

Glossary

April 2024



The following definitions are based on those provided in existing guidance from the IACP Policy Center. Specific definitions may vary by jurisdiction or local statute. In some cases, terms may have multiple definitions; the definitions are provided as they are used within the context of the policy guidance issued by the IACP Policy Center; and hyperlinks appear after each definitions.



Glossary

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Glossary of Policy Terms

Abandoned: A child ordered to leave home or prevented from returning home by an adult household member without adequate alternative care provided. (See [Missing Persons](#).)

Abandonment: Leaving a child alone or in the care of another under circumstances that demonstrate an intentional abdication of parental or guardian responsibility. (See [Investigating Child Abuse](#).)

Abduction: A form of false imprisonment when someone is illegally confined or prevented from certain freedoms against their will. Both adults and children can be abducted. In the case of a child, abduction can occur when someone takes a child from or fails to return a child to their guardian. May also be referred to as *kidnapping*. (See [Missing Persons](#).)

Acquaintance Stalking: Occurs when the stalker and victim know each other casually. This can be through formal or informal contact. (See [Stalking](#).)

Actionable Grievance: An allegation by an employee relating to employment matters. Grievances may also relate to matters pertaining to improvement or modification in working conditions or to practices or procedures that have a bearing on employee effectiveness, efficiency, safety, or health. (See [Grievance Procedures](#).)

Active Aggression: Threat, attempt, or actual physical harm to self or others. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Active Resistance: The use of non-assaultive physical measures by an unarmed person, including flight, to resist and or prevent an officer from gaining control. (See [Aerosol Restraint Spray](#) and [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Active Shooting: An incident in which one or more armed persons have used, or are reasonably likely to use, deadly force in an ongoing manner, and where persons have been injured, killed, or are under imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm by such persons. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Acute Stress Disorder:

- An intense reaction (cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral) to trauma within a month after a traumatic event.¹ (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)
- An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and occurs within 30 days of exposure. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Additional Handgun: Any authorized handgun in addition to the primary service handgun that is carried by a police officer in an authorized concealed manner. May also be referred to as a *backup* or *secondary weapon*. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

¹ American Psychiatric Association (APA), "[What Is Posttraumatic Stress Disorder?](#)"

Administrative Investigation: An internal investigation conducted in response to a complaint with the goal of determining whether an employee violated agency policy. (See [Investigation of Allegations of Employee Misconduct](#).)

Administrator: The police official conducting the identification procedure. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Aerosol Restraint Spray: A chemical irritant distributed in extremely small particles as a method of less-lethal force, used to overcome resistance. (See [Aerosol Restraint Spray](#).)

Affidavit: A written statement under oath. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Affirmative Duty: The personal responsibility and obligation of an employee to report wrongdoing—rather than to provide such information only when requested. (See [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)

Agency Briefing: An informational administrative report on what happened during a critical incident. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Airborne: Infectious agents that can be carried by dust or droplet nuclei suspended in air and transmitted to new hosts. Airborne particles can settle on surfaces but can also be easily moved by wind currents and can be blown over great distances. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Alternatives to Arrest: Programs that are those focused on deflection—where preventative services are offered for individuals thought to be at elevated risk of criminal justice system involvement—and on pre-arrest diversion—where charges are held in abeyance or suspended without any prosecutorial or judicial involvement and subsequently not pursued once a prescribed treatment or program has been entered, started, or completed. (See [Alternatives to Arrest](#).)

Analysis: Activity whereby meaning (actual or suggested) is derived through organizing and systematically examining information and applying logical reasoning. This often involves resolving or separating an idea or construct into its component parts, ascertaining those parts, and tracing parts to their source to reveal the general principles behind them. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Anti-Felon Identification (AFID) Tags: Confetti-like pieces of paper installed on electronic control weapon (ECW) devices that are expelled from the cartridge when deployed. Each AFID tag contains an alpha-numeric identifier unique to the cartridge used. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Archive Image: An image stored on media suitable for long-term storage. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Armorer: Any individual certified by a recognized training authority having proficiency in the repair and replacement of firearms parts, who is authorized and/or designated by the agency. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Arrest: Taking a person into custody. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)

Arrest Warrant: A written order issued by a judge, magistrate, or other proper authority that commands a police officer to place a person under arrest. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)

Assistant: This is the title for subordinates of principal command staff positions. The title indicates a level of technical capability, qualifications, and responsibility subordinate to the primary positions. Assistants may also be assigned to unit leaders. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Audit:

- A process for ensuring that files are maintained in accordance with the goals and objectives of the intelligence authority and include information that is both timely and relevant. Audits may be conducted internally and/or by an outside agency. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)
- An official examination and verification of accounts, documents, records, policies, and processes intended to verify and improve the integrity of agency procedures. An audit ensures compliance with existing laws, regulations, and policies, and identifies any corrective action necessary. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Authority Removal Laws: Laws that provide authority for designated public agencies to remove vehicles and/or spilled cargo from the roadway to restore traffic flow. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Authorized Ammunition: Ammunition that has been approved by the agency for use in authorized firearms. This should take into consideration the firearm manufacturer's recommended specifications. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Authorized Emergency Vehicle: An agency vehicle equipped with operable emergency equipment as designated by applicable law. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Authorized Firearm: Any make, model, or caliber of firearm that meets an agency's designated requirements and specifications and has been formally approved by the agency armorer and chief executive or their designee for general or individual use by sworn police personnel. This includes any weapon platform used for police purposes and any firearm carried as an off-duty weapon. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Authorized Holster: A holster that is approved by the agency and is sufficiently rigid enough to prevent the trigger from being manipulated, is designed to fit a particular handgun, and provides adequate retention to secure the firearm in place. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Auxiliary Aids and Services: As defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),² these communication aids assist people who are deaf or who have hearing loss. (See [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).)

Avian Influenza: A strain of influenza that naturally occurs among wild birds and is deadly to domestic poultry. Highly pathogenic avian influenza such as H5N1 has crossed the species barrier to infect humans, but person-to-person spread has thus far been rare, if it has occurred at all, according to some authorities. The potential for it to mutate into a form that is efficiently transmitted between humans who have no immunity has caused it to be closely monitored. May also be referred to as the *bird flu*. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Backdraft: The introduction of oxygen to a smoldering fire, such as by opening a door or window, causing a sudden and explosive ignition of combustibles sufficient to cause death or serious bodily injury. (See [Law Enforcement Fire Response](#).)

Bacteria: Single-celled microorganisms that can cause diseases and are treated with antibacterial medications. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Barricaded Individual(s): An individual who is the focus of a police intervention effort, has taken a position in a physical location that does not allow immediate police access, and is refusing police orders to exit. This may include barricaded subjects and/or barricaded suspects. (See [Barricaded Individuals](#).)

- **Barricaded Subject:** A barricaded individual who is not suspected of committing a crime.
- **Barricaded Suspect:** A barricaded individual who is suspected of committing a crime.

Base: Is the location where primary logistics functions are coordinated and administered. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Behavioral Threat Assessment: A proactive targeted violence prevention effort, to include identifying individuals of concern; assessing their risk for engaging in or being subjected to violence or other harmful activities; and identifying intervention strategies to manage that risk. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

Bias: A preformed opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on classifications such as race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or gender identity/expression. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Biased Policing: Discrimination in the performance of police duties or delivery of police services, based on personal prejudices or partiality of agency personnel toward classes of people based on specified characteristics. (See [Bias-Free Policing](#).)

² For more information, see United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, [The Americans with Disabilities Act](#).

Biological Weapon: Any microorganism, such as a bacteria or virus, used intentionally to inflict harm upon others. Biological weapons are most effective when dispersed as fine airborne particles (aerosols) to be inhaled by intended victims. However, biological agents can also be effective if ingested or injected. (See [Responding to Suspicious Mail: Biological Threats](#).)

Bioterrorism: The concept of threatening or intimidating, either through overt action or mere implication, an injury or attack through the use of biological weapons. It can include hoaxes calculated to instill fear. (See [Responding to Suspicious Mail: Biological Threats](#).)

Blind Presentation: Occurs when the lineup or photo array administrator conducting the identification procedure does not know the suspect's identity. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Blinded Presentation: The lineup or photo array administrator may know the identity of the suspect, but does not know which lineup or photo array member is being viewed by the eyewitness at any given time. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Bloodborne Diseases: When infectious agents can be transmitted by blood. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Bodily Fluids: Any liquid secretions of the body such as blood, semen, vaginal fluids, saliva or mucus, urine, diarrhea, vomit, and sweat. May also be referenced as *body fluids*. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#) and [HIV/AIDS Prevention](#).)

Body Armor: An item of personal protective equipment intended to protect the wearer from threats that may include ballistic threats, stabbing, fragmentation, or blunt impact. Body armor generally consists of two armor panels or plates—a front and a back—placed in a carrier. (See [Body Armor](#).)

Body Cavity Search: Any search involving the physical or visual examination of a person's internal, genital, or anal cavities. It may, in some instances, include internal organs, such as the stomach cavity. (See [Strip and Body Cavity Searches](#).)

Bomb Threat: A situation where an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location. (See [Bomb Threats and Response](#).)

Branch: A branch has functional or geographical responsibility for major aspects of incident operations. Incident command branches are identified by the use of Roman numerals or by functional area. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Bullying: Repeated inappropriate behavior, abuse, or mistreatment conducted by one or more persons against another or others that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. (See [Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#).)

Camp: A location where personnel not currently assigned to an incident designated for rest and recuperation. A camp is often adjacent to a base with the term base/camp referring to both. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Canine Apprehension: Leveraging canine deployment (directly or indirectly) to gain control and custody of a suspect. (See [Patrol Canines](#).)

Canine Deployment: Use of a canine for purposes of finding, apprehending, containing, or controlling a suspect or for other purposes as authorized. Mere presence of a canine at a crime or incident scene does not constitute a deployment. (See [Patrol Canines](#).)

Canine Team: An officer/handler and their assigned police canine. (See [Patrol Canines](#).)

Capture: The process of recording an image. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Caregiver: A responsible adult selected to temporarily care for a child in situations where another individual with legal custody of the child is unavailable. (See [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents](#).)

Carrier: A garment whose primary purpose is to retain body armor panel(s) or plate(s) and to provide a means of supporting and securing the armor panel(s) or plate(s) to the wearer. (See [Body Armor](#).)

Case Agent: The officer primarily responsible for an investigation, which includes preparing, planning, and implementing the search warrant. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Casualty Collection Point (CCP): A location where victims can be assembled for movement from areas of risk. Based upon incident dynamics, such as the number and location of victims, multiple CCPs may be required. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Chain of Custody: Chronological documentation of the seizure, custody, control, transfer (temporary or permanent), and disposition of physical or electronic evidence.³ (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Challenged Officers: An out-of-uniform officer who is mistaken for a criminal suspect by another officer during an off-duty enforcement encounter. May also be referred to as the *confronted officer*. (See [Off-Duty Arrests](#).)

Challenging Officer: An officer who confronts or challenges an individual believed to be a suspect without knowledge or reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is a police officer. May also be referred to as the *confronting officer*. (See [Off-Duty Arrests](#).)

Chaplain: A member of the clergy who serves in a nondenominational capacity to aid employees in their spiritual health as well as other aspects of health and wellness. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Child:

- Any unemancipated person under the age of 18, or as otherwise defined by state/provincial law. (See [Investigating Child Abuse](#) and [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Toolkit](#).)
- This includes adopted children, foster children, stepchildren, legal wards, and anyone for whom the employee stood in loco parentis. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)

Child Abuse: An act or failure to act on the part of a parent, guardian, caregiver, or other responsible person in a position of trust and authority that presents an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or harm to a child. (See [Investigating Child Abuse](#).)

Child Identity Theft: The fraudulent use of the personal information of a minor child. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Child Neglect: A failure to act or to provide for a child's basic needs, on the part of a parent, guardian, caregiver, or other responsible person in a position of trust and authority. (See [Investigating Child Abuse](#).)

