Screening for Domestic Violence

Predominant Aggressor Assessment
When both parties have used violence, investigators must determine which person acted in self-defense.

Always report the following items:

☐ All evidence collected or statements made during interviews

☐ History of violence including prior arrests, criminal records and TPO filings

☐ Comparisons of height and weight between victim and suspect

☐ Absence or presence of any physical disabilities, medical conditions or impairments

☐ Claims of self-defense

☐ Specific injury patterns found on the victim or suspect which commonly include:
  • Fingernail or other scratches to suspect’s neck, face and arms caused by victim in self-defense
  • Bite marks on suspect’s arms, hands, or chest caused by victim in self-defense
  • Groin or genital injuries to suspect by victim in self-defense
  • Bruises, lacerations and abrasions on the forearms and hands of victims from attempting to block punches, kicks, or other strikes with a weapon

Remember bruising will not always appear immediately!
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Information for the Victim
Encourage the victim to contact Georgia’s 24-Hour, Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-33-HAVEN (1800-334-2836). Explain that they can talk to an advocate about shelter and additional services.

Explain their rights and inform them that they might qualify for a Family Violence Protective Order and/or Victim’s Compensation.

Making A Good Domestic Violence Case
☐ Document parties location upon arrival and interview them separately (including children)
☐ Have victim and witnesses write (or tape) a statement
☐ Take pictures of crime scene, injuries, etc.
☐ Describe in detail victim’s and suspect’s injuries (or lack of), crime scene, etc.
☐ Document any spontaneous utterances (in quotes)
☐ Note any history of abuse including court orders/TPO filings
☐ Describe victim’s and suspects emotional and physical condition, including height and weight
☐ Identify and interview person calling 911, if not victim
☐ Record names/ages of any children present
☐ Impound weapons
☐ Follow Miranda. Ask if suspect wants to make a statement (write/record)
☐ Record permanent and alternative phone number and address for victim and witnesses
☐ Obtain signed medical release form from victim
☐ Record name and badge number of all officers present
☐ Note emergency personnel information