**DUBLIN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

# SECTION: M-014 GANG SUPPRESSION / INTELLIGENCE UNIT

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**I. PURPOSE**

To establish and prescribe guidelines and procedures for the organization, management, and function of the department Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure is applicable to all personnel assigned to the Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit; the SOP applies to the department as a whole.

**III. OBJECTIVES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND DUTIES**

A. The Dublin Police Department is committed to the active and aggressive pursuit of preventing and reducing crime in the community. To help achieve this goal, and complement other community policing efforts of the department, a Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit will be established to perform responsible intelligence gathering, as well as professional and tactical work, directed towards the suppression of criminal gang activity in the City of Dublin.

B. Basic objectives of the unit include, but are not limited to:

1. Investigate gang-related crimes.  
2. Identify and document gang members.   
3. Educate the public on gang activity.   
4. Assess the nature and scope of illegal gang activities; once identified penetrate and dismantle

the criminal activities with a proactive investigative effort.  
5. Target specific criminal enterprises to eliminate gang power and influence.  
6. Identify opportunities for coordinated multijurisdictional and interdepartmental planning to

implement prevention strategies.  
7. Identify and review major research studies, national surveys, and community models for

addressing problems.

8. Compile intelligence records on known gang members, associates, and gang activity as well as general information on all crimes and offenders.

9. Collect field interview forms from patrol shifts to be entered into intelligence files.

C. The prevention of crime and establishment of effective community relations is a mutual responsibility between all police personnel and the citizens in the community. It is the policy of this department to establish close community relations and proactive crime prevention programs for the residents of the City of Dublin in response to their needs. One of the primary functions of the Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit will be to act as an integral part of the department’s community policing efforts. Team officers will get to know the community through one-on-one contact with individuals and group meetings to learn and understand both individual and community gang-related concerns. These officers will then work with community members to solve community problems and take action to resolve issues.

D. The Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit is organized as a separate entity under the command and control of the Major; team officers will function under and be responsible to the Major and intermediate supervisors as appointed. Team officers will normally perform unit-related duties, and work varying hours based on the task(s) and/or problem(s) at hand. Team officers may wear different types of uniforms or clothing based on the duties being performed.

**IV. SELECTION AND ASSIGNMENT**

A. The Chief of Police has primary responsibility for the staffing and selection of personnel for the Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit, but will normally delegate this responsibility to the Major.

B. Assignment to the team may be on a full-time and/or part-time basis, based on the availability of positional funding and department needs. There is no selection process for team assignment; team members will be appointed based on the needs of the department. There is no ‘set’ number of personnel that may be assigned.

a. Officers who are assigned to the team as a full-time duty will perform gang intelligence gathering and suppression duties on a full-time basis in accordance with this SOP and as directed by the Chief and Major.

b. Officers who are assigned to the team as a part-time duty will perform the same duties as an additional duty; these officers who are selected for team inclusion will not be relieved from their current assignment.

c. Personnel who wish to participate, but are not appointed, may volunteer for team inclusion.

C. There are no definitive selection criteria for team appointments. However, personnel selected for or volunteering for team inclusion should:

1. have completed or be willing to attend gang training courses.

2. possess good investigative and administrative skills.

3. be willing to work varying and non-conforming hours.

4. be experienced in or willing to learn enforcement of narcotics and illegal drugs, burglary/theft,

and other related criminal activity.

Selectees/applicants MUST be responsible, highly motivated, flexible, self-starters, able to work without supervision, able to work in many types of environments, willing and able to work and converse with the public, and committed to making the City of Dublin a better place by suppressing criminal gang activity.

D. An officer chosen/selected for assignment to the Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit will be notified; appointment/selection decisions of the Chief and/or Major will be final.

