



**Division of Criminal  
Justice Services**

# **New York State Committee for the Coordination of Police Services to Elderly Persons**

**2015 Annual Report**

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**New York State  
Committee for the Coordination of Police Services to Elderly Persons  
2015 Annual Report**

This report is submitted as required by Section 844-b (3-a) of the New York State Executive Law. It includes statistics from Domestic Incident Reports (DIRs) involving elderly victims (65 or older) from all counties outside of New York City and information about the Committee's activities.

*Issued June 2016*

**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
*Governor*  
State of New York

**Michael C. Green**  
*Executive Deputy Commissioner*  
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

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## **Overview**

In 2015, the New York State Committee for the Coordination of Police Services to Elderly Persons focused on developing and supporting training to improve the law enforcement response to elder abuse and raising awareness, among committee members and their constituents, of the resources available to elderly individuals. It met twice, on Oct. 8 and Dec. 14, 2015, at the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) offices in Albany. The DCJS Office of Public Safety provides staff support to the Committee.

The Committee's duties were expanded in 2015. New York State Executive Law Section 844-b was amended, requiring the Committee to focus on the support and development of programs, training, prevention practices and technical support to law enforcement agencies and service providers in an effort to combat crimes against the elderly. Prior to this change, the Committee's responsibility centered on support and development of Triad programs, which are partnerships among law enforcement, older adults and community groups aimed at improving the quality of life and safety of elderly individuals.

## **Committee Activities**

### Law Enforcement Training

#### *Basic Course for Police Officers: Crimes Against the Elderly*

New York State requires police officer recruits to complete the Basic Course for Police Officers, developed and approved by the state's Municipal Police Training Council. The Council, which like the Committee is staffed by the DCJS Office of Public Safety (OPS), is responsible for ensuring the course remains current and relevant to the needs of police agencies and their future officers.

As part of the course, recruits receive four hours of training about crimes against the elderly. Utilizing the expertise, support and resources available from members of the Committee, OPS staff began to update this section of the course. To that end, the Committee conducted an assessment of the existing curriculum and identified content to be updated, including, but not limited to, common scams and abuses faced by the elderly community and ways to combat these crimes. Working with the Committee, OPS staff plan to propose a final draft of revisions to the Council for adoption this year.

#### *Online Training: Adult Protective Services and Law Enforcement*

While seeking ways to strengthen relationships among agencies to better serve the elderly, the Committee identified a need to improve collaboration between Adult Protective Services and law enforcement.

As a result of that identified need, DCJS and the state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), which oversees Adult Protective Services provided by counties across the state, developed an online training on the topic. The training, titled Adult Protective Services and Law Enforcement, debuted in May 2015 and since that time, more than 500 professionals have completed the training.

The 30-minute training details how law enforcement can work with Adult Protective Services (APS) on cases of elder abuse and can supplement other trainings, particularly the Basic Course for Police Officers, and Basic Criminal Investigations.

The training covers the following topics: an overview of the APS program, types of abuse, making referrals, how APS aids law enforcement, how law enforcement aids APS, information sharing, and laws related to abuse and neglect. It also includes APS contact information by county in an effort to facilitate collaboration.

## Program Support

### *Triad Programs*

The Committee is responsible for support and development of Triad programs in the state. During 2015, Ontario County officials provided the Committee with an overview of Triad activities to facilitate the sharing of those initiatives among Committee members and their partnering agencies.

The Ontario County Sheriff's Office has partnered with the county Office for the Aging, AARP and local police departments in the county since 1994 to offer an expanded Triad program known as the SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) Council. Committee members learned about several programs that are integral to the initiative:

- *Blue light program:* Installed in the home of an elderly individual, these blue lights, when activated, are designed to allow emergency personnel to quickly find the residence.
- *TeleTen program:* This automated system calls individuals on a regular basis and records their responses. If an individual does not answer the call, law enforcement will respond to the person's home.
- *Cellphone donation program:* This initiative has resulted in the donation of approximately 1,500 used cell phones being provided to those in need.
- *Prescription medication return program:* The county participates in designated prescription drug drop-off dates and locations, which provide for proper disposal of prescription medications. More than 1,000 pounds of unused medications have been collected through this program.

Ontario County program participants offered to provide technical assistance to Committee members and service providers on the implementation of SALT programs in other counties or communities.

