

# WRITTEN DIRECTIVE



<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Handle With Care
<b>ORDER TYPE:</b>	Standard Operating Procedure
<b>ISSUED DATE:</b>	12/31/2021
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b>	12/31/2021
<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b>	All Sworn Personnel
<b>CALEA STANDARDS:</b>	N/A

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish reporting procedures for the *Statewide Handle with Care Program* in accordance with *New Jersey Attorney General Directive 2020-09*.

## POLICY

It is the policy of the Camden County Police Department to safeguard the well-being of our collective community. To that end the department participates in the *Statewide Handle with Care Program* in accordance with *New Jersey Attorney General Directive 2020-09*. In no way does this directive supersede department policy on *Alternate Care for Arrestee's Dependents*.

## DEFINITIONS

Child or children refers to any student, regardless of age, enrolled in pre-school through twelfth grade at either a public or private school.

Community violence is interpersonal violence committed in public areas by individuals not intimately related to the victim. Examples of community violence include but, are not limited to fights among gangs or other groups, bullying, and shooting.

Point of contact refers to a school employee identified by the head of the school or Board of Education. This individual will be responsible for receiving all Handle with Care Notices for children enrolled in that school and for disseminating the Handle with Care Notices to the child's teacher(s).

School Liaison Detective. refers to a Juvenile Bureau detective identified by the Commander of Investigations Bureau. This individual will be responsible for reviewing the Handle with Care Notices, administering the protocols for notifications to the Point of Contacts and memorializing the process, via an Excel Spreadsheet. The detective will review, complete and appropriately notify the listed Point(s) of Contact prior to the start of school, each school day.

Traumatic event. shall be broadly construed and includes but, is not limited to the following incidents when a child is a victim or witness:

- The arrest of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;
- A search warrant executed at the child's residence;
- A drug/alcohol overdose of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;
- Suicide or attempted suicide of an individual who resides in the home where the child is present;
- An incident of domestic violence;
- Physical/sexual abuse;
- Community violence;
- A bullied child or a child who is bullying others;
- Forced displacement from the residence;
- Involvement with the Department of Child Protection & Permanency (DCP&P);
- House fires;
- Any other incident where a child is identified at the scene or in an investigation as being exposed to trauma or a critical incident (e.g., crime/drug activity, violence or abuse within the household); or
- The sudden death of an immediate family member or guardian of the child of which the police are made aware.

## PROCEDURE

1. It is necessary to maintain a program in order to:
  - 1.1. Identify when a child has been exposed to a traumatic event or other type of critical incident; and
  - 1.2. Make notification to the child's respective school by sending a handle with care notice form to the designated point of contact within the school.
  
2. The Juvenile Bureau School Liaison Detective Officer shall maintain a current list of email addresses of all school principals (or other school administrators designated by the principal as Points of Contact).
  
3. The *Handle with Care Notice* requires *only* the following basic, non-specific information:
  - Name of the school the child attends; and
  - Name of this agency; and
  - Date and time of the incident; and
  - (REMOVE from heading) Date of referral; and
  - Name of the child, age and grade.
  - No other information shall be written on the notice form.

NOTE: *Although officers may not press for this information for the Handle with Care Notice, officers are not restricted from determining any information regarding a child or a child's school that may be relevant to a criminal investigation, to ensure the child's health or safety, or to address a concern of imminent danger.*

4. When a member of this agency responds to, investigates, or is aware of a traumatic or critical incident when a school age child (see definitions) is present, the officer shall complete, the top portion (above the gray line), of the *Handle with Care Notice*.
  
5. Once the top portion of the notice form is completed, the officer shall immediately email the form as per the following:
  - 5.1. The Subject Line shall be: *Handle with Care Notice* followed by the event case number (example: Handle with Care – 2101261234).

- 5.2. Attach the document and send to:
  - [handlewithcare@camdencountypd.org](mailto:handlewithcare@camdencountypd.org)
  - Your supervisor
  - [RTTOIC@camdencountypd.org](mailto:RTTOIC@camdencountypd.org)
6. The School Liaison Detective shall complete, the bottom portion (below the gray line), of the *Handle with Care Notice* and edit any corrections gleaned through research and investigation.
7. Once the document is complete and accurate, the School Liaison Detective shall email the form, prior to the next school day or prior to the child arriving at school, whichever is sooner, as per the following:
  - 7.1. The Subject Line shall be: *Handle with Care Notice* followed by the event case number (example: Handle with Care – 2101261234).
  - 7.2. Attach the document and send to:
    - Appropriate School Point of Contact
    - Detective's supervisor
8. The sending of the notice must be documented in the corresponding interview/incident/arrest report for the incident, via drop down box in RMS system denoting (HWC y/n).
9. Reports related to the incident shall never be shared in conjunction with, or in replacement of, the *Handle with Care Notice*. Should there be any additional communication between the law enforcement agency and the school, the detective must be cautious not to disclose any details that would violate the privacy interests of any of the parties involved.
10. Situations could arise when a detective sends the *Handle with Care Notice* to a school where the detective reasonably believes a child to be enrolled but, it is returned because the child does not go to that institution. In these rare cases, the School Liaison Detective must make a good faith effort to ascertain the correct

school of enrollment and provide the *Handle with Care Notice* to that school as soon as possible.

11. Some children may attend schools in areas outside of this agency's jurisdiction. In such cases:
  - 11.1. The officer/detective shall still complete the *Handle with Care Notice* and send it immediately to the local law enforcement agency where an affected child's school is located. Communications staff will assist in providing appropriate contact information if necessary.
  - 11.2. The receiving local law enforcement agency is responsible for sending the completed *Handle with Care Notice* to the school's appropriate point of contact but, shall not share with the school any related investigative or incident reports.
12. Supervisors shall ensure the handle with care notification process is carried out by their personnel and properly documented in the report.
13. The School Liaison Detective shall monitor the [handlewithcare@camdencountypd.org](mailto:handlewithcare@camdencountypd.org) email inbox each school day morning, prior to school start time and complete/disseminate in accordance with this policy.
  - 13.1. Investigative administrative Supervisor will be responsible for attaching a copy of the *Handle with Care Notice* and the email into Mark 43 and the appropriate case file.
14. The General Investigations Commander shall be responsible for the tracking, accuracy and reporting of the *Handle with Care* spreadsheet.

## OTHER PROVISIONS

*All personnel are responsible for adhering to the requirements of this written directive* until rescinded or amended by written order of the Chief of Police. Employees have an ongoing and continuous responsibility to seek guidance and verify their understanding of this and all directives including orders, policies, procedures, and rules. This directive shall take effect 12/31/2021 and remain in force and effect unless and until it is repealed, amended, or superseded by Order of the Chief of Police. All directives not expressly altered by this order remain in full force and effect.

*The provisions of this directive shall be severable.* If any phrase, clause, sentence or provision of this directive is declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, the remainder of the directive shall not be affected.

*Non-enforceability by third parties.* This Directive is issued pursuant to the Chief of Police's authority to ensure the uniform and efficient enforcement of the laws and administration of criminal justice by department members. This Directive imposes limitations that may be more restrictive than the limitations imposed under the United States and New Jersey Constitutions, and federal and state statutes and regulations. Nothing in this Directive shall be construed in any way to create any substantive right that may be enforced by any third party.

By Order of

X /Gabriel Rodriguez/

Gabriel Rodriguez #12  
Chief of Police