



Manual Part: Investigations (IN)	Policy Number: IN4PO	Alberta Policing Standards: OP 10.1, OP 10.4
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# Intimate Partner Violence Policy

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## Purpose:

To outline the EPS's approach to investigating reports of intimate partner violence and the strategies that are proactively employed to protect victims from ongoing violence. This policy is established in accordance with the Government of Alberta's *Intimate Partner Violence Police Guidelines*.

## Statement of Principle:

Intimate partner violence is a major concern to the EPS, and to the community, affecting all aspects of society. Violence in the home is a leading cause of injury and children who grow up witnessing this violence are often affected for life. Abusers, unless held accountable for their actions, continue to commit acts of violence and intimidation. The EPS is committed to providing an appropriate and effective response to intimate partner violence.

## Definitions:

*Definitions listed in this section apply to this document only with no implied or intended organization-wide or EPS Policy and Procedure Manual wide use.*

**Intimate Partner** – With respect to a person, includes their current or former spouse, common-law partner and dating partner.

**Intimate Partner Violence** – Any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened, in an Intimate Partner relationship. It may include a single act of violence, or a number of acts forming a pattern of abuse through the use of assaultive and controlling behaviour. The pattern of abuse may include physical, emotional, psychological, and/or sexual abuse, stalking, and/or threats to harm children, other family members, pets and property.

**Intimate Relationship** – A relationship between Intimate Partners that may vary in duration and legal formality and includes:

1. Current and former dating relationships,
2. Current and former common-law relationships,
3. Current and former married relationships, and/or



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4. Persons who are the parents of one or more children, regardless of their marital status or whether they have lived together at any time.

**Safety Planning** – A safety plan is a set of strategies that may be used by victims of violence to increase safety and prepare in advance for the possibility of future violence and is specific to the victim's unique case, context, and needs. Safety Planning may be initiated by the responding patrol member and later built upon by other individuals such as a divisional Domestic Abuse High Risk Team (DAHRT) Constable, Domestic Offender Crimes Section (DOCS) Detective, a member of the Crime and Trauma-Informed Support Services (CTSS), or a Registered Social Worker. The plan may include discussion around topics such as:

- How to leave safely and where to go to be safe.
- How to protect oneself and children in dangerous situations or during a violent episode.
- Where to keep important papers and documents.
- Which resources to access in a crisis.
- How members of the family, community, or friends may be able to provide support.
- Court processes and applicable conditions for the accused.

**ODARA Index Offence** – The index offence is the most recent incident in which the offender is accused of committing any act of violence that involved either:

- Physical contact with the victim, even if that contact appears as mutual assaults.
- A credible threat of death made with a weapon in hand in the presence of the victim.

If the most recent incident does not clearly meet the above criteria, an earlier incident meeting the criteria should be used as the Index Offence.

## **Policy Statement:**

1. All reports of intimate partner violence, whether resulting in a charge or not, must be investigated and:
  - a. Accompanied by a completed Occurrence Report and a Family Violence Investigative Report (FVIR).



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- b. Be forwarded to DOCS for assessment and triage for further intervention.
2. Investigating members must lay charges in cases of intimate partner violence in which reasonable and probable grounds exist to believe that an offence has been committed.
3. The EPS provides intervention strategies through victim notification, safety planning, offender management, and other programs and partnerships to support the safety of victims and reduce the likelihood of re-offence.
4. Intimate partner violence training is provided to all members who are required to provide service in this area.