

## Domestic Violence Escalation Scenario

### **Facilitator:**

While monitoring the radio in your cruiser, you hear two patrol units dispatched to a residential street in your area for a possible domestic violence call. You know that both dispatched patrol units are single-officer cruisers.

The dispatcher states the reporting person is a neighbor who observed the young couple living across the street arrive home and park in the driveway. The husband immediately got out of the vehicle and began screaming and yelling obscenities. The husband then opened the passenger's door, grabbed his wife by her hair and pulled her out of the vehicle, throwing her to the ground. The wife was crying and was kicking at the husband, screaming for him to "Stop!" The husband continued to yell at her, then punched her 2-3 times in the face. As the neighbor went outside to intervene, the husband picked his wife up off the ground by her hair and pulled her into the house. The reporting person remained outside and from their own front yard can hear yelling and what sounds like "things breaking" from inside the couple's house across the street.

What actions, if any, do you take at this time?

### ***FLS Response:***

*First actions:*

1. *Possible answers:*

- a. *Continue monitoring the radio, but only if your agency normally handles these situations using two officers.*
- b. *Respond to assist the two officers.*
- c. *Respond and send additional units to assist.*
- d. *Ask dispatch to keep the reporting person on the phone for updates or call them back if needed.*

### **Facilitator:**

Scenario update: Dispatch has kept the reporting person on the phone. They tell the dispatcher they just heard several loud "pops" from inside the residence. They believe these "pops" were gunshots and the caller has now run inside to hide. How does this change your response?

Scenario update: As the first two officers arrive on scene, they report a female running out of the front door of the house. She is covered in blood and collapses in the street approximately 30 feet in front of their cruisers. You are approximately 30 seconds out and arrive on the scene just as the officers finish providing the update. Both officers have parked their cruisers one house away and across the street from the residence in question. You observe your officers are out of their cruisers, guns drawn, and appear to be contemplating trying to secure the female in the roadway. Identify the issues and articulate any additional changes in the police response based on these facts.

**FLS Response:**

*Issues:*

1. *Who fired the reported shots, and where are they now? (Don't automatically assume the husband was the shooter.)*
2. *Are you and the officers on scene currently exposed if the shooter is the female laying in the street or someone inside the house?*
3. *Is the female bleeding? Is she covered in someone else's blood?*
4. *Is the female the shooter or a victim? Is she armed?*
5. *If she is the shooter, is there a victim in the house?*
6. *If the female is injured and bleeding, what caused the injury? Gunshot, stab wound, etc.? Where is she injured and how badly?*
7. *If the female is the victim of a gunshot(s), is the suspect now barricaded inside the house?*
8. *Can officers safely approach the person in the street?*
9. *Can the officers safely reach her with the resources already on-scene?*
  - a. *How? Give me your plan?*
2. *What other resources are available that you might want?*
  - a. *Are the resources you want/need available?*
  - b. *Can you request them directly or do you need to contact a superior officer or command staff member for authorization?*
3. *If the situation becomes a barricaded subject, what are your next actions?*

Sample scenario variable: The male has barricaded himself inside the residence. You have requested additional resources and are waiting for them to arrive on scene. One of your officers observes the barricaded subject open a window and call out in a loud voice to the officer. The subject is not visible in the window, but the officers can clearly hear his voice. It appears he wants to speak to the officers. An officer begins trying to negotiate with the barricaded subject.

Without warning, a television news crew arrives. They were in the area covering a separate story and observed all the cruisers converging on the street. They park their vehicle behind your cruiser and quickly start filming before officers notice them. A reporter walks over to an officer on-scene and begins asking questions about the situation.

What should you do?