


Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual		Standard Operating Procedure
Effective Date September 7, 2021		APD.SOP.5070 Gangs and Special Investigations
Applicable To: Division and section commanders		Review Due: 2025
Approval Authority: Chief Rodney Bryant		
Signature: Signed by RB		Date Signed: 9/7/2021

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1. PURPOSE

To establish policies and procedures for the operation of the Gangs and Special Investigations Unit (GSI). within the Atlanta Police Department to collect, analyze, and disseminate information and data related to criminal activity.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of Atlanta Police Department to aggressively monitor, track, and suppress the growth and spread of criminal activity. APD will collect, analyze, and disseminate information and data related to criminal activity. These activities will include gathering and analyzing both tactical and strategic information concerning crime, patterns of crime, criminal participants, and selective enforcement of laws relating to criminal street gangs, robberies, aggravated assaults, and other crimes where units request GSI assistance. APD shall establish proactive cooperation with the Atlanta Public School system, community-based groups and other law enforcement agencies to gather and disseminate intelligence and take proactive measures to reduce criminal activity.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Criminal Investigations Division (CID) commanders shall establish the Atlanta Police Department's GSI Unit and ensure that adequate personnel and equipment resources are provided.