Child Sexual Abuse: The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in—or assist any other person to engage in—any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing child abuse images or child abuse material; or the rape, statutory rape, act of incest, molestation, prostitution, or sexual exploitation of a child. (See [Investigating Child Abuse](#).)

Child Welfare Services: A public service agency or its contractee that has authority to assume responsibility for the care, welfare, and temporary supervision of a child pursuant to law. (See [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Toolkit](#).)

Choke Hold: A physical maneuver that restricts an individual's ability to breathe for the purposes of incapacitation. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Civil Disturbance: A gathering that constitutes a breach of the peace or any assembly of persons where there is a threat of collective violence, destruction of property, or other unlawful acts. May also be referred to as a *riot* or *unlawful assembly*. (See [Crowd Management](#).)

Cold Zone: A geographic area where first responders can operate with minimal threat to personal safety or health. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Collaborative Partnership: A long-term structured commitment across multiple stakeholders for a range of common goals or multiple projects over time. (See [Law Enforcement-Researcher Collaborative Partnerships](#).)

Command Staff: In an incident management organization, those who report directly to the incident commander. The command staff often includes a deputy incident commander and the special staff positions of public information officer, safety officer, liaison officer, and other positions as required. (See [Incident Command](#).)

³ International Association For Property & Evidence Inc. (IAPE), [Chain of Custody](#), IAPE Forms & Professional Standards.

Communicable Disease: An illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or via an animal, vector, or the inanimate environment to a susceptible animal or human host. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Companion Officer: An officer assigned to provide emotional support and assistance following a critical incident. The assigned officer is normally a member of the agency's peer support team but may also be an officer who has had a similar experience as the officer involved in the incident, is a close friend of the officer, or both. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Compelling Governmental Interest: The determination that the interests of privacy, freedom of expression, and related constitutional guarantees are outweighed by the nature and magnitude of the likely harm should the suspected criminal activity continue. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Compelling Public Interest: Situations in which failure to act would likely result in a loss of life, serious injury, or some serious negative consequence for persons, property, or public safety and therefore demand action. (See [Confidential Informants](#).)

Complainant: The person reported to be the victim of sexual harassment. (See [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Complaint: An allegation of misconduct against an employee or that expresses concern about services provided by the employee. These allegations may be submitted from both external and internal sources. (See [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Confidence Statement: A statement in the witness's own words taken immediately after an identification is made stating the witness's level of certainty in the identification. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Confidential: Entrusted to be kept secret. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Confidential Fund: The agency accounting system that provides officers with investigative expense monies. (See [Confidential Fund](#).)

Confidential Fund Custodian: The employee(s) or unit responsible for dispensing and monitoring the use of investigative funds by officers. (See [Confidential Fund](#).)

Confidential Funds: Monies disbursed from the confidential fund that are to be used solely for the purchase of confidential information, services related to confidential informants, evidence, or other uses as prescribed. (See [Confidential Fund](#).)

Confidential Informant (CI): An individual under the direct supervision of an enforcement officer who is provided with a reasonable expectation of confidentiality, and who furnishes information about suspected criminals or criminal activity for consideration under the direct supervision of an enforcement officer, with or without compensation. (See [Confidential Informants](#).)

Confidential Informant File: A file maintained to document all information that pertains to a CI. (See [Confidential Informants](#).)

Consent: Words or overt actions by a person who is legally and functionally competent to give informed approval, indicating a freely given agreement to engage in sexual acts. (See [Investigating Sexual Assaults](#).)

Consul or Consular Officer: A citizen of one country employed by that country's government and authorized to provide assistance on behalf of that government to their citizens in another country. (See [Diplomatic Immunity](#).)

Contact: When a canine locates a suspect; bites or barks at a suspect for purposes of apprehension, or is close enough in proximity to a suspect sufficient to effect compliance. (See [Patrol Canines](#).)

Contact Officer or Team: The first officer(s) at the scene of an incident tasked with locating the suspect(s) and stopping the threat. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Contaminated: The presence or reasonably anticipated presence of potentially infectious materials on an item or surface. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Controlled Substance: Any substance that is illegal to consume, possess, manufacture, or distribute, or any psychoactive substance, drug, or medication that requires the prescription of a licensed medical practitioner. (See [Employee Drug Use](#).)

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Coronaviruses are a family of viruses found in people and animals that cause a range of illnesses from the common cold to severe respiratory infection. The Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the name given by the World Health Organization for a respiratory disease first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)

Corrective Action: Response to employee misconduct that may include counseling, additional training, and/or disciplinary action. (See [Investigation of Allegations of Employee Misconduct](#).)

Course and Scope of Employment: Employee work or actions performed on or off duty to further the agency's policing responsibilities and goals as authorized by law; statute; or departmental policies, procedures, rules, and training. (See [Mobile Communication Devices](#).)

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles: CPTED involves collaboration with police officers, architects, city planners, landscape and interior designers, and resident volunteers to create a safer physical environment in which a community can operate. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

Crime Scene:

- The location(s) at which a crime has been committed or is ongoing; where evidence of a crime is located or presumed to be located; and/or the site(s) of suspicious incidents where a criminal act may have occurred. (See [Crime Scene Response](#).)
- Any location that may be associated with a crime. It can be the place where the crime took place, or any area where evidence of or from the crime itself may potentially be found. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Crime Victim: A person who has been physically, financially, and/or emotionally injured due to the occurrence of a crime. (See [Response to Victims of Crime](#).)

Criminal Identity Theft: Using another person's name, address, or other personal information to commit a crime or in an encounter with police such as at a traffic stop or when arrested. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Criminal Intelligence: Information compiled, analyzed, and/or disseminated to anticipate, prevent, or monitor criminal activity. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Criminal Investigation: The collection of facts and information intended to identify an offender and to organize facts and information in a way that presents evidence sufficient for criminal charges. (See [Criminal Investigations](#).)

Crowd Control: Techniques used by police to address civil disturbances. (See [Crowd Management](#).)

Crowd Management: Techniques used to manage lawful assemblies before, during, and after an event for the purpose of maintaining lawful status through event planning, pre-event contact with event organizers, issuance of permits when applicable, information gathering, personnel training, and other means. (See [Crowd Management](#).)

Cultural Competency: A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, an agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Custodial: Situations where an individual is under arrest or when a "reasonable person"⁴ in the individual's position would feel that their freedom of action has been restricted to the degree consistent with a formal arrest. (See [Interrogations and Confessions](#) and [Interviewing and Interrogating Juveniles](#).)

Custody: Placed under formal arrest or when a reasonable person in the individual's position would have understood the situation to constitute a restraint of freedom of movement of the degree that the law associates with formal arrest. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)

⁴ Vaughan v. Menlove, 132 Eng. Rep. 490 (1837).

Deadly Force: Any use of force that creates a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Deadly Force Justification: Circumstances in which a person is being subjected to or reasonably appears to be subjected to actions by a suspect that create a substantial risk of causing or resulting in death, serious physical injury, or the commission of that class of offense under statute that justifies the use of deadly force to prevent or stop such actions. (See [Hostage Situations](#).)

Deadly Jeopardy: A situation in which a person is being directly subjected or exposed to circumstances that create a substantial risk of death, serious physical injury, or the commission of that class of offense under statute that justifies the use of deadly force to prevent or stop such actions. (See [Hostage Situations](#).)

Debriefing: A formal process that is conducted by a qualified mental health professional to address the psychological and emotional effects of a critical incident. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Deconfliction: The process of determining when police personnel are conducting an event in close proximity to one another at the same time, notifying the affected agencies or personnel regarding the identified conflict, and coordinating response. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Decontamination: The process of removing or neutralizing a hazard from the environment, property, or life form. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

De-escalation: Taking action or communicating during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Degaussing: Electronic cleansing of analog recording media that returns the media to its original state and ready for the imprinting of new images. (See [Mobile Video Recording Equipment](#).)

Demonstration: A lawful assembly of persons organized primarily to engage in free speech activity. These include scheduled events that allow for police planning. Lawful demonstrations can devolve into civil disturbances that necessitate enforcement action. (See [Crowd Management](#).)

Deputy: A fully qualified individual who, in the absence of a superior, can be delegated the authority to manage a functional operation or perform a specific task. In some cases, a deputy can act as relief for a superior and, therefore, must be fully qualified in the position. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Detainee:

- Any person in the custody of a police agency, regardless of adjudication status. (See [Holding Facilities](#).)
- A foreign national who is arrested or placed in custody pending investigation or judicial appearance, or both. Brief stops of such persons for motor vehicle violations or similar incidents are not considered detentions. (See [Consular Notification and Access](#) and [Diplomatic Immunity](#).)

Developmental Disability: A long-term disability attributable to a physical, intellectual, mental, or a combination of impairments that result in functional limitations in major life activities. The disability must have originated before the age of 22 and must be likely to continue throughout the individual's life. (See [Interactions with Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#).)

Digital Image: An image that is stored in electronic numerical form. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Digital Imaging: The process of capturing images using a digital camera. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Digital Media Evidence: Digital recordings of images, sounds, and associated data. (See [Small Unmanned Aircraft System](#).)

Diplomatic Immunity: A principle of international law by which certain foreign government officials are not subject to the jurisdiction of local courts and authorities for both their official and, to a large extent, their personal activities. (See [Diplomatic Immunity](#).)

Direct Access: In the context of the ADA⁵ requirements, direct access means that all calls from persons who are deaf, have hearing loss, or have speech impairments must be accepted through a police agency's emergency communication center by whatever means are provided to other members of the public. Such communications may not be relayed through third-party emergency service providers unless the caller asks the agency to do so. (See [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).)

Direct Transmission: Transmission of an infectious agent to a host by direct contact or via droplets. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Disability: A physical or mental impairment, whether temporary or permanent, that is due to conditions that are congenital or acquired by heredity, accident, injury, advanced age, or illness. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Discovery: The judicial process for compelling production of written records or other evidence for use in litigation. (See [Response to Civil Litigation](#).)

Discrimination: Unfair or unequal treatment of an individual or group based on protected class status. (See [Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#).)

Disease: A condition that impairs the normal functioning of a living organism. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)

Disposal: The disposition of an item classified as evidence once the prosecutorial and judicial process is concluded. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Disposition of Property/Evidence: The process of permanently releasing property/evidence from the custody of the property facility to the agency, city, or county for authorized public use. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Disruptive Activity of a Mobile Device: Any time that mobile communication devices would be considered disturbing, such as in meetings, training sessions, court, or public places when their use would reasonably be deemed inappropriate or intrusive. (See [Mobile Communication Devices](#).)

Distraction by a Mobile Device: Any time the use of a mobile communication device would divert, hinder, or delay the attention of an officer from official duties and/or cause a potentially hazardous situation. (See [Mobile Communication Devices](#).)

Diversion: Intervention strategies that redirect individuals away from formal processing in the justice system, while still holding them accountable for their actions. (See [Alternatives to Arrest](#) and [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)

Division: Divisions are created in order to partition an incident into geographical areas of operation. Divisions are established when the number of resources exceeds the manageable span of control of the Operations Section Chief (OSC). (See [Incident Command](#).)

Documentation Unit: The documentation unit maintains a master record of all personnel and components involved in the response to a critical incident and is comprised of status recorders who maintain a chronological log, personnel rosters, and a record of all telephone communications. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Domestic Violence: Abusive behavior in any relationship, as defined by law, that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner or family or household member. (See [Domestic Violence](#).)

Driver Removal Laws: Laws that require motorists involved in minor crashes (where there are no serious injuries and the vehicle can be driven) to move their vehicles out of the travel lanes to the shoulder or other safe area. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Drive-Stun: The use of an ECW as a pain compliance technique by pressing it against a subject's body and delivering an electronic shock. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

⁵ For more information, see United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division "[The Americans with Disabilities Act](#)."

Droplet Spread: The direct spread of an infectious agent through relatively large, short-range aerosols produced by sneezing, coughing, and talking. Spread can occur over a few feet, but droplets will quickly fall to the ground because they are too large to be carried on air particles. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Drug: Any substance, including but not limited to controlled substances, alcohol, and over-the-counter medications, that has the potential to impair judgment or functioning. (See [Employee Drug Use](#).)

