



CUSTOM NOTIFICATIONS IN CHICAGO



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INDEX CATEGORY:	Gang and Narcotic Abatement		

I. PURPOSE

This directive continues the Chicago Police Department's program for custom notifications under the Violence Reduction Initiative in partnership with John Jay College of Criminal Justice Community Team, which will serve as outreach partners within the social service and community partners assembly.

II. SCOPE

The program, effective 07 July 2013, will continue until further notice on a city-wide basis.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. While the Violence Reduction Strategy (VRS) is predicated upon group accountability, individuals within certain groups are identified as having the increased likelihood of victimization or engagement in criminal activity. The custom notification will identify those at-risk individuals and reach out to advise them of the risks and consequences of their actions should they engage in criminal conduct. The goal is to ensure the individual is not only informed of the law enforcement consequences for deciding to engage or continue in gun violence, but also of the devastating impact of gun violence within their community. Opportunities for seeking assistance will also be provided during the custom notification. However, it is ultimately the decision of the individual to choose not to engage in criminal activity.
- B. For the identified individuals, custom notifications serve as notice that law enforcement action will not be random, but rather targeted and specific to the individual, and the failure to follow the clear and consistent message to cease participating in gun violence will have specific and cognizable penalties, as contained within the custom notification letter.
- C. The District Intelligence Officer (DIO) will confer with District Commanders on individuals who are eligible for a Custom Notification letter. The District Intelligence Officer will then contact the Bureau of Patrol to request a Custom Notification letter be created for that individual.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Custom Notification" is a process that identifies potential criminal actors and victims associated with the continuum of violence. Once identified, the individual is notified of the consequences that will result should violent activity continue. The Custom Notification is predicated upon national research that concluded certain actions and associations within an individual's environment are a precursor to certain outcomes should the individual decide to or continue to engage in criminal behavior. The Custom Notification will include a description of both federal and state sentencing options where applicable, as well as identification of the potential for seized assets and other consequences as appropriate.
- B. The Strategic Subjects List (SSL) is a rank-order list of potential victims and subjects with the greatest propensity for violence. The SSL model looks at individuals with criminal records who are ranked according to their probability of being involved in a shooting or murder, either as a victim or an offender, known as a "Party to Violence" (PTV). The software is generated based on empirical data that lists attributes of a person's criminal record, including the record of violence among criminal associates, the degree to which his criminal activities are on the rise, and the types and intensity of criminal history.

- C. "Influentials" are those individual seen as having importance or the ability to influence an individual's actions. These can be both positive and negative influences.
- D. The Custom Notification Letter will be used to inform individuals of the arrest, prosecution, and sentencing consequences they may face if they choose to or continue to engage in public violence. The letter will be specific to the identified individual and incorporate those factors known about the individual inclusive of prior arrests, impact of known associates, and potential sentencing outcomes for future criminal acts.

## V. PROCEDURES

- A. District Intelligence Officers will:
  - 1. continually review and update information relative to individuals linked to gun violence. These reviews will include, but are not limited to:
    - a. investigating individuals' name, date of birth, and IR number;
    - b. review of the Strategic Subjects List (SSL) for the district including the identification of those individuals who live within district;
    - c. CPIC information relative to criminal activity and conflicts within the district;
    - d. the District Gang Audit and other database information;
    - e. intelligence information relayed from district officers, area-assigned officers, and officers assigned to the Bureau of Organized Crime and Bureau of Detectives; and
    - f. review of those individuals who have attended previous call-ins within the district.
  - 2. determine those individuals eligible for custom notifications. Factors for eligibility include, but are not limited to:
    - a. placement on the Strategic Subjects List;
    - b. victim of a shooting incident, where prosecution has been declined for lack of cooperation;
    - c. identification as a repeat offender for public violence crimes; and
    - d. other factors as developed and linked to public violence within the district.
  - 3. ensure when an individual is identified and:
    - a. residency is established, inform the district commander who will ensure the Custom Notification procedure is initiated.
    - b. residency cannot be verified, forward such information to CPIC and record the information in the district Heat List database pending subsequent confirmation of a new address. Residency will be verified and notification will occur at a future date.
- B. The Custom Notification will be conducted under the direction of the district commander.
  - 1. The Custom Notification Letters will be signed by the district commanders.
  - 2. Those present for notifications may vary, based upon identified criminal factors, identified influentials, and other factors as identified in the review process.
  - 3. A Chicago Police Department officer will always be present for a custom notification.
  - 4. The district commander will ensure a safety evaluation has been conducted prior to the arrival of the Custom Notification Team.
- C. The Custom Notification Team will:
  - 1. generally conduct the notification at the identified individual's residence;
  - 2. explain the Custom Notification program and the contents of the Custom Notification Letter; and

3. deliver the letter to the identified individual.

**NOTE:** When an identified individual is not present at the time of the custom notification, or refuses to participate, the Custom Notification Team may deliver the letter and explain the program to a family member or leave the letter at the residence.

- D. When a recipient of the custom notification engages in criminal activity for which he or she is arrested, the district commander will ensure:
  1. notification to and coordination with the appropriate Bureau of Detectives Area to ensure appropriate charging occurs. The highest possible charges will be pursued for any individual in the VRS Custom Notification Program.
  2. Court advocacy volunteers are notified of the date, time, and place of the bond hearing or other court hearings and encourage attendance at the hearing to demonstrate the community's support in decreasing the violence.
  3. coordination with the Cook County State's Attorney Community Justice Center Unit as appropriate.
- E. A copy of the custom notification will be forward to the CPIC and maintained within the district.

(Items indicated by italics/double underline have been revised or added).

Authenticated by: KC

Garry F. McCarthy  
Superintendent of Police

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