**V. GANG AWARENESS**

A. Gang Definition – As provided in OCGA 16-15-3, the definition of a criminal street gang is three or more individuals, who associate formally or informally, and engage in criminal gang activity. In reality, this equates to the following:

The term "Criminal Street Gang" means any:

* *Organization, association, or group of three or more,*
* *Associated in fact; AND,*
* *Engaging in "Criminal Gang Activity".*

The term "Criminal Gang Activity" means:

* *The commission*
* *The attempted commission*
* *Conspiracy to commit*
* *Solicitation, coercion, or intimidation of another person to commit*

***Any*** of the following offenses:

* Racketeering offenses
* Stalking offenses
* Rape, aggravated sodomy, statutory rape, or aggravated sexual battery
* Escape and confinement offenses
* Security of correctional facilities offenses
* Encouraging a child to escape from custody
* Criminal trespass or criminal damage to property resulting from gang-related tagging,

marking, writing, or graffiti on the property of another

* Violating any federal, state, or foreign gang law
* Crimes of violence
* Weapons offenses

It is also against Georgia law to commit offenses related to:

* Acquiring/maintaining property or proceeds from gang activity.
* Encouraging participation in, organizing, or maintaining gangs.
* Retaliating against people for or discouraging people from leaving a gang.

B. Gang members usually identify themselves by the following means:

* **Clothing:** Gang members may wear clothing from a particular athletic team to represent their gang. Clothing may also include jewelry displaying gang symbols and/or names.
* **Colors:** Gang members may dress in colors that represent their gang (sweatbands, hats, bandannas, shoe laces, belts, etc.).
  + **Tattoos/Brands:** Members may have tattoos/brands professionally drawn, self-drawn, and/or burned or carved on any part of their body.  Symbols, monikers, and/or names associated with the gang may be displayed.

C. Street gangs normally communicate using the following methods:

* **Graffiti:** Gangs use graffiti to show gang membership, gang superiority, territory, rivals, and revenge.
* **Hand signals:** Gangs use hand signals as non-verbal communication between gang members.  Hand signs may also be used to challenge and/or disrespect rival gangs.
* **Symbols:** Gangs use certain symbols that are specific to each gang
* **Alphabet/Codes:** Gangs use certain codes or made-up alphabet letters to conceal written communication.  Different codes or alphabets are specific to each gang.

D. Different types of gangs include:

* **Traditional Gangs:** These groups have a well-defined structure, and organization, along with an established system of motivation, and identifiable colors and hand signs.  Many profit from the drug trade.  Violence is prevalent.  Members generally can range in age from 8-30 years old or more.
* **Non-Traditional Gangs:** These groups have little organization.  Usually evolve into a traditional gang and are unique to a local area.  Sometimes these gangs call themselves a "rap group" to avoid the stigma and law enforcement attention that traditional gangs attract.  They provide a false identity of the group to mislead others.
* **Hybrid Gangs:** Some non-traditional gangs still adopt the same colors, signs, and symbols of traditional gangs. These "hybrid gangs" mix and match the identifiers of established gangs and have very loose affiliations with Traditional Gangs.
* **Criminal Enterprise Gangs:** These groups are highly organized and focused on financial gain from criminal activities such as prostitution, gun trafficking, fraud, and others.  Violence is only a tool used to protect the integrity of the enterprise or to make more money.  Typically, members of these gangs are older.
* **Nations:** Nations are groups of traditional gangs that align under a set of symbols and identifiers. Example: The Folk and the People Nations.
* **Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs:** These groups have a well-defined structure, and organization, along with an established system of motivation and identifiable colors.  They profit from the drug trade and violence is prevalent.
* **Prison Gangs**: Operating from within the prison, these groups are parts of traditional gangs that have a well-defined structure, and organization, along with an established system of motivation, and identifiable colors and hand signs.  Violence is prevalent.
* **Hate Groups**: These groups or movements vary in organization and structure, and advocate and practice hate, hostility, and often violence towards members of a race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or other sector of society. Common examples include the KKK, skinheads, and Aryan Nations.
* **Cults**: Groups or movements exhibiting a great or excessive devotion or dedication to some person, idea, or thing, and employing unethically manipulative techniques of persuasion and control designed to advance the goals of the group's leaders to the actual or possible detriment of members, their families, or the community.
* **Taggers/Tagging Crews:**  These are typically groups that are focused on vandalism and artistic expression.  No other criminal acts are engaged by these loosely defined groups.