Drug Test: The compulsory production and submission of urine or blood, or submission to a breath alcohol analyzer system to detect prohibited drug usage. (See [Employee Drug Use](#).)

Duty: A moral or legal obligation. Police chaplains typically have a duty to report certain admissions pertaining to the threatened safety of others, governed by state statute. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Duty to Disclose: The affirmative duty of police to notify the prosecutor of any exculpatory material. (See [Duty to Disclose Exculpatory Evidence](#).)

Early Identification System: A system designed to assist supervisors and managers in identifying employees whose performance warrants review and, where appropriate, outline intervention procedures in circumstances where the employee's behavior may have negative consequences for the employee, coworkers, the agency, and/or the general public. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Electronic Control Weapon (ECW): A device that uses electricity to impair voluntary motor responses or to cause discomfort to gain compliance; overcome resistance; or capture, control, and facilitate constraint. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Electronic Messaging Device: Electronic messaging devices include personal computers, electronic mail systems, voice mail systems, paging systems, electronic bulletin boards, and internet services, mobile digital terminals, and facsimile transmissions. (See [Electronic Messaging](#).)

Electronic Recording: An audio or video recording whether using magnetic tape, digital means, or other recording media. (See [Electronic Recording of Interrogations and Confessions](#).)

Elevated Risk Factors: A missing child who is 13 years of age or younger, or is believed or determined to be out of the zone of safety for their age and developmental stage; in a life-threatening situation; reported to the police as missing after a delay by their caregiver, without a plausible explanation for the delay; and/or absent under circumstances inconsistent with established patterns of behavior and the deviation cannot be explained. (See [Missing Children](#).)

Elevated Risk Population Groups: Individuals who are potentially at greater risk of injury or death following an exposure to an ECW, including those who reasonably appear or are known to be elderly, medically infirm, pregnant, users of internal cardiac devices, or who have low body mass, such as small children. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Eligible Employee:

- An employee who has worked for the agency for at least 12 months and who has worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period preceding the date upon which leave is to begin. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)
- Those persons who can initiate an action under agency policy. These are permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees who have worked at least 20 hours per week on a continuous basis for at least six months. (See [Grievance Procedures](#).)

Eligible Personnel (for Temporary Light Duty): Any full-time sworn or civilian member of a police agency suffering from a medically certified illness, injury, or disability requiring treatment by a licensed healthcare provider—and who, because of injury, illness, or disability, is temporarily unable to perform their regular assignment, but is capable of performing alternative assignments. (See [Temporary Light Duty](#).)

Emergency:

- A situation with a high probability of death, serious bodily injury, or significant property loss. (See [Discretionary Response to Calls for Service](#).)

- Any occurrence, or threat thereof, whether natural or caused by humans, which results or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population, substantial damage to or loss of property, or substantial harm to the environment and is beyond the capacity of an individual police agency to effectively control. (See [Mutual Aid](#).)

Emergency Vehicle: An authorized police vehicle equipped with emergency lights (red/blue/white), sirens, and/or other emergency warning devices required by law and used for emergency response situations. (See [Discretionary Response to Calls for Service](#) and [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Emergency Warning Devices: Devices placed in/on each agency emergency vehicle that emit audible or visual signals in order to warn others that police services are in the process of being delivered. (See [Use of Emergency Vehicular Warning Devices](#).)

Employee Assistance Program: Confidential services provided by a third party and sponsored by the employer. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Employment: The provision of a function or service in exchange for a fee or compensation. (See [Secondary Employment](#).)

Employment or Government Benefits Identity Theft: Using another's social security number or other personal information to get a job or to claim unemployment, public, or veterans' benefits. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Endangered: A juvenile who is missing under circumstances indicating their physical safety may be in danger. (See [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)

Essential Positions and Assignments: Employees who possess special knowledge, skills, or abilities and whose extended absence would create serious disruptions to a critical agency function. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Ethnic Group: A group of persons whose members identify with each other through a common heritage, often consisting of a shared language, culture, and/or ideology that stresses common ancestry. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Event: A scheduled occurrence that may require use of the incident command system. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Evidence:

- Information obtained in the course of an investigation that may help prove or disprove circumstances of a case. This may include written or oral statements, physical evidence, and/or digital/electronic evidence. This may also include exculpatory information. (See [Crime Scene Response](#).)
 - **Testimonial Evidence:** Relevant information collected through interviews, interrogation, or recorded conversation.
 - **Physical Evidence:** Any material in either gross or trace quantities collected at a crime scene for examination and analysis.
 - **Digital Evidence:** Information and data of value to an investigation that is stored on, received on, or transmitted by an electronic device.
- Items taken or recovered in the course of an investigation that may tend to prove or disprove the facts of a case; may include documentary or oral statements, material objects admissible as testimony in a court of law, and digital evidence. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Evidence Collector: Member of the search team responsible for taking possession, packaging, sealing, and marking of all items seized. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Excited Delirium Syndrome: A medical disorder generally characterized by observable behaviors including extreme mental and physiological excitement, intense agitation, hyperthermia (elevated body temperature) often resulting in nudity, hostility, exceptional strength, endurance without apparent fatigue, and unusual calmness after restraint accompanied by a risk of sudden death. (See [Excited Delirium](#).)

Excluded Grievance: Complaints or disputes arising from the following: (1) complaints related to alleged acts of sexual, racial, or other harassment and discrimination prohibited by law; (2) complaints regarding allegations of misconduct or improper job performance against any agency employee that, if true, would form the basis for employee disciplinary action; or (3) retaliation against employees who file or assist in filing complaints in either of the above circumstances. (See [Grievance Procedures](#).)

Exculpatory Evidence: Evidence that is favorable to the accused; is material to the guilt, innocence, or punishment of the accused; and/or may impact the credibility of a witness, including a police officer or other agency employee. (See [Duty to Disclose Exculpatory Evidence](#).)

Exigent Circumstances:⁶ Those circumstances that would cause a “reasonable person”⁷ to believe that a particular action is necessary to prevent physical harm to an individual, the destruction of relevant evidence, the escape of a suspect, or some other consequence improperly frustrating legitimate police efforts. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#) and [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Explosive Device Located: When a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or has been detonated. (See [Bomb Threats and Response](#).)

Exposure:

- Subjection to an infectious disease. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)
- Any contact with body fluids including, but not limited to, direct contact with skin, eyes, nose, and mouth, and through needle sticks. (See [HIV/AIDS Prevention](#).)

Exposure Incident: Contact with an eye, a mouth, a mucous membrane, and/or nonintact skin or piercing through the skin and with blood or other potentially infectious materials. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Expressive Association: The constitutional right of individuals to gather without undue governmental interference for the purpose of engaging in activities protected by the First Amendment, such as freedom of speech, assembly, and the exercise of religious beliefs. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Extra-Duty Employment: Any employment that is conditioned on the actual or potential use of police powers by the employee. (See [Secondary Employment](#).)

Fair and Bias-free Treatment: Conduct of agency personnel wherein all people are treated in the same manner under the same or similar circumstances irrespective of specified characteristics. (See [Bias-Free Policing](#).)

Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA): A United States federal law designed to ensure the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in consumer reports, sometimes informally called “credit reports.” The FCRA includes consumer protections to help identity theft victims clear their credit reports of negative information that results from fraudulent transactions. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Fair Labor Standards Act:⁸ United States federal law regulating wages and work hours to include provisions for overtime pay. (See [Overtime](#).)

False Report: A report that is not made in good faith and is based on information that is known or reasonably likely to be inaccurate; intentionally or negligently ignores exculpatory or mitigating information; or is made with the purpose of harassing or wrongly incriminating another employee. (See [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)

Family and Medical Leave Act: United States federal law providing for up to 12 weeks of annual leave for workers due to illness, injury, or certain other family conditions/situations. (See [Temporary Light Duty](#).)

⁶ Based on the definition from *United States v. McConney*, 728 F.2d 1195, 1199 (9th Cir.), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 824 (1984).

⁷ *Vaughan v. Menlove*, 132 Eng. Rep. 490 (1837).

⁸ 29 U.S.C. §207(a).

Family Orientation: An opportunity for family members to tour agency facilities, including the communications center; meet the chief executives, chaplains, and peer support team; and learn about available support services. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Field Activities: Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected to place officers in situations where they would be required to act in enforcement rather than administrative or support roles. (See [Body Armor](#).)

Filler: A live person, or a photograph of a person, included in an identification procedure who is not considered a suspect. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Finance/Administration Section: The finance/administration section is responsible for incident management activities that require finance and other administrative support services. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Finance Section Chief (FSC): The FSC ensures that personnel time, expenditures, and procurements are tracked and used in an efficient manner. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Fire Hose Bridges: Ramps placed over fire hoses that allow traffic to pass over them without damaging hoses or couplings, or without interrupting the flow of water. (See [Law Enforcement Fire Response](#).)

Firearms Qualification: Periodic testing required for officers to determine their competency to carry and operate authorized firearms. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

First Responder:

- Personnel from agencies that are responsible for managing traffic incidents. These groups typically include police, fire departments, emergency medical services (EMS), and the department of transportation. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)
- An emergency worker who initially responds to an incident. The term is usually specific to fire rescue, police, and EMS. (See [Responding to Suspicious Mail: Biological Threats](#).)

Fixed License Plate Reader (LPR) System: LPR cameras that are permanently affixed to a structure, such as a pole, a traffic barrier, or a bridge. (See [License Plate Readers](#).)

Flash Roll Funds: Money used by undercover officers to demonstrate the intent and ability to purchase information or illegal goods or services from criminal suspects or informants. (See [Confidential Fund](#).)

Flow Path: The volume of air or hot gases, smoke, and small particles between an inlet and outlet that allow the movement of heat and smoke from a higher pressure within the fire area toward the lower pressure areas accessible through doorways, window openings, and roof openings. (See [Law Enforcement Fire Response](#).)

Foot Pursuit: An incident where an officer chases—on foot—a person who is evading detention or arrest. (See [Foot Pursuits](#).)

Foreign National: A foreign national is any person who is not a citizen. Lawful permanent resident aliens who have resident alien registration cards (green cards) retain their foreign nationality and must be considered foreign nationals. Undocumented or illegal aliens are also included in the definition of a foreign national. May also be referred to as *alien*. (See [Consular Notification and Access](#) and [Diplomatic Immunity](#).)

Found/Abandoned Property: Any item held by police for storage to determine ownership or to prevent a criminal act. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Fraternization: While employee fraternization may include many types of interpersonal relationships, it may also refer specifically to romantic or sexual relationships. These situations tend to be the most visible and most difficult for administrators to manage. (See [Personal Relationships in the Workplace](#).)

Function: Function refers to the general staff functional areas in the incident command system: (1) command, (2) operations, (3) planning, (4) logistics, and (5) finance/administration. The term *function* is also used when describing the activity involved, e.g., the planning function. A sixth function, intelligence, may be established, if required, to meet incident management needs. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Gender: The social norms and expectations of men and women in terms of their roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes. Gender interacts with, but is distinct from, biological sex. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Gender Expression:

- External manifestations and appearance of one's gender identity, usually expressed through one's behavior, clothing, haircut, body characteristics, or voice and grooming habits, which may or may not conform to socially defined behaviors and characteristics typically associated with being either masculine or feminine. (See [Grooming and Appearance](#) and [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)
- An individual's external manifestations and appearance of gender identity, frequently expressed through one's name, behavior, pronouns, clothing, hair, behavior, voice, or body characteristics. (See [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)

Gender Identity:

- One's innermost sense of being as male, female, a blend of both, or neither. Gender identity may or may not correspond with the assigned sex at birth. (See [Grooming and Appearance](#) and [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)
- An individual's inner sense of self as male, female, a combination of both, or neither. Gender identity can be the same or different as their sex assigned at birth. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Gender Nonconforming: A broad term referring to people who do not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of gender, or whose gender expression does not fit neatly into a category. (See [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)

General Staff: A group of incident management personnel organized according to function and reporting to the incident commander. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Good-Faith Report: A report that provides allegations concerning an employee who is reasonably believed to have purposely committed a serious violation of agency policy, procedures, rules, or laws. (See [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)

Good Standing: An officer is in good standing when they have maintained all required certifications; are not the subject of ongoing disciplinary action that would be considered serious or egregious or contain allegations that could be subject to discipline greater than suspension, including dismissal; and are substantially current with all required reports. (See [Secondary Employment](#).)

