

Connecticut General Statutes 46b-38b – Investigation of family violence crime by peace officer. Arrest. Assistance to victim. Guidelines. Education and training program. Compliance with model law enforcement policy on family violence. Assistance and proto

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(a) Whenever a peace officer determines upon speedy information that a family violence crime has been committed within such officer's jurisdiction, such officer shall arrest the person or persons suspected of its commission and charge such person or persons with the appropriate crime. The decision to arrest and charge shall not (1) be dependent on the specific consent of the victim, (2) consider the relationship of the parties, or (3) be based solely on a request by the victim. Whenever a peace officer determines that a family violence crime has been committed, such officer may seize any firearm or electronic defense weapon, as defined in section 53a-3, or ammunition at the location where the crime is alleged to have been committed that is in the possession of any person arrested for the commission of such crime or suspected of its commission or that is in plain view. Not later than seven days after any such seizure, the law enforcement agency shall return such firearm, electronic defense weapon or ammunition in its original condition to the rightful owner thereof unless such person is ineligible to possess such firearm, electronic defense weapon or ammunition or unless otherwise ordered by the court.

(b) No peace officer investigating an incident of family violence shall threaten, suggest or otherwise indicate the arrest of all parties for the purpose of discouraging requests for law enforcement intervention by any party. Where complaints are made by two or more opposing

parties, the officer shall evaluate each complaint separately to determine whether such officer should make an arrest or seek a warrant for an arrest. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, when a peace officer reasonably believes that a party in an incident of family violence has used force as a means of self defense, such officer is not required to arrest such party under this section.

(c) No peace officer shall be held liable in any civil action regarding personal injury or injury to property brought by any party to a family violence incident for an arrest based on probable cause or for any conditions of release imposed pursuant to subsection (b) of section 54-63c.

(d) It shall be the responsibility of the peace officer at the scene of a family violence incident to provide immediate assistance to the victim. Such assistance shall include, but not be limited to: (1) Assisting the victim to obtain medical treatment if such treatment is required; (2) notifying the victim of the right to file an affidavit for a warrant for arrest; (3) informing the victim of services available, including providing the victim with contact information for a regional family violence organization that employs, or provides referrals to, counselors who are trained in providing trauma-informed care; (4) referring the victim to the Office of Victim Services; and (5) providing assistance in accordance with the uniform protocols for treating victims of family violence whose immigration status is questionable established pursuant to subsection (g) of this section. In cases where the officer has determined that no cause exists for an arrest, assistance shall include: (A) Assistance as provided in subdivisions (1) to (5), inclusive, of this subsection; and (B) remaining at the scene for a reasonable time until, in the reasonable judgment of the officer, the likelihood of further imminent violence has been eliminated. For the purposes of this subsection, “trauma-informed care” means services (i) directed by a thorough understanding of the neurological, biological, psychological and social effects of trauma and violence on a person; and (ii) delivered by a regional family violence organization that employs, or provides referrals to, counselors who: (I) Make available to the victim of family violence resources on trauma exposure, its impact and treatment; (II) engage in efforts to strengthen the resilience and protective factors of victims of family violence who are impacted by and vulnerable to trauma; (III) emphasize continuity of care and collaboration among organizations that provide services to

children; and (IV) maintain professional relationships for referral and consultation purposes with programs and persons with expertise in trauma-informed care.

(e) (1) Each law enforcement agency shall develop, in conjunction with the Division of Criminal Justice, and implement specific operational guidelines for arrest policies in family violence incidents. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to: (A) Procedures for the conduct of a criminal investigation; (B) procedures for arrest and for victim assistance by peace officers; (C) education as to what constitutes speedy information in a family violence incident; (D) procedures with respect to the provision of services to victims; and (E) such other criteria or guidelines as may be applicable to carry out the purposes of sections 46b-1, 46b-15, 46b-38a to 46b-38f, inclusive, and 54-1g. Such procedures shall be duly promulgated by such law enforcement agency. On and after October 1, 2012, each law enforcement agency shall develop and implement specific operational guidelines for arrest policies in family violence incidents which, at a minimum, meet the standards set forth in the model law enforcement policy on family violence established in subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) There is established a model law enforcement policy on family violence for the state. Such policy shall consist of the model policy submitted by the task force established in section 19 of public act 11-152* on January 31, 2012, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, as amended from time to time by the Family Violence Model Policy Governing Council established pursuant to section 46b-38j.

(3) Not later than January 15, 2013, and annually thereafter, the chairperson of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council shall provide notice of updates to the model policy, if any, adopted by the council during the prior calendar year, to the chief law enforcement officer of each municipality having a police department, the law enforcement instructor of each such police department, and the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection.

(4) Not later than July 1, 2013, and annually thereafter, each law enforcement agency shall submit a report to the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection, in such form as the commissioner prescribes, regarding the law enforcement agency's compliance with the model law enforcement policy on family violence for the state.

(5) On and after July 1, 2010, each law enforcement agency shall designate at least one officer with supervisory duties to expeditiously process, upon request of a victim of family violence or other crime who is applying for U Nonimmigrant Status (A) a certification of helpfulness on Form I-918, Supplement B, or any subsequent corresponding form designated by the United States Department of Homeland Security, confirming that the victim of family violence or other crime has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity, and (B) any subsequent certification required by the victim.

(f) The Police Officer Standards and Training Council, in conjunction with the Division of Criminal Justice, shall establish an education and training program for law enforcement officers, supervisors and state's attorneys on the handling of family violence incidents. Training under such program shall: (1) Stress the enforcement of criminal law in family violence cases and the use of community resources, and include training for peace officers at both recruit and in-service levels; and (2) include, but not be limited to: (A) The nature, extent and causes of family violence; (B) legal rights of and remedies available to victims of family violence and persons accused of family violence; (C) services and facilities available to victims and persons who commit acts of family violence; (D) legal duties imposed on police officers to make arrests and to offer protection and assistance, including applicable probable cause standards; and (E) techniques for handling incidents of family violence that minimize the likelihood of injury to the officer and promote the safety of the victim. On and after July 1, 2010, training under such program shall also include, within available appropriations, information on (i) the impact of arrests of multiple parties in a family violence case on the immigration status of the parties; (ii) crime scene investigation and evaluation practices in family violence cases designed by the council to reduce the number of multiple arrests in family violence cases; and (iii) practical considerations in the application of the general statutes related to family violence. On and after

July 1, 2010, such training shall also address, within available appropriations, eligibility for federal T Visas for victims of human trafficking and federal U Visas for unauthorized immigrants who are victims of family violence and other crimes.

(g) Not later than July 1, 2010, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council shall establish uniform protocols for treating victims of family violence whose immigration status is questionable, and shall make such protocols available to law enforcement agencies. Each law enforcement agency shall adopt and use such protocols on and after the date they are established by the council.