

Early Warning System (EWS)

1027.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy is intended to assist supervisors and managers in identifying employees whose performance warrants review and, where appropriate, intervention in circumstances that may have negative consequences for the employee, fellow employees, this agency, and/or the public.

1027.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident- A singular traumatic event experienced by an officer that may cause them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at the scene or later. Examples include but are not limited to the following: Officer involved shooting; vehicle crash involving serious injury or death to an officer or citizen; officer being the victim of a felonious assault; death of a colleague or partner; death or serious injury to someone in custody of officer; near shoot situations; severe trauma or death of a child (particularly if officer has a child near same age); or an incident involving multiple deaths or injuries in short amount of time (natural disaster or terrorist attack).

Excessive Use of Force - The application of an amount and/or duration of force greater than required to compel compliance of a non-compliant subject.

Office of Professional Responsibilities (OPR) - Also referred to as internal affairs, this function is executed by the employees or unit with primary responsibility for conducting investigations of employee misconduct allegations.

Potential-Risk Incidents - Actions that may result in injury to employees or the public, increase the civil liability to the agency or cause this agency to lose public support and confidence in its ability to perform its duty in a professional manner.

Use of Force - Efforts employed by a deputy sheriff or correctional officer to compel compliance from an unwilling subject, to include but not limited to the use of hands-on physical force; chemical, electronic; and impact devices; taser, firearms; and other weapons or means.

1027.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this agency to establish a system for tracking and reviewing incidents of risk to the agency and the involved employees. This is accomplished using the agency IAPro software. Maintained by the Office of Professional Responsibilities (OPR), IAPro maintains a substantial database of the employee's performance. The software features an Early Warning System (EWS) module, a means to identify and assess employee performance involved in potential-risk incidents and intervene where appropriate.

1027.3 GENERAL

- (a) It is the duty of the supervisors to directly monitor the performance and behavior of personnel under their charge on a daily basis.

Early Warning System (EWS)

- (b) IAPro is software to assist supervisory personnel in monitoring employee performance and serve as an early warning system.
- (c) Supervisory personnel will be familiar with alternatives and authorized actions they may take in response to personnel exhibiting behavioral problems with or without information provided through the IAPro.

1027.4 REPORTING PROCEDURES

This agency's OPR will be responsible for establishing and administering the IAPro software and generating reports specified in this policy or as otherwise directed by the Sheriff. OPR will maintain a database of the following:

- (a) Complaints lodged against employees in accordance with provisions of this agency's policy on investigation of employee misconduct, to include the following:
 - 1. Complaints lodged by one employee against another;
 - 2. Summary disciplinary actions taken against an employee by supervisor with or without a formal complaint;
 - 3. Complaints lodged by citizens against agency personnel;
 - 4. Disciplinary actions taken against employees;
 - 5. Administratively defined examples of improper actions and/or improper conduct.
- (b) Performance based and related information will also be included in the IAPro database, to include, but not limited to the following:
 - 1. Agency Vehicle Accidents
 - 2. Vehicle Pursuits
 - 3. Use of Force Reports
 - 4. Accident & Sick Reports
 - 5. Formal Written Counseling Reports
 - 6. Critical Incident Reports

1027.5 REPORTS

- (a) OPR will collect and report on the aforementioned data and information by comparing it to historical norms of all agency personnel functioning in the same or similar assignments. Norms will be updated on an ongoing basis for each behavioral or performance indicator. Reports on individual officers based on deviations from those norms will be distributed to respective organizational supervisors via an Early Warning System Alert.
- (b) Early Warning System (EWS) Alerts will be automatically generated by IAPro whenever an officer has exceeded the threshold established by this agency requiring supervisory review and intervention. The agency threshold criteria will be determined by utilizing the predictive software within IAPro and consulting with the Division Commanders. The criteria will be reviewed by OPR annually (at a minimum) and

Early Warning System (EWS)

may be modified consistent with personnel assignments and the number of incidents reported. The following incidents will be utilized when determining threshold settings:

1. Uses of Force (Levels 2 and 3 only)
 2. Complaints Against Personnel
 3. Negligent Agency Vehicle Accidents
 4. Critical Incidents
 5. Accident & Sick Incidents (Initial Only)
 6. Written Counseling (Corrections Officers and Professional Staff)
- (c) A combination of the above incidents will trigger an Overall EWS Alert. The threshold setting for this alert will be determined by OPR and consultation with the Division Commanders.
- (d) EWS Alert reports will provide a list of the incidents which caused the alert to trigger and their respective dispositions when available. Alert Reports are intended to assist supervisory personnel to evaluate and guide their subordinates. Alert Reports alone will not form the basis for remedial and/or disciplinary action.
- (e) OPR will assign an EWS Alert to the involved employee's supervisor, designated by the Division Commander. The Alert will be routed via the Blue Team Software.
- (f) Supervisors will review the EWS Alert Report and associated incidents to identify trends or other commonalities in the data provided and other information such as the employee's use of sick leave, performance evaluations, traffic accidents, use of force incidents, citizen complaints, Supervisor Notes, facts and information data, their knowledge of the employee, etc., and determine if any action is necessary.
- (g) Early warning data for all employees is available to the respective employee's supervisors by accessing the agency's early intervention software called EIPro. This software provides in-depth analytical information which may be helpful to the supervisor investigating the EWS Alert.
- (h) The supervisor will meet with the involved employee and discuss the EWS Alert and attempt to identify any circumstances (professional or personal) which may have caused the Alert. The employee should be notified that the meeting and subsequent report will not be made part of their personnel file and is not a discipline matter.
- (i) The involved employee's Division Commander or designee and the supervisor will meet to discuss the report and other relevant information and determine if immediate corrective actions are warranted. These actions may include, but are not limited to the following:
1. Refer the employee to an agency-authorized mental health professional or other mental health care provider authorized by the agency.
 2. Referral to an Employee Assistance Program.
 3. Require that the employee participate in agency-authorized training targeting personal or professional problems that the officer may be facing (e.g., communications, cultural awareness, coping with stress, anger management)

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office

LE Policy Manual

Early Warning System (EWS)

4. Initiate reassignment
 5. Initiate monitoring of the employee's work history utilizing "Monitored Employee" feature in the Division Commander software. The duration of the monitoring will be determined by the Division Commander; or
 6. Conclude that the employee's actions do not warrant immediate need for corrective action.
- (j) A report of action recommendations and justification for those recommendations will be forwarded through the chain of command via Blue Team to OPR. The Assistant Sheriff will be notified if corrective actions for the employee are recommended.

[St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: 1013.1 Early Warning System Reports](#)

[St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: 1013.2 IAPro](#)

1027.6 SUPERVISOR ALERTS

- (a) IAPro software will also generate EWS Alert Reports to identify potential supervisory issues and/or training concerns. The Alert report will identify a specific supervisor. For example, if the Alert identifies a Sergeant in Patrol, then the Alert will be investigated by a Lieutenant or above. Supervisor Alerts are handled in the same manner as listed in previous sections of this policy.
- (b) Early Warning System (EWS) Supervisory Alerts will be automatically generated by IAPro whenever the employees under a supervisor's purview collectively exceed the thresholds established by this agency.

1027.7 ANNUAL REPORTING

A documented annual evaluation of the Early Warning System approved by the supervisor of OPR is due Feb 1st of each year and will be forwarded to the Sheriff.