Grooming Behavior: Actions deliberately undertaken by an offender with the aim of befriending a child in order to lower the child's sexual inhibitions or establish an intimate friendship in preparation for a sexual act with the child. (See [Registering and Tracking Sex Offenders](#).)

Group: A group is often a specialized unit within a division or branch. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Handler:

- The officer primarily responsible for supervision and management of a CI. (See [Confidential Informants](#).)
- A police officer with their assigned police canine, serving as a canine team. (See [Patrol Canines](#).)
- An accomplice of a suicide bomber who delivers the explosive device to the bomber, provides escort to the target location, provides security, and often has the ability to detonate the device from a remote location (See [Suicide Bombings](#).)

Harassment: Unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited conduct that demeans, threatens, or offends another person. Harassment becomes unlawful where (1) enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or (2) the conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive. (See [Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#).)

Hate Crime: A crime in which the perpetrator intentionally selects a victim, or in the case of a property crime, the property that is the object of the crime, in whole or in part because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, or sexual orientation of any person. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes.](#))

Hate Group: An organization whose ideology, goals, or activities are primarily or substantially based on a shared antipathy, hostility, or hatred toward certain people based on their personal characteristics such as race, color, religion, ethnicity, nationality, national origin, gender, and/or sexual identity. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes.](#))

Hate Incident: Actions by an individual or group that, while motivated by hate or improper bias, do not rise to the level of a criminal offense. This may involve biased or prejudiced comments, imaging, or other messaging to another individual based on race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or age. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes.](#))

High-Pathogenicity Avian Influenza: Any form of avian influenza—H5N1 being only one potential form—that demonstrates high efficiency in human-to-human transmission. (See [Pandemic Flu.](#))

Hit: A read matched to a license plate that has previously been registered on an agency’s “hot list” of vehicle plates. (See [License Plate Readers.](#))

Holding Facility: A short-term (length of time not to exceed 72 hours) confinement area for persons under arrest or awaiting a decision to release or transfer to another secure facility. (See [Holding Facilities.](#))

Hostage: A person held against their will by an armed, potentially armed, or otherwise dangerous suspect who has demonstrated by action, word, or deed willingness to do the person harm in order to compel another party to act or refrain from acting in a particular way, or for personal gratification. (See [Hostage Situations.](#))

- **Conventional Hostage Situation:** A scenario in which a person is being held against their will by an armed, potentially armed, or otherwise dangerous suspect; in which the local agency has primary jurisdiction; and the circumstances presented are likely within the resolution capabilities of a properly trained and equipped local tactical and negotiations team. (See [Hostage Situations.](#))
- **Unconventional Hostage Situation:** A scenario in which a person is being held against their will by an armed, potentially armed, or otherwise dangerous suspect; where the local agency does not have primary jurisdiction; or the circumstances presented are likely beyond the resolution capabilities of a properly trained and equipped local tactical and negotiations team. Unconventional hostage situations occur in a wide variety of operational environments and include all terrorist situations and those that are so technical or complex that they are beyond the capabilities of the local tactical element. (See [Hostage Situations.](#))

Hot List: A list of license plate numbers associated with stolen cars, vehicles owned by persons of interest, and vehicles associated with AMBER Alerts⁹ that are circulated among police agencies. (See [License Plate Readers.](#))

Hot Zone: A geographic area consisting of the immediate incident location with a direct and immediate threat to personal safety or health. All violent incidents are considered hot until police determines otherwise. Only police personnel should operate in the hot zone. (See [Active Shooter.](#))

Identity Theft: The misuse of another individual’s personal information with the intent to facilitate other criminal activities; obtain credit, goods, or services without the victim’s consent; or conceal one’s identity from others, such as the government, police, or those who perform background checks, such as employers. (See [Identity Theft.](#))

Identity Theft Report: A police report that contains specific details of an identity theft and complies with the requirements of Section 603(q)(4) of the FCRA. An identity theft report entitles an identity theft victim to certain protections that will help them clear fraudulent transactions from credit reports and aid in restoring their pre-crime status. (See [Identity Theft.](#))

⁹ For more information, visit the [Amber Alert](#) webpage.

Immediate Action: Rapid response by one or more officers based on a reasonable belief that failure to swiftly seek out and address the threat would result in death or serious bodily injury. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Impact Projectiles:

- Projectiles designed and intended to deliver non-penetrating impact energy from safer than contact range. These may include direct fire or non-direct skip-fired rounds. The latter are projectiles that are discharged toward the ground in front of a target, theoretically delivering the energy to the subject following contact with the ground. (See [Crowd Management](#).)
- Kinetic projected devices designed to gain compliance by a subject with reduced potential for causing death or serious physical injury when used in accordance with agency policy and training guidelines. (See [Impact Projectiles](#).)

Impacted Personnel: Any employee who is identified as being affected by a traumatic incident. This may include employees who are on the scene at the time of the incident, individuals who respond to the scene immediately following the incident, and/or support personnel participating in the response to the incident. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Impoundment: The seizing and temporary custody of a motor vehicle for a legitimate police purpose, such as for evidentiary purposes. (See [Motor Vehicle Impoundment](#).)

Improper Bias: Bias applied in such a way as to be negatively prejudicial or unjustly discriminatory toward a particular group of people. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

In-Camera Inspection: Judicial inspection of allegedly privileged information to determine whether the need to present such information as part of the essential proof of the case outweighs the interest in maintaining its confidentiality. (See [Response to Civil Litigation](#).)

In-Car Camera System: Any system that captures audio and video signals capable of installation in a vehicle, and that includes, at minimum, a camera, microphone, recorder, and monitor. May also be referred to as *mobile video recorder*. (See [Mobile Video Recording Equipment](#).)

Incident: A natural or human-caused occurrence that requires an emergency response to protect life, property, or both. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Incident Action Plan (IAP): An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Incident Clearance Time: The time between the first recordable awareness of a collision or roadway closure and the time at which the last responder has left the scene. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Incident Command Post (ICP): The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed. The ICP may be located jointly with the incident base or other incident facilities. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized on-scene emergency management system that provides for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Incident Commander (IC): The individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for the management of all operations at the incident site. (See [Incident Command](#) and [Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings and Other Serious Incidents](#).)

Incident Management Team (IMT): The IMT consists of the incident commander and appropriate command and general staff personnel assigned to the incident. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Incubation Period:

- The time between exposure to a pathogen and the development of the first symptoms of a disease. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)
- Interval between infection and onset of symptoms. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Indirect Transmission: Transmission of an infectious agent to a host through suspended air particles, inanimate objects (vehicles), or animate intermediaries (vectors). (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Influenza: An acute infectious viral disease marked by inflammation of the respiratory tract, fever, muscular pain, and bowel irritation. May also be referred to as the *flu*. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Information: Knowledge in its raw form. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Injury Benefits: Any work-related benefits that can help an injured officer including sick and vacation leave; short-term and long-term disability coverage; workers' compensation; and disability benefits. It does not include support from nonprofits, individual fundraisers, or other forms of support. (See [Line-of-Duty Serious Injury](#).)

Inner Perimeter: An area established to keep the threat contained to a specific location. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Intellectual Disability: A group of disorders characterized by limited or diminished intellectual functioning and difficulty with adaptive behaviors. (See [Interactions with Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#).)

Intelligence: The end product of an analytic process to determine its utility for tactical and strategic police purposes that evaluates information collected from diverse sources; integrates the relevant information into a logical package; and produces a conclusion, estimate, or forecast about a criminal phenomenon by using the scientific approach to problem-solving (analysis). (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Intelligence Authority: An individual or group designated with an agency's intelligence responsibilities. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Intelligence Cycle: The process by which information becomes intelligence. The intelligence cycle is completed through active collaboration and consists of six steps: planning and direction, collection, processing, analysis and production, dissemination, and reevaluation. The cycle is circular in nature, and the movement between the steps is fluid. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Interference: Using intimidation, threat, or coercion to prevent or discourage an individual's right to make a complaint of sexual harassment. (See [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Interrogation:

- Direct questioning of a suspect about a crime or suspected crime, as well as any words, statements, or actions by officers, that the officers should know are reasonably likely to elicit a self-incriminating response from the suspect. (See [Interrogations and Confessions](#).)
- The formal, systematic, and intensive questioning of a person arrested for or suspected of committing a crime. This also includes any words or actions by officers that they should know are reasonably likely to elicit a self-incriminating response. (See [Interviewing and Interrogating Juveniles](#).)

Interview: A non-accusatory interaction designed to gather information and learn more about the details of an incident. (See [Interviewing and Interrogating Juveniles](#).)

Intimate or Former Intimate Partner Stalking: Occurs when the stalker and the victim have or have had an intimate relationship; they may be married, divorced, current cohabitants, former cohabitants, current sexual partners, or former sexual partners. (See [Stalking](#).)

Intimate Partners or Family or Household Members: Persons who are married, in a domestic partnership, or in a romantic or dating relationship; have a child in common; have been intimately involved in some way; are related by blood, adoption, or legal custody; or reside in the same home. (See [Domestic Violence](#).)

Inventory: A procedure whereby items held in a property facility or specifically described storage location are verified with agency records to confirm that there is an exact match and that all items are accounted for. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Investigative Services: Unit of a police agency staffed by personnel assigned to specific areas of investigation. (See [Criminal Investigations](#).)

Investigatory Detention: Temporary detention of a person for investigative purposes based upon reasonable suspicion that the person has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime, under circumstances that do not amount to probable cause for arrest. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)

Inviolability: Embodied in international law that generally precludes police officials from handcuffing, arresting, or detaining certain foreign diplomatic and consular officials in any form and forbids U.S. authorities from entering the residences, automobiles, or other property of protected persons. (See [Diplomatic Immunity](#).)

Involved Officer(s): Unless otherwise indicated, those sworn officers in on-duty or off-duty status who are involved in a serious incident or are direct witnesses to such an event. (See [Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings and Other Serious Incidents](#).)

Isolation: Separating people who are in fact ill and have tested positive for a communicable disease to prevent further spread. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#) and [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Juvenile: An individual who is under the age of 18. (See [Interviewing and Interrogating Juveniles](#).)

Key Employee: One who is among the highest paid 10 percent of persons employed by an agency. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)

Kidnapping: Abduction involving threat, force, or violence. (See [Missing Persons](#).)

Less-Lethal Force: Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force that involves physical effort to control, restrain, or overcome the resistance of another. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Liaison Officer: A member of the command staff responsible for coordinating with representatives from cooperating and assisting agencies. (See [Incident Command](#).)

License Plate Recognition/Reader (LPR): Is a camera with character recognition that can quickly scan the license plate of a vehicle, compare it to current records of criminal or suspicious activity, and alert police of any notable matches. (See [License Plate Readers](#).)

Line Inspection: Inspections conducted by the supervisory personnel directly responsible for the person, equipment, or facility being inspected. Line inspections are designed to examine, evaluate, and improve the performance of agency personnel and equipment. (See [Inspections](#).)

- **Formal Line Inspection:** Formal line inspections are conducted for the purpose of preparing a written report for senior command personnel. These reports set forth in detail the findings of the inspection and document specific actions taken to remedy the deficiencies found. Where appropriate, such reports may also include recommendations for long-term resolution of problems discovered during the inspection. (See [Inspections](#).)
- **Informal Line Inspection:** Immediate supervisors conduct informal line inspections during the course of their regular operations to ensure compliance with agency policies and procedures. Immediate action is normally taken by the supervisor to remedy any deficiencies. A written report is not required for informal line inspection unless it reveals a critical problem that should be brought to the attention of a higher command level. (See [Inspections](#).)