E. Warning signs that indicate a street gang may be operating in the area:

* Clustering of rival groups
* Movement of groups not common in your neighborhood (carloads of strangers)
* Reports of fights and arguments on school property
* Increased gang graffiti
* Violent incidents reported in the area
* Sudden/excessive change in dress (groups wearing or displaying a particular color)

F. How do gangs recruit members?

* Hanging out at schools and neighborhoods
* Promising security, money, and respect
* Intimidation or threats
* Seeking out those individuals who have special talents to assist with crimes
* The Internet
* Targeting younger children to handle many tasks and create long-term loyalty
* The ideal target age for recruitment is 10-13 years old

G. Why do young people join gangs?

* Status, identity, recognition, and/or respect
* Excitement of gang activity
* Breakdown of family; poor communication at home
* Low self-esteem
* Lack of success in school
* Need for acceptance or belonging
* Lack of involvement in activities
* Perceived or real need for protection
* Peer pressure from gang members
* Financial benefits from drug sales, burglaries, robberies, and other crimes
* Family member is already involved
* Confidence, loyalty, sex, rules, structure, discipline, and organization
* Powerful group identity
* Relieve boredom and gain a reputation

H. How do gangs initiate members?

* **Beat-in/jumped-in:** Enduring a severe beating from members
* **Blessed-in:**  Member vouches for a person
* **Sexed-in:** Females must engage in sexual acts with members; willing to rape
* **Criminal Act:**  Commit a crime to show loyalty

**VI. DOCUMENTATION OF GANGS AND GANG MEMBERS**

A. Department personnel will document gangs and gang members in order to identify and prosecute

individuals involved in gang-related crimes. In documenting gang members, we also learn about the

gangs in order to help prevent gang-related crimes from occurring. Gaining knowledge about a gang and its members is the key to preventing future gang crimes. We call this intelligence gathering and use this intelligence information to identify suspects involved in gang-related crimes.

B. Criteria for documenting a gang member include:

* Subject has admitted to being a gang member.
* Subject has been arrested alone or with known gang members for offenses consistent with usual gang activity.
* Subject has been identified as a gang member by a reliable informant/source.
* Subject has been seen affiliating with documented gang members.
* Subject has been seen displaying symbols and/or hand signs.
* Subject has been seen frequenting gang areas.
* Subject has been seen wearing gang dress/colors/flags/other related items.
* Subject is known to have gang tattoos/brands.

An individual may be documented as a gang member when:

* He/she achieves the required points on the DPD Gang Member Identification Criteria worksheet
* He/she has three separate contacts with police meeting one or more of the criteria listed above, or anyone contact with three or more of the criteria listed above.

C. Criteria for documenting a gang:

* The group meets the definition of a criminal street gang and is involved in criminal gang activity (per OCGA 16-15-3 and 16-15-4), or…
* The group has a name (or leadership) and group members associate on a regular basis, or…
* The group claims a turf, territory, neighborhood, criminal enterprise, or causes or contributes to the deterioration of a community through a pattern of criminal activity, and group members associate with each other on a regular basis.

**VII. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT**

A. As written in OCGA 16-15-2, the Georgia Assembly has declared that it is the right of every person to be secure and protected from fear, intimidation, and physical harm caused by the activities of violent groups and individuals. The assembly also finds that the State of Georgia is in a state of crisis which has been caused by violent street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit a multitude of crimes against the peaceful citizens of their neighborhoods. These activities, both individually and collectively, present a clear and present danger to public order and safety.  
  
The assembly further finds that there are criminal street gangs operating in Georgia and that the number of gang-related murders is increasing. It is the intent of the General Assembly to seek the eradication of criminal activity by street gangs by focusing on patterns of criminal gang activity and upon the organized nature of street gangs which together are the chief source of terror created by street gangs.

B. The Georgia Street Gang Terrorism and Prevention Act was passed in 2007 by the Georgia State Legislature; the Georgia Supreme Court has since unanimously upheld the constitutionality of the statute. Act information can be found in OCGA sections 16-15-1 through 16-15-10.

**VIII. FORMS**

There are two forms used in conjunction with this SOP: the DPD Gang Member Identification Criteria worksheet and the DPD Field Interview Report. Officers will complete both forms when interviewing suspected or actual gang members. Completed forms will be forwarded through channels to senior gang unit personnel. Copies of both forms can be found on the ‘P’ drive.

**IX. CLOSING**

As stated previously, the Dublin Police Department is committed to the active and aggressive pursuit of preventing and reducing crime in the community. Gang-related crime has become an issue, and through intelligence and action, the Gang Suppression / Intelligence Unit will help combat the onset of street gangs whose members threaten, terrorize, and commit crimes against the peaceful citizens of our community.