### *Project Lifesaver*

Project Lifesaver, a nationwide program providing transmitters to vulnerable children and adults susceptible to wandering as a result of cognitive impairments such as autism, Down syndrome, Alzheimer's disease and dementia, or brain injuries, is available in 55 counties in New York State. The transmitters, worn on the wrist or ankle, emit a radio signal that allows law enforcement to locate children or adults when they go missing. If an individual with a Project Lifesaver transmitter goes missing, his or her caregiver notifies the local police agency and a trained responder will assist in finding the person. Typically, individuals wearing a Project Lifesaver transmitter are located within 30 minutes of the device being activated.

The Committee showed its support for the program by inviting staff from the state's Missing Persons Clearinghouse to learn more about the program and identify potential opportunities to expand the initiative among collaborating partners to benefit the elderly.

The Clearinghouse is located at DCJS and, among other responsibilities, it assists law enforcement agencies with investigation of missing persons' cases and administers alert programs, similar to AMBER alerts, activated when children, college students or vulnerable adults go missing and are at credible risk of harm.

Clearinghouse staff described a partnership between DCJS and Project Lifesaver that resulted in the agency purchasing transmitters and accompanying technology and providing the equipment to county sheriffs' offices and two police departments in 2015 to benefit children with autism, Down syndrome or other cognitive impairments.

### **Future Activities of the Committee**

The Committee and Office of Public Safety staff will continue to identify programs – in consultation with experts, service providers and representative organizations engaged in safeguarding the elderly – designed to assist law enforcement in the protection of elderly persons against crimes.

The Committee also will continue to focus on the development of training that provides law enforcement professionals with additional information, tools and resources designed to improve their ability to investigate the abuse and neglect of elderly persons.

## 2015 Domestic Incident Report (DIR) Submissions

Police officers responding to a domestic call for service are required to complete a DIR, regardless of whether an arrest was made in connection with the incident.

In 2015, police departments and sheriffs' offices in the 57 counties outside of New York City completed a total of 6,591 domestic incident reports (DIRs) involving victims who were 65 years old or older. The following provides an overview of data included in those reports.

### *Victim and Suspect Demographics*

- Nearly two-thirds (62.3%) of elderly victims were female (4,171) and about 63 percent of suspects were male (4,179).
- Nearly three-quarters (73.9%) of victims were white, 17.9 percent were black, 4.3 percent, Hispanic and 2.3 percent were from other racial/ethnic groups.
- The race/ethnicity of suspects was similar to that of victims: 69.9 percent white, 19.3 percent black, 4.9 percent Hispanic and 2.6 percent from other racial/ethnic groups.
- The majority of victims (41.7%) were between the ages of 65 and 69 while the median age of all victims was 71 years old.
- The majority of suspects (19.5%) were between the ages of 40 and 49, with the median age of all suspects was 43 years old.

### *Orders of Protection*

- Orders of Protection (OP) were in effect in 9.5 percent (628) of DIRs. A violation of an order was reported in more than half – 55.3 percent (347) – of those incidents.

**Note:** All percentages detailed here are based upon totals that include information not reported in certain categories. See Table 1 for more information.

<b>Table 1. Domestic Incident Reports (DIR) involving Elderly Victims</b>		
<b>Total Reports</b>	6,591	100%
<b>Victim Gender</b>		
Male	2,340	35.5%
Female	4,171	63.3%
Not Reported	80	1.2%
<b>Suspect Gender</b>		
Male	4,179	63.4%
Female	2,312	35.1%
Not Reported	100	1.5%
<b>Victim Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	4,871	73.9%
Black	1,183	17.9%
Hispanic	286	4.3%
Other	151	2.3%
Not Reported	100	1.5%
<b>Suspect Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White	4,607	69.9%
Black	1,270	19.3%
Hispanic	321	4.9%
Other	174	2.6%
Not Reported	219	3.3%
<b>Victim Age Group</b>		
65 to 69	2,747	41.7%
70 to 74	1,630	24.7%
75 to 79	1,002	15.2%
80 and over	1,212	18.4%
Median	71	
<b>Suspect Age Group</b>		
5 to 15	295	4.5%
16 to 19	437	6.6%
20 to 29	1,037	15.7%
30 to 39	1,041	15.8%
40 to 49	1,284	19.5%
50 to 59	1,058	16.1%
60 to 69	667	10.1%

<b><i>Suspect Age Group (continued)</i></b>		
70 and over	620	9.4%
Not Reported	152	2.3%
Median Age	43	
<b><i>Total Orders of Protection (OP)</i></b>	628	9.5%
<b><i>Of OPs, Number of Orders Violated</i></b>	347	55.3%
<p><b>Source:</b> Division of Criminal Justice Services DIR Repository, DIRs completed in 2015 and included in the Repository as of 2/1/16. All data are preliminary and subject to change.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Information previously reported detailing suspect/victim relationship, offenses committed and the presence of the suspect at the scene is no longer available.</p>		

## **Attachment A:**

### **Enabling Legislation and Committee Composition**

Chapter III of the Laws of 1993 established the New York State Committee for the Coordination of Police Services to Elderly Persons.