Line-of-Duty Death: When determining line-of-duty deaths, agencies should consider deaths that occur during the course of or as a result of performing police functions; any time the officer is on-duty; during extra-duty assignments; any time the officer is in uniform; while the officer is in transit to/from a duty assignment; and as a result of suicide. (See [Line-of-Duty Death](#).)

Line-of-Duty Injury: The injury of an officer by intentional or accidental means during the course of performing police functions while on or off duty. (See [Line-of-Duty Serious Injury](#).)

Lineup: The process of presenting live individuals to an eyewitness for the purpose of identifying or eliminating suspects. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Lipreading: The ability to use information gained from movements of the lips, face, and body to increase understanding. May also be referred to as *speech reading*. (See [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).)

Logistics Section: The logistics section is responsible for meeting all support needs for the incident through appropriate procurement of facilities, food service, transportation, supplies, communications, equipment maintenance and fueling, medical services for incident personnel, and personnel for expanding incidents or relief on long incidents. The logistics section is responsible for ensuring the safety of responders when they are in a base, camp, or staging area prior to deployment and ensuring that relief personnel and equipment are available for deployment as needed. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Logistics Section Chief (LSC): The LSC is responsible for ensuring that the activities for an incident or event can be sustained. This includes obtaining, securing, and maintaining the facilities needed to sustain the operation, including a base, camp, or staging area. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Major Crimes: Homicide, sexual assault, armed robbery, and other Part I crimes as defined in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reports (UCRs),¹⁰ as well as other crimes as may be defined by the agency, whether committed by adults or by juveniles who could be charged as adults for such offenses. (See [Electronic Recording of Interrogations and Confessions](#).)

Mandatory Notification: Certain nations have entered into specific bilateral agreements with each other requiring that their consulate or embassy be notified of any arrest or detention of a citizen of their country residing in the other country, regardless of the desires of the arrested or detained individual. (See [Consular Notification and Access](#).)

Master Disc: A recordable compact disc (CD-R) or recordable digital video disc (DVD-R) upon which primary images have been transferred to create the master images. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Master Image: An accurate and complete replica of the primary image, irrespective of media. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Material Evidence: Information that, had it been disclosed to the defense, would have a “reasonable probability of providing a different result in the trial or sentencing” in the case.¹¹ Exculpatory evidence is “material” if there is a reasonable probability that disclosing it will change the outcome of a criminal proceeding. (See [Duty to Disclose Exculpatory Evidence](#).)

Media: The storage source for visual or audio recordings, whether by film, analog, or digital means. (See [Recording Police Activity](#).)

Medical Forensic Examiner: The healthcare provider conducting a sexual assault medical forensic examination. (See [Investigating Sexual Assaults](#).)

Medical Identity Theft: Using another person’s name or health insurance number to see a doctor, get prescription drugs, file claims with the victim’s insurance provider, or obtain other medical, psychiatric, or substance abuse care. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Medical Syndrome: A collection of behavioral and physiological signs and symptoms of a medical disorder known to frequently appear together but without a full understanding of their underlying cause or causes. (See [Excited Delirium](#).)

¹⁰ For more information, visit the Federal Bureau of Investigation Crime/Law Enforcement Stats (Uniform Crime Reporting Program) at [Crime/Law Enforcement Stats \(UCR Program\) — FBI](#).

¹¹ See *Williams v. Taylor*, 529 U.S. 362 (2000).

Memorandum of Understanding: A document designed to clearly define and outline the goals, expectations, roles, responsibilities, duration, and accountability mechanisms of the partners within a collaborative partnership. (See [Law Enforcement-Researcher Collaborative Partnerships](#).)

Mental Health Crisis: An event or experience in which an individual's normal coping mechanisms are overwhelmed, causing them to have an extreme emotional, physical, mental, and/or behavioral response. (See [Responding to Persons Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis](#) and [Welfare Checks](#).)

Mental Health Services: Services provided by a qualified mental health professional. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Mental Health Wellness Consultation: An opportunity for employees to meet with a qualified mental health professional of their choice for a confidential mental health discussion. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Mental Illness: An impairment of an individual's normal cognitive, emotional, or behavioral functioning caused by physiological or psychosocial factors. (See [Responding to Persons Experiencing a Mental Health Crisis](#).)

Ministry: The service of providing pastoral, spiritual, or religious support to an individual, group, or community. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Ministry of Presence: Spending time with someone as a comfort to ease their feelings of despair. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Missing Child: A person younger than 18 years of age, or as otherwise defined by applicable law, whose current location is unknown to their parents, guardian, or caregiver. (See [Missing Children](#) and [Missing Persons](#).)

Mobile Communication Device: Cellular telephones, personal digital assistants, and any such device designed to record, transmit, and/or receive voice communications, text messages, email, sound, video, or photographic images. (See [Mobile Communication Devices](#).)

Mobile LPR System: LPR cameras that are affixed, either permanently (hardwired) or temporarily (e.g., magnet-mounted), to a police vehicle for mobile deployment. (See [License Plate Readers](#).)

Mobile Video Recorder Technician: Personnel trained in the operational use and repair of mobile video recorders, duplicating methods, storage and retrieval methods and procedures, and who possess a working knowledge of video forensics and evidentiary procedures. (See [Mobile Video Recording Equipment](#).)

Monitoring: Short-term, preliminary observation of an individual, group, or organization to gather information to determine whether criminal activity is taking place, has taken place, or is about to take place. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Motor Vehicle: Any vehicle operating or capable of being operated on public streets or highways, to include automobiles, trucks, trailers, recreational vehicles, mobile homes, motor homes, and any other type of vehicle, whether self-propelled or towed. (See [Motor Vehicle Searches](#).)

Motor Vehicle Crash: Any collision of a vehicle with another vehicle, stationary object, or person that results in property damage or personal injury. (See [Motor Vehicle Searches](#).)

Move Over Laws: Laws that require drivers approaching a scene where emergency responders are present to either change lanes when possible and/or reduce vehicle speed. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Mutual Aid: Refers to the provision and receipt of assistance between agencies that are signatories to the mutual aid agreement in response to a formal request for assistance from an authorized agency officer and dealing with an emergency as defined in the agreement. (See [Mutual Aid](#).)

Naloxone: An opioid antagonist drug (brand name Narcan) that counteracts the effects of an opioid overdose. The drug restores an overdose victim's ability to breathe, frequently allowing them to survive a potentially fatal overdose. (See [Naloxone](#).)

Nasal Naloxone Injector Kit: Is a kit police officers carry that consists of the naloxone medication, atomizer, and instructions for administering naloxone. (See [Naloxone](#).)

National Incident Management System (NIMS): NIMS provides levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector with the shared vocabulary, systems, and processes to guide personnel on how to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from incidents as described in the National Preparedness System. (See [Incident Command](#) and [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

National Origin: A person's real or perceived ethnic background related to birthplace, ancestry, culture, or language. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Nepotism: The term suggests the disparate or discriminatory practice of employing a relative or immediate family member who may not have the knowledge, skills, abilities, or tenure needed when compared to other employees in the same or similar positions. (See [Personal Relationships in the Workplace](#).)

Next of Kin: The closest relative(s) of the decedent. (See [Death Notification](#) and [Line-of-Duty Death](#).)

Noncompliance: Failure to comply with state or federal registration laws or failure to comply with an officer's lawful direction. (See [Registering and Tracking Sex Offenders](#).)

Non-Custodial: Situations where an individual is not in custody and is free to leave at any time, nor has their freedom been restrained to a degree associated with a formal arrest. (See [Interviewing and Interrogating Juveniles](#).)

Nonemergency: Any situation other than that defined as an "emergency." (See [Discretionary Response to Calls for Service](#).)

Non-Secure Custody: A condition under which a juvenile's freedom of movement is controlled by police officers and, during such time, the juvenile is held in an unlocked, multipurpose area that is in no way designed for residential use, such as a report-writing room or an office; held only long enough to complete identification, investigation, and processing, and then released to a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult or transferred to a juvenile facility or court; and kept under continuous visual supervision until released. (See [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)

Notification at the Foreign National's Option: Foreign nationals from countries that are parties to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations must be provided with the option of having the consulate notified of their arrest or detention. If the detainee requests notification, a responsible detaining official must ensure that notification is given to the nearest consulate. (See [Consular Notification and Access](#).)

Objectively Reasonable:¹² The determination that the necessity for using force and the level of force used is based upon the officer's evaluation of the situation in light of the totality of the circumstances known to the officer at the time the force is used and upon what a reasonably prudent officer would use under the same or similar situations. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#) and [Suicide Bombings](#).)

Off-Duty Employment: Any employment that will not require the use or potential use of police powers by the employee. (See [Secondary Employment](#).)

Office of Professional Standards: The designated employee(s) or unit, which may be external to an agency, with primary responsibility for monitoring adherence of employees to agency policy, procedures, and rules and for conducting investigations of allegations of employee misconduct. (See [Investigation of Allegations of Employee Misconduct; Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#); and [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Officer-Involved Shooting Incident: An incident where a police officer fires their weapon in the course of their duties. This can include firing the weapon accidentally or missing the intended target during the shooting. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Online Impersonation: Using someone's personal information to create social media or email accounts in the victim's name. Perpetrators might post photos or narratives that are of an intimate or sensitive nature in order to embarrass or extort the victim. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

¹² See *Graham v. Connor*, 490 U.S. 386 (1989).

Open Roads Policies: Policies that provide guidance to first responders of an appropriate timeframe for clearing or reopening a roadway. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Operations Section: This component has the responsibility for all tactical operations at an incident site directed toward reducing the immediate hazard, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoring normal conditions. The operations section is responsible for implementing the IAP and achieving the objectives set forth in that plan. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Operations Section Chief (OSC): The OSC is responsible for all tactical operations within the incident or event, ensuring implementation of the IAP, and helping to develop the IAP for the oncoming shift. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Opioid: A class of drugs that may be derived naturally from the poppy plant or from synthetically produced chemicals. Opioids bind to specific receptors in the brain, spinal cord, and gastrointestinal tract that can affect a person's mood, blood pressure, breathing, and pain sensations. (See [Naloxone](#).)

Opioid Overdose: A serious medical condition resulting from the consumption or use of an opioid or another substance with which an opioid was combined that may lead to decreased or loss of consciousness, respiratory depression, coma, or death. (See [Naloxone](#).)

Order of Protection: An emergency, interim, or permanent injunction issued by a criminal, civil, or domestic relations court that prohibits certain actions—typically those related to physical contact, harassment, intimidation, or interference with personal liberty—that grants custody of minor children or that requires that certain actions be taken by the respondent. (See [Court Protection Orders](#).)

Outer Perimeter: An area established to keep the inner perimeter secured and to prevent outside elements from entering the incident. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Out-of-Uniform/Non-Uniformed: Officers wearing clothes commonly worn while off duty. May also be referred to as *civilian attire*, *street clothes*, or *plainclothes*. (See [Off-Duty Arrests](#).)

Overtime: Work performed in excess of 40 hours in one week or as otherwise established by state law. (See [Overtime](#).)

Package: Any container that may hold a biological weapon or hoax substance, including a letter, box, jar, suitcase, or other packaging material. (See [Responding to Suspicious Mail: Biological Threats](#).)

Page: The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed. Pages are managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights. (See [Social Media](#).)

Pandemic: An outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)

Pandemic Influenza: Occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which there is little or no immunity among humans, begins to cause serious illness, and then spreads easily from person to person worldwide. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Parent:

- Biological parents as well as an individual who stands or stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)
- Any adult who is legally responsible for the well-being, supervision, and care of a child. In most cases, this individual is a biological or adoptive parent, or guardian. (See [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents](#).)

Partner Organization: A group or agency with committed interests aligned with a police agency. (See [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Toolkit](#).)

