer with your agency and was the person who caused the visible injuries.

She states that her husband had been drinking all day and is “really drunk” right now. Just before midnight, the couple began to argue about his chronic drinking. Her husband became enraged during the argument and “shoved her” onto the floor. When she tried to get up, he “slapped her” in the face, knocking her to the floor again. She received the cut above her eye when her head struck the edge of a table as she fell to the floor. The suspect then stated he was leaving and began searching for his car keys. When she tried to tell him that he was too intoxicated and should not drive, he grabbed her tightly by the neck and accused her of hiding his keys. The female was eventually able to break his grip and run from the house. She quickly ran to a friend’s house to call the police.

The female victim also provided the following additional information:

- The suspect was wearing his Department handgun when she left the residence.
- When she escaped from the house, the suspect was still inside looking for his keys.
- They have two children, 2 years old and 5 months old, who are still inside the residence.
- She left the house immediately without her children because she was scared he would hurt her if she attempted to take them.
- She does not think he will physically hurt the children, but she fears that he will put them in the car and drive away with them.

***FLS Response:***

*(FLS’s need to set prioritized order of response)*

1. *Meet with the officers prior to meeting with the victim (see above).*
2. *Get the victim’s information and establish if a crime occurred.*
3. *Notify the Watch Commander.*
4. *Recommend calling domestic violence detectives.*
5. *Send officers to check if the suspect’s car is still at the house.*

6. *Have the officers watch the house and stop the suspect if he leaves the house.*
7. *Identify roles and responsibilities if the suspect does leave. (Contact/cover/less lethal/etc.)*
8. *Determine the location of the crime scene. If it is other than at the house, send officers to secure it.*
9. *If there is reason to believe the suspect is still at the house, make a determination to approach or not.*
  - a. *Considerations for the husband:*
    - i. *He takes the kids hostage and barricades everyone in the residence.*
    - ii. *He takes his own life.*
    - iii. *He fights/shoots it out with the responding officers.*
    - iv. *He comes outside peacefully. (Ensure a team is ready to receive him.)*
  - b. *Possibilities:*
    - i. *Find the victim a place to stay and wait until the morning to contact the suspect.*
    - ii. *Call the suspect on his phone and ask him to come outside and meet you.*
    - iii. *Turn the situation over to detectives.*
    - iv. *All of the above decisions may require approval from superior officers or administrators. This case involves an officer within your department and has criminal and administrative implications.*