As required by section 844-b (2) (a) of the Executive Law, the Committee is composed of 16 members appointed by the DCJS Commissioner.

Committee membership must include: one representative of DCJS and the following state agencies: the New York State Police; Office of Victim Services; Office for the Aging; and the Office of Children and Family Services; two representatives each from the District Attorneys' Association of New York State; state Association of Chiefs of Police; and the New York State Sheriffs' Association; one representative each from the Attorney General's Office; the New York City Police Department; the New York State Crime Prevention Coalition; and two representatives from the Legislature, one appointed by Senate President and the other by the Assembly Speaker. Additionally, a representative from the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) serves on the Committee, replacing the position designated for the commissioner of the state's former Department of Social Services.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- Consult with experts, service providers, and representative organizations engaged in the protection of the elderly.
- Recommend the development of "Triad" or related programs in New York State, if appropriate, to assist the elderly to avoid criminal victimization through coordinated efforts of State and local law enforcement agencies and organizations which provide services for the elderly.
- Recommend policies and programs, if appropriate, to assist law enforcement agencies to implement "Triad" and related programs, including training and prevention standards and technical assistance. Such recommendations may include:
  - (1) The establishment of a statewide and central clearinghouse of information and education materials.
  - (2) The development of innovative community police programs for the elderly.
  - (3) Providing assistance to the Municipal Police Training Council in the development and delivery of training to law enforcement professionals involved in "Triad Programs," including, but not limited to: crimes against the elderly and the protection of elderly persons; police sensitivity to the needs of elderly persons as victims and witnesses; and social and human services.
  - (4) Providing assistance to State and local law enforcement officials and not-for-profit corporations and other organizations with respect to effective policies and responses to crimes against elderly persons.

- (5) Promoting and facilitating cooperation among State agencies and local units of government.
- (6) Effective advocacy of services to protect elderly persons and elderly victims of crime.
- (7) Evaluating the relationship between crimes against elderly persons and other problems confronting elderly persons, and making recommendations for effective policy response.
- (8) The collection of statistical data and research.

**Attachment B:**

**Committee Members** *(as of December 2015)*

**New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services**

Michael Wood, Deputy Commissioner and Co-Chair  
Office of Public Safety  
80 South Swan Street  
Albany, New York 12210

**New York State Police**

Patricia Groeber, First Deputy Superintendent and Co-Chair  
1220 Washington Avenue  
Building 22  
Albany, New York 12207

**New York State Sheriffs' Association**

Thomas Mills, Sheriff  
Delaware County Sheriff's Office  
Phoebe Lane, Suite 1  
Delhi, New York 13753

Phillip Povero, Sheriff  
Ontario County Sheriff's Office  
74 Ontario Street  
Canandaigua, New York 14424

**New York State Association of Chiefs of Police**

Randy Diamond, Chief  
Hudson Falls Police Department  
218 Main Street  
Hudson Falls, New York 12839

Timothy Parisi, Chief  
Ilion Police Department  
55 First Street  
Ilion, New York 13357

**New York State Office of Victim Services**

Kathy Davidson  
Crime Victims Specialist II  
80 South Swan Street  
Albany, New York 12210

**New York State Office of Attorney General**

Vacant (nomination not received)

**New York City Police Department**

Vacant (nomination not received)

**New York State Senate**

Vacant (nomination not received)

**New York State Crime Prevention Coalition**

Kern Swoboda, Sergeant  
3353 McKinley Parkway  
Blasdell, New York 14219

**New York State Office for the Aging**

Greg Olsen, Acting Executive Deputy Director  
Two Empire State Plaza  
Albany, New York 12223

**New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance**

Paula Cook, SSP Policy Manager  
40 North Pearl Street, 16<sup>th</sup> floor  
Albany, New York 12243

**New York State Assembly**

Vacant (nomination not received)

**New York State Office of Children and Family Services**

Alan Lawitz, Director, Bureau of Adult Services  
52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, New York 12144-2796

**New York State District Attorneys' Association**

Kristen Kane, Assistant District Attorney  
Chief, Elder Fraud Unit  
Queens County District Attorney's Office  
125-01 Queens Boulevard  
Kew Gardens, New York 11415

Candace K. Vogel, Assistant District Attorney  
Special Investigations/Prosecution Bureau  
Erie County District Attorney's Office  
25 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14202