Passive Resistance: Refusal by an unarmed person not reasonably perceived to be an immediate threat or flight risk to comply with an officer's verbal commands or physical control techniques that does not involve the use of physical force, control, or resistance of any kind. (See [Aerosol Restraint Spray](#) and [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Pastoral Care: A model of emotional, social, and spiritual support for individuals. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Pat-Down: A frisk or external feeling by utilizing the hands without manipulation of the outer garments of an individual for weapons. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops.](#))

Pathogen: A bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that can cause disease in its host. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention.](#))

Peer Support: A program designed to provide one-on-one emotional, social, or practical support and referrals to additional professional services, when needed. The program comprises specifically trained sworn or civilian colleagues, referred to as peer support persons, who are not counselors or therapists. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness.](#))

Peer Support Team: A formal group of individuals consisting of approved members who have undergone training in peer support methods. May also be referred to as *peer support team members*. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support.](#))

Personal Computer: Any agency or personally owned computer that provides access to the agency or agency personnel. This includes both on- and off-duty usage. (See [Electronic Messaging.](#))

Personal Information: Individually identifiable information from or about a person. (See [Identity Theft.](#))

Personal Protective Equipment: Equipment to protect the wearer from exposure to contaminants, bodily fluids, airborne pathogens or other disease-specific transmission routes. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\).](#))

Personal Use: Use of an electronic device to include verbal conversations, texting, internet use, game playing, and similar functions that is unrelated to an officer's employment. (See [Mobile Communication Devices.](#))

Personally Assigned Police Vehicle (PAV): A marked or unmarked police vehicle for use by one officer that, when not in use, is parked at the assigned officer's primary place of residence or at a strategic location for crime prevention purposes where it is readily available for use. PAVs may also be assigned to more than one officer when their shift assignments do not overlap. (See [Personally Assigned Vehicles.](#))

Personally Involved: An off-duty officer is deemed personally involved when assisting a family member or a friend who becomes engaged in a personal dispute or incident. This does not apply to situations where the police officer, family member, or friend is a crime victim. (See [Off-Duty Arrests.](#))

Personnel Authority: Person(s) responsible for personnel administration and processing in a police agency. (See [Personnel Transfer and Rotation.](#))

Photo Array: A means of presenting photographs to an eyewitness for the purpose of identifying or eliminating suspects. (See [Eyewitness Identification.](#))

Pixels: Refers to each individual element of a digital picture to which a specific color and brightness can be assigned. Short for "picture elements." (See [Digital Cameras.](#))

Place of Detention: A police station, jail, or similar holding facility in which suspects may be detained in connection with criminal charges. (See [Electronic Recording of Interrogations and Confessions.](#))

Planning Section: An IC group responsible for collecting, evaluating, and processing tactical information in order to develop an incident action plan with the incident commander, command, and general staff. (See [Incident Command.](#))

Planning Section Chief (PSC): The individual responsible for monitoring the current operation and determining the needs for personnel and activities for the oncoming shift. The PSC develops, writes, and disperses the incident action plan after it is approved by the IC. (See [Incident Command.](#))

Police Chaplain: A spiritual leader from the community and a member in good standing of a recognized religious denomination or group who serves in a consultative capacity to a police agency. (See [Police Chaplains.](#))

Police Services: These are actions and activities that may not directly include enforcement of the law, but that contribute to the overall well-being of the public. May also be referred to as *community caretaking functions*. (See [Bias-Free Policing.](#))

Police Utility Knife: There are two types of knives that can be categorized as a police utility knife: a fixed blade, with a set blade and fixed handle, and a folding blade knife in which the blade mechanically folds into the handle. The folding knife may also be referred to as a *pocketknife*. (See [Knife Safety and Usage](#).)

Policies: Policies are concise position statements based on underlying organizational principles, goals, values, and operational philosophies. They are designed for broad general direction and guidance primarily designed for use by all members of the agency or by more than one operational division. (See [Written Directive System](#).)

Polygraph: An instrument that records certain physiological changes in a person undergoing questioning in an effort to determine truth or deception. A polygraph simultaneously records a minimum of respiratory activity, electrodermal response, and cardiovascular activity. (See [Polygraph Examinations](#).)

Portable LPR system: LPR cameras that are transportable and can be moved and deployed in a variety of venues as needed, such as a traffic barrel or speed radar sign. (See [License Plate Readers](#).)

Post: Content that an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site. (See [Social Media](#).)

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder:

- An intense and persistent reaction to trauma including intrusive thoughts, avoidance behaviors, negative thoughts and feelings, and/or arousal and reactive symptoms that disrupt one's normal functional ability.¹³ (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)
- An anxiety disorder that can result from exposure to a traumatic event and is diagnosed as such if symptoms persist after 30 days. (See [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Predominant Aggressor: The individual who poses the most serious, ongoing threat but who might not necessarily be the initial aggressor in a specific incident. (See [Domestic Violence](#).)

Preferred Arrest Response: Police officers are expected to arrest any person who commits a crime related to domestic violence as defined by law, unless there is a clear and compelling reason not to arrest, such as self-defense or lack of probable cause, after a comprehensive investigation to identify the predominant aggressor. (See [Domestic Violence](#).)

Pregnancy Accommodations: Modifications to a pregnant officer's regular duties or schedule to comply with the restrictions recommended by the agency's physician or the pregnant officer's medical provider. (See [Pregnancy](#).)

Preliminary Investigation: The preliminary crime scene investigation and recording of information. It is generally the responsibility of first responding uniformed patrol officers, although in some instances investigative personnel may be assigned to or included in this function. (See [Criminal Investigations](#).)

Primary Image: The first instance in which an image is recorded onto any media, e.g., a digital image recorded on a flash memory card. (See [Digital Cameras](#).)

Primary Investigator: The officer assigned primary responsibility and accountability for an investigation. (See [Criminal Investigations](#).)

Primary Service Handgun: The firearm authorized by an agency to be carried as part of the service uniform and related equipment for uniformed personnel or the authorized firearm to be carried by plainclothes officers. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Primary Unit: The initial pursuing police unit that assumes primary control of the pursuit unless relieved by another unit. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Prisoner: Any individual who is in police custody. (See [Transportation of Prisoners](#).)

Privilege: A particular benefit or advantage that a certain group holds because of their role. Privilege can include a right, power, immunity, or exemption from some specified burden that pertains to others. Privileged communication is often

¹³ APA, "[What Is Posttraumatic Stress Disorder?](#)"

considered to be confidential and may include such information as disclosed between a police chaplain and an agency employee or community member employing the police chaplain's services. (See [Police Chaplains](#).)

Probable Cause:¹⁴

- When articulable facts and circumstances within an officer's knowledge are sufficient to warrant a prudent person or one of reasonable caution to believe that the suspect has committed, is committing, or is about to commit an offense. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)
- The arresting officer must examine all the factors and events leading up to the arrest and decide whether these facts, viewed from the standpoint of an objectively reasonable police officer, support the belief that an individual has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime. (See [Motor Vehicle Stops](#).)
- A condition that exists when known facts and circumstances are sufficient to produce in an officer of reasonable prudence the belief that an offense has been, is being, or is about to be committed. Probable cause is to be viewed from the vantage point of a reasonable police officer on the scene guided by their experience and training. (See [Suicide Bombings](#).)

Probe Deployment: A mode of ECW use that delivers an electrical current upon contact with a target through probes propelled from a distance, attached to the ECW. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)

Procedures: Procedures are more detailed instructions on means and methods for carrying out the policy directive and generally draw the boundaries of permissible officer discretion in performing specific tasks or duties. (See [Written Directive System](#).)

Profile: Information that a user provides about an individual or an agency on a social networking site. (See [Social Media](#).)

Property: A generic term that includes all items held in the custody of the property facility, including evidence, items for safekeeping, and found property. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Property Facility: An identified location for the secure storage of property/evidence in the custody of this agency. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Property for Disposal: Property that has been approved for a final disposition and staged in the property facility. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Property/Items Held for Safekeeping: Any non-evidentiary item that is in the custody of a police agency for temporary protection on behalf of the owner. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Property Report: The primary form that documents all property/evidence that is submitted to a police agency—including such information as type of crime, names of owners/suspects, dates, times, description of property, chain of custody, storage locations, approvals to release or destroy, and signature of receiving parties. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Protection Order: Any injunction or other court order issued for the purpose of preventing violent or threatening acts or harassment against, contact or communication with, or physical proximity to another person issued by a civil or criminal court. (See [Domestic Violence](#).)

Protective Sweep: A quick and limited search of premises incident to an arrest or service of a warrant performed in order to identify persons who may pose a danger to the officers or others. Officers must have reasonable articulable suspicion to believe there is someone present who poses a threat in order to conduct a protective sweep. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Psychological Services: Confidential mental health services- conducted by culturally competent mental health professionals. May also be referred to as *behavioral health and wellness program*. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

¹⁴ U.S. Const., amend. IV.

Public Assistance Towing: Towing of disabled and other motor vehicles for public assistance or for purposes of public safety. While public assistance towing may involve a legitimate police purpose, it normally does not involve custody of the vehicle by the police agency or authorization from the police agency for its release. (See [Motor Vehicle Impoundment](#).)

Public Disclosures: Statements made to the media or information entered in any forum that is available to the public—such as social media websites—that provide information that is critical of the agency, its personnel, or both. (See [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)

Public Information Officer (PIO): The officer designated to prepare and dispense all public information regarding an incident with the approval of the IC. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Purge: To dispose of or destroy criminal intelligence in such a way that it is no longer accessible. (See [Criminal Intelligence](#).)

Qualified Mental Health Professional: An individual who is licensed as a mental health professional and has an in-depth understanding of trauma-related disorders and the police culture. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#), [Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings and Other Serious Incidents](#), and [Post-Shooting Personnel Support](#).)

Quarantine:

- To separate and restrict the movement of people who have been or may have been potentially exposed to a communicable disease and are not yet ill. Quarantined persons may become ill and infectious over a certain period of time after exposure thus presenting a risk for spread of the communicable disease. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)
- Legally enforceable order that restricts movement into or out of the area of quarantine of one person, a large group of people, or community; designed to reduce the likelihood of transmission of contagious disease among persons in and to persons outside the affected area. When applied to all inhabitants of an area, the intervention is referred to as a *cordon sanitaire* (sanitary barrier). (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Race: A group of persons who possess common physical characteristics, for example, color of skin, eyes, and/or hair; facial features, and so forth, which are genetically transmitted by descent and heredity and that distinguish them as a distinct division of humankind. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Random Selection: A method of selection in which every employee in predetermined employee classifications has an equal chance to be chosen each time a selection is conducted. (See [Employee Drug Use](#).)

Read: Digital images of license plates and vehicles and associated metadata that are captured by the LPR system. (See [License Plate Readers](#).)

Real or Physical Evidence: Any material in either gross or trace quantities collected at a crime scene for examination and analysis. (See [Crime Scene Response](#).)

Reasonable Suspicion:¹⁵

- A particularized and objective basis, supported by specific and articulable facts, for suspecting a person of criminal activity.¹⁶ Reasonable suspicion must be more than a hunch or feeling but need not meet the test for probable cause sufficient to make an arrest. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)
- The totality of circumstances in each incident or situation that provides an officer with a particularized and objective basis for suspecting legal wrongdoing. The “process allows officers to draw on their own experience and specialized training to make inferences from and deductions about the cumulative information available to them.”¹⁷ (See [Motor Vehicle Stops](#).)

¹⁵ See *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1 (1968).

¹⁶ *Black’s Law Dictionary*, 9th ed., s.v. “Reasonable Suspicion.”

¹⁷ *United States v. Arvizu*, 534 U.S. 266, 273 (2002).

- Articulable circumstances that would cause a trained police officer to reasonably believe that activity relating to a definable criminal activity or enterprise has occurred, is occurring, or is reasonably likely to occur. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Recorded Media: Refers to audio-video signals recorded on any of several storage devices, including analog tape (VHS, SVHS, Hi 8mm), digital tape (DV), or other portable digital storage devices (CD, DVD, hard drive, etc.). (See [Mobile Video Recording Equipment](#).)

Recording: Capturing of images, audio, or both, by means of a camera, cellphone, audio recorder, or other device. (See [Recording Police Activity](#).)

Registered Sex Offender: Any individual who is convicted of a registerable sex offense under any United States jurisdiction, including convictions for sex offenses under federal, military, state, territorial, tribal, or local law. Foreign convictions are also covered under certain circumstances. (See [Registering and Tracking Sex Offenders](#).)

Release of Evidence: The formal process, including authorization and documentation, of releasing evidence for court purposes or to the crime lab, other agency, or owner. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Religious Group: A group of people who share the same religious beliefs regarding the origin and purpose of the universe and the existence or nonexistence of a supreme being. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Remote Pilot in Command: The individual with the final authority and responsibility for operation and safety of a small, unmanned aircraft system operation. (See [Small Unmanned Aircraft System](#).)

Rescue Task Forces (RTFs): Teams consisting of fire/EMS personnel, paired with police officers. Fire/EMS personnel are tasked with initial treatment and triage of patients in the warm zone. Police officers are assigned as the protection for this team and should not separate from the fire/EMS personnel. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Research: The systematic investigation of subjects by trained personnel aimed at answering questions or addressing concerns that arise within police organizations. (See [Law Enforcement-Researcher Collaborative Partnerships](#).)

Resiliency: The capacity to prepare for, recover from, adapt to, and navigate through stress and adversity, to include applying skills to everyday life to strengthen one's ability to overcome challenges, maintain peak performance, and thrive personally and professionally. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Responsible Adult:

- In the absence of a juvenile's parents or legal guardian, an individual who has reached the age of majority under the laws of the jurisdiction and who is responsible for the physical custody of a juvenile or who is another acquaintance of the juvenile's parents or legal guardian who agrees—and who reasonably demonstrates the ability to provide supervision for the juvenile until a parent or legal guardian can assume that responsibility in accordance with applicable jurisdictional statutes. (See [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)
- An individual over 18 years of age who can pass a preliminary NCIC check and clear a child protection registry background check to ensure that they do not have any arrests for founded cases of child abuse, sexual crimes, domestic violence, recent arrests for drug use or possession, or other violent felony violations. (See [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Toolkit](#).)

Restricted Duty: An assignment that does not require an officer to be armed. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Retaliatory Conduct:

- Conduct or action designed to serve as retribution against an employee who, in good faith, has reported or otherwise provided information regarding misconduct against another employee. (See [Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#) and [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)
- Harmful conduct or action designed to serve as retribution against an employee for engaging in legally protected activity, such as reporting or otherwise providing information regarding misconduct against another employee or testifying on behalf of another employee. (See [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Roadway Clearance Time: The time between the first recordable awareness of an incident by a responsible agency and first confirmation that all travel lanes are open. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Romantic Relationship: A relationship between two individuals that may be categorized by the following behaviors: “[A] pattern of exclusivity between the couple; time spent together as a couple after work hours; physical touching that implies a romantic intention or desire; the sharing of personal information appropriate for a romantic relationship but beyond the boundaries of a professional workplace relationship; actual physical intimacy; written communications or other actions that imply or directly indicate romantic interest.”¹⁸ (See [Personal Relationships in the Workplace](#).)

Rules: Rules define situations where no deviation or exceptions to agency authorized actions are permitted. As opposed to procedure statements that often provide officer flexibility and discretion, rules are characterized by their inflexibility. (See [Written Directive System](#).)

Runaway: A child who leaves their legal residence without permission or who fails to return home after permission to leave temporarily. Runaway children are at a high risk for endangerments. (See [Missing Persons](#).)

Safe, Quick Clearance: The practice of rapidly, safely, and proactively removing temporary obstructions from the roadway to enhance the safety to responders and motorists, minimize motorist delay through traffic control and opening of lanes, and restore the roadway to its pre-incident capacity as safely and quickly as possible. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Safety Officer: This officer oversees the safety of all operations within the incident or event and has the authority to stop an operation if it is unsafe. The safety officer and their assistants oversee tactical operations to ensure the safety of responders and the general public. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Safety Priorities: The basis for the agency’s operational and tactical decisions. (See [Hostage Situations](#).)

Safety-Sensitive Position: Those designated as such by collective bargaining agreements, state law, or the agency chief executive and whose duties involve such a great risk “of injury to others that even a momentary lapse of attention can have disastrous consequences.”¹⁹ (See [Employee Drug Use](#).)

School Resource Officer: A police officer who is deployed by an employing police agency or school district in a community-oriented policing assignment to work in collaboration with one or more schools and function as a school-based police officer. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

School Safety Team: A multidisciplinary team intended to conduct an audit to review safety conditions, which may include behavioral threats and institutional security.²⁰ This team may also be referred to as a school safety audit committee and may include officials from police, fire departments, school administration, and local community services. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

School-to-Prison Pipeline: The school-to-prison pipeline is the name given to a national trend where juveniles are unnecessarily funneled out of school systems and into the criminal justice systems. Often attributed to the integration of sworn police officers in schools, this pipeline focuses solely on punishment, discipline, and criminalization of student behavior rather than providing the appropriate educational and counseling services that some vulnerable populations of children may need. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

Search: An examination of all or a portion of a vehicle or other property with an investigatory motive. (See [Motor Vehicle Searches](#).)

Search Personnel: Police officers and supporting personnel taking part in the execution of a search warrant. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

¹⁸ Calvin College, “Definition of Romantic Relationships,” in *Handbook for Teaching Faculty*, §6.17.2.

¹⁹ See *Skinner v. Railway Labor Executives Association*, 489 U.S. 602, 628 (1989); *National Treasury Employees Union v. Von Raab*, 489 U.S. 656, 670 (1989).

²⁰ U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Secret Service, [Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence](#) (2018).

- Search Site:** The object or location to be searched, as explicitly stated in the search warrant. (See [Search Warrants](#).)
- Search Warrant:** A written order, in the name of the people, signed by a magistrate or other judicial authority, directing a police officer to search for specified personal property and bring it before the magistrate. (See [Search Warrants](#).)
- Seasonal Flu:** A respiratory illness that can be transmitted from person to person. Most people have some immunity, and a vaccine is available. May also be referred to as the *common flu*. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)
- Secondary Crash:** Vehicle crashes that occur after the initial incident and either within the incident scene or within the incident queue due to sudden traffic congestion or other issues resulting from the primary traffic incident. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)
- Secondary Employment:** Any employment outside of an employee's regular duty assignments. (See [Secondary Employment](#).)
- Secondary Unit:** The second police unit in a pursuit. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)
- Section:** The organizational level with responsibility for one of the general staff functional areas of incident management. (See [Incident Command](#).)
- Section Chief:** The title for an individual responsible for management of one of the general staff functional sections: operations, planning, logistics, finance/administration, and intelligence (if established as a separate section). A section chief reports directly to the IC or unified command (UC) and works with the command and general staff to develop and implement IAPs. (See [Incident Command](#).)
- Secure Custody:** A condition in which an individual is physically detained or confined in a locked room, set of rooms, or a cell that is designated, set aside, or used for the specific purpose of securely detaining persons who are in police custody or when the individual is physically secured to a stationary object. (See [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)
- Selection Process:** The system whereby individuals are chosen to fill vacancies, to include advertising vacancies, accepting and reviewing applications, conducting components of the selection process, making and announcing a selection, reviewing the selection process, and debriefing the candidates. (See [Personnel Transfer and Rotation](#).)
- Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus:** A personal protection device that provides breathable air to the wearer. (See [Law Enforcement Fire Response](#).)
- Self-Quarantine:** The act of putting oneself in quarantine. A request that persons remain at home, ban visitors, wear a mask when in the same room as other members of the household, and sleep in a separate room. May also be referred to as *voluntary quarantine*. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#) and [Pandemic Flu](#).)
- Sensitive Body Areas:** Areas of the body particularly susceptible to injury when exposed to ECW probes or activation. (See [Electronic Control Weapons](#).)
- Sensitive Circumstances:** Sensitive circumstances exist if there is a reasonable expectation that the operation will involve investigation of criminal conduct by an undercover officer or an elected or appointed federal, state, or local government official or political candidate. (See [Surveillance](#).)
- Sequential:** Presentation of a series of photographs or individuals to a witness one at a time. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)
- Serious Acts of Misconduct:** A deliberate act or failure to act that could reasonably form the basis for significant disciplinary action against an employee. (See [Retaliatory Conduct by Employees](#).)
- Serious Bodily Injury:** Injury that involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or extended loss or impairment of the function of a body part or organ (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#) and [Reporting Use of Force](#).)
- Serious Health Condition:** Any illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves treatment by a healthcare provider for any period of incapacity, continuing treatment, a long-term condition, or prenatal care. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)

Serious Incident: A serious incident includes but is not limited to any use of deadly force by an employee, and any incident that occurring during the course of an agency operation results in serious injury or death. (See [Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings and Other Serious Incidents](#).)

Serious Injury: Injury that involves a substantial risk of death, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or extended loss or impairment of the function of a body part or organ. (See [Investigation of Officer-Involved Shootings and Other Serious Incidents](#) and [Line-of-Duty Serious Injury](#).)

Sex: Assigned at birth based on the appearance of a baby's genitalia. (See [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)

Sexual Assault: All felony crimes of sexual violence. Specific statutory definitions of sex crimes vary by state. (See [Investigating Sexual Assaults](#).)

Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examination: An examination of a sexual assault patient by a healthcare provider, ideally one who has specialized education and clinical experience in the collection of forensic evidence and treatment of these patients. (See [Investigating Sexual Assaults](#).)

Sexual Harassment: A form of gender discrimination, sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical offensive conduct of a sexual nature that explicitly or implicitly affects employment; unreasonably interferes with work performance; or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. (See [Harassment, Discrimination, and Unprofessional Conduct](#) and [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct](#).)

Sexual Orientation:

- Describes a person's inherent or immutable emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to other people but is not a matter of gender identity. (See [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)
- Classification of a person's physical, romantic, sexual, or emotional attraction to others. (See [Investigation of Hate Crimes](#).)

Shelter-in-Place: A mandate requiring individuals to stay in a safe, nonpublic location (home), except for essential activities, until told otherwise. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)

Show-Up: The presentation of a suspect to an eyewitness within a short time frame, and in close proximity, following the commission of a crime to either confirm or eliminate the individual as a possible perpetrator. May also be referred to as *field identifications*. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Sign Language: American Sign Language is the form of sign language most often used in the United States. Signs convey concepts or ideas even though a sign may stand for a separate English word. Signing individual letters by finger spelling can supplement sign language. (See [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#).)

Simultaneous: Presentation of a series of photographs or individuals to a witness all at once. (See [Eyewitness Identification](#).)

Small Unmanned Aircraft System (sUAS): An unmanned aircraft and its associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the aircraft that are required for safe and efficient operation. May also be referred to as *remote piloted aircraft* or *drone*. (See [Small Unmanned Aircraft System](#).)

Social Distancing:

- Maintaining distance between people to avoid the spread of disease. (See [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)
- Measures taken to reduce contacts between individuals in order to lower the chance of spreading the disease. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Social Media: A category of internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation. (See [Social Media](#).)

Social Networks: Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies. (See [Social Media](#).)

Special Needs Child: A child who has a special needs condition that may be defined as any other condition characterized by physical, social, or cognitive impairments or communication challenges. (See [Missing Children](#).)

Specific Task Inspections: An inspection conducted to evaluate particular components or activities of the agency. (See [Inspections](#).)

Specified Characteristics: Real or perceived personal characteristics, to include but not be limited to race, ethnic background, national origin, immigration status, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, age, disability, or political affiliation. (See [Bias-Free Policing](#).)

Speech: Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words; in writing; or by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication. (See [Social Media](#).)

Spouse: A husband or wife as defined or recognized by state law for purposes of marriage, including common-law marriages, where recognized by law. (See [Family and Medical Leave](#).)

Staff Inspection: An objective review of the facilities, equipment, personnel, administrative organization and functioning, operational activities, and programs of the department. Staff inspections involve detailed and wide-ranging examination of departmental operations for efficiency, effectiveness, compliance with departmental policies, accreditation standards, and adequacy of management controls. (See [Inspections](#).)

Staging Area: Designated spaces established to assemble resources while awaiting a tactical assignment. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Stakeout: The deployment of officers in anticipation of the commission of a crime, generally at specific locations that have a high potential for such an event. (See [Conducting Stakeouts](#).)

Stalking: A persistent course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. Stalking tactics may or may not be criminal on their own, but as part of a pattern of behavior may become criminal in nature. (See [Stalking](#).)

Status Offender: A juvenile who is charged with an offense that would not be a crime if committed by an adult. (See [Juvenile Diversion and Custody](#).)

Stranger Stalking: Occurs when the victim and the stalker do not know each other in any capacity. This includes celebrity or public figure stalking. (See [Stalking](#).)

Strategic National Stockpile: A national repository of antibiotics, chemical antidotes, antitoxins, life support medications, intravenous administration equipment, airway maintenance supplies, and medical and surgical items designed to supplement and resupply state and local public health agencies in the event of a national emergency. (See [Pandemic Flu](#).)

Strip Search: Any search of an individual requiring them to remove or rearrange some or all of their clothing to permit the visual inspection of skin surfaces, specifically the buttocks, genital/groin area, and/or breasts. (See [Strip and Body Cavity Searches](#).)

Suicide Bomb Emergency: A condition that exists after an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be on or with an individual, or under their control. (See [Suicide Bombings](#).)

Suicide Bomber: An individual who conveys or detonates an explosive device with the intention of inflicting casualties by means that will intentionally result in their own death. (See [Suicide Bombings](#).)

Summary Action: Corrective action taken by an employee's supervisor or commander for lesser violations of agency rules, policies, or procedures. Summary actions are the lowest level of corrective action generally handled by first-line supervisors. (See [Investigation of Allegations of Employee Misconduct](#).)

Supervisor: Personnel officially appointed responsibility for a departmental component. (See [Mobile Video Recording Equipment](#).)

Surveillance: The continuous or prolonged observation of a targeted individual, group, or organization by clandestine means to gather information relative to an open criminal investigation. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Survivors: Immediate family members of the deceased officer. (See [Line-of-Duty Death](#).)

Symptoms: The combination of bodily expressions that indicate the existence of a disorder or disease. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Synthetic Identity Theft: Using someone's social security number in combination with a fake name and birth date to create a new, fictitious identity. Victims may experience problems when the new identity tracks back to their credit or tax records. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

System Administrator: The member of an agency designated with the responsibility for managing all aspects of electronic messaging through individual computers and computer networks within the agency. (See [Electronic Messaging](#).)

Tactical and Emergency Response Plans: Safety and tactical evacuation plans designed to prepare police, firefighters, EMS, and school staff for violent and hazardous events at or near a school. (See [School-Police Partnerships](#).)

Tactical Coordinator: The officer responsible for planning and supervising tactical operations to include dynamic entry and other tasks requiring special weapons and tactically trained officers. (See [Search Warrants](#).)

Tax-Related Identity Theft: Using someone's social security number to fraudulently file a tax return and claim a tax refund. (See [Identity Theft](#).)

Technology: Devices, systems, or software/applications that can or have the potential to monitor, capture, analyze, store, transmit, and/or share data, including audio, video, visual images, or other information that may include the time, date, and geographic location where the data were captured. (See [Implementing Technology](#).)

Temporary Storage: Areas such as lockers that are used to secure property/evidence that has been packaged, documented, and tagged when it cannot be personally presented to the property officer. (See [Property & Evidence Control](#).)

Tentative Recognition Signal: An agency approved sign or gesture used by an individual to indicate that they are a police officer. (See [Off-Duty Arrests](#).)

Terminate: To discontinue or stop pursuing a vehicle. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Terms Limiting Officer Discretion: Words used in written directives of an agency that impose limitations on officer discretion. These terms are classified as *judgmental*, *discouraging*, and *prohibitive* in nature. (See [Written Directive System](#).)

- **Judgmental:** The word “may” is used to convey the utmost discretion to officers. “May” indicates that officers should employ their best judgment in addressing a situation by relying on experience, training, the stated mission and values of the agency, and the general guidance provided in statements of agency policy.
- **Discouraging:** The words “should” or “should not” are used to convey the agency's desire for officer actions in given circumstances. These directives should be followed whenever reasonably possible. However, it is recognized that exceptions to desired actions can be anticipated in these circumstances that could require alternative action. Officers are therefore authorized whenever reasonable to use limited discretion to deal effectively with the situation or problem.
- **Restrictive or Prohibitive:** The terms “shall” or “shall not” or “will” or “will not” impose absolute requirements or prohibitions on officer actions. Considering that the full set of circumstances surrounding many situations confronted by officers cannot be fully predicted, such terms must be used with care and with the understanding that failure to abide by such restrictions may result in disciplinary action. Where deemed appropriate, however, these terms may appear in policies, procedures, and rules.

Tertiary Unit: The third police vehicle that may be used to assist in tactical interventions on a high-risk traffic stop, to work any crash that occurs, and/or to assist with arrests. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Threat: Situations indicating likely danger. (See [Evacuations](#).)

Traffic Incident: Any non-recurring event that causes a reduction of roadway capacity or an abnormal increase in demand. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Traffic Incident Management: A planned and coordinated multidisciplinary process for detecting, responding to, and removing traffic incidents; for restoring traffic capacity as quickly as possible in their wake; and for ensuring safety for on-scene responders and the traveling public. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Traffic Queue: An area where the volume of traffic exceeds available capacity, creating traffic congestion. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Transgender: Individuals who typically experience their gender identity or expression as different from cultural expectations associated with their assigned sex at birth (See [Grooming and Appearance](#) and [Interactions with Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Individuals](#).)

Trauma: Results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and over which they have or perceives to have a lack of control. Trauma may have lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. (See [Response to Victims of Crime](#) and [Safeguarding Children of Arrested Parents Toolkit](#).)

Trauma Informed Approach: A program, organization, or system that “realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in individuals and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into police procedures and practices and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.”²¹ (See [Response to Victims of Crime](#).)

Traumatic Incident: An incident that may overwhelm an individual's normal coping mechanisms and cause extreme psychological distress. (See [Employee Mental Health and Wellness](#).)

Triggering Point: Specific predetermined circumstances that justify the initiation of direct action to prevent or stop a particular course of suspect behavior. (See [Hostage Situations](#) and [Barricaded Individuals](#).)

Undercover Operation: An approved criminal investigation using an officer (or officers) generally under an assumed name or cover identity to infiltrate a group or organization in order to obtain information through the development of personal relationships and other approved information-gathering methods. (See [Surveillance](#).)

Unified Command (UC): An incident command system used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction, or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through designated members of the UC, often the senior person(s) from agencies and/or disciplines participating in the UC, to establish a common set of objectives and strategies. (See [Active Shooter](#) and [Incident Command](#).)

Unintended Discharge: An unplanned discharge that occurs outside of the firearm's prescribed use. May also be referred to as *negligent discharge*. (See [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#).)

Unity of Command: A chain of command designed to ensure efficiency in meeting a specific objective. Every individual assigned to an incident or event reports to one supervisor. The exception to this is when the section chief reports to a UC. (See [Incident Command](#).)

Unmanned Aircraft: An aircraft that is operated without direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft. (See [Small Unmanned Aircraft System](#).)

Unreliable Informant File: A file containing information pertaining to an individual who has failed at following an established written CI agreement and has been determined to be generally unfit to serve as a CI. (See [Confidential Informants](#).)

²¹ HHS, *SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma Informed Approach* (Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

Use of Force: The amount of effort required by police to achieve compliance or overcome a subject's physical resistance to any command, arrest, or detention. This includes any use of force occurring while the officer is acting in an official police capacity. This does not include the use of handcuffs as a restraint in arrest and transport activities; physical removal of passively resisting demonstrators; presence of officers, horses, or canines; or issuance of verbal commands. (See [Reporting Use of Force](#).)

Vascular Neck Restraint: A technique that can be used to incapacitate individuals by restricting the flow of blood to their brain. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Vectors: Animate intermediaries between infectious agents and potential hosts. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Vehicle Removal Laws: Laws that require motorists involved in minor crashes (where there are no serious injuries and the vehicle can be driven) to move their vehicles out of the travel lanes to the shoulder or other safe area. (See [Traffic Incident Management](#).)

Vehicles: Inanimate objects that indirectly transmit infectious agents by carrying or providing a suitable environment for them. Examples include food, water, and biological fluids. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#).)

Vehicular Pursuit: An attempt by an officer in an authorized emergency vehicle to apprehend a suspect who is actively attempting to elude apprehension while operating a vehicle as defined by applicable law. (See [Vehicular Pursuits](#).)

Vicarious Trauma: The cumulative transformative effect of empathetic engagement with victims of crime and traumatic experiences. May also be referred to as *compassion fatigue*. (See [Response to Victims of Crime](#).)

Victim: A person who has been harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime or other suspicious event or action. (See [Crime Scene Response](#).)

Victim Advocate: A service provider who is trained to assess and address the needs of the victim as well as to provide counseling, advocacy, resources, information, and support. (See [Investigating Sexual Assaults](#).)

Victim Services: Internal or external services offered through agency personnel or outside providers specializing in working with crime victims. (See [Response to Victims of Crime](#).)

Virus: An infectious agent that can multiply in living host cells such as animal, plant, fungi, or bacteria cells. (See [Communicable Disease Prevention](#) and [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).)

Visual Observer: An sUAS flight crewmember designated by the remote pilot in command to assist with the responsibility to identify and avoid other air traffic or objects in the air or on the ground. (See [Small Unmanned Aircraft System](#).)

Voluntary Contact: An encounter between a police officer and an individual that may be initiated by the officer for any reason and during which the individual is free to leave at any time. (See [Arrests and Investigatory Stops](#).)

Volunteer: Someone who performs a service for a police agency without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services rendered. (See [Pandemic Flu](#) and [Volunteers](#).)

Warm Zone: A geographic area where police has either cleared or isolated the threat to a level of minimal or mitigated risk; can be considered clear but not secure. (See [Active Shooter](#).)

Warning Shot: Discharge of a firearm for the purpose of compelling compliance from an individual, but not intended to cause physical injury. (See [National Consensus Policy and Discussion Paper on Use of Force](#).)

Weapons of Mass Destruction: Any nuclear, biological, incendiary, chemical, explosive, or radiological weapon that may be used for the death or destruction of an adversary. (See [Responding to Suspicious Mail: Biological Threats](#).)

Welfare Check: A visit to check the health status of an individual who, by way of community member or police reporting, has been brought to the attention of police as having concern for their well-being. (See [Welfare Checks](#).)

Well-Being: Refers to the psychological, emotional, mental, and/or physical health of an individual. (See [Welfare Checks](#).)

Wipe: A term used to describe the process of deleting the contents of a file or disk space so that none of that content can be recovered. (See [Digital Cameras.](#))

Working Copy: A duplicate of the master image used for investigative purposes, forensic analysis, and prosecutorial presentation. (See [Digital Cameras.](#))

Workplace: Anywhere an employee is performing job-related responsibilities, is in uniform, is acting as a representative of the agency, or is acting in such a way that leverages the power and privilege of their status as a police officer and the power the position affords them. (See [Sexual Harassment & Misconduct.](#))

Write Once Read Many Media: Storage media, such as CD-R or DVD-R, that is used to permanently store or archive images. (See [Digital Cameras.](#))

Written Directives: Position statements by or authorized through the chief executive officer that guide or direct the actions and activities of officers. (See [Written Directive System.](#))

Zone of Safety: The distance a child could travel from the location where last seen before he or she would most likely be at risk of injury or exploitation based on age, developmental stage, and related matters. (See [Missing Children.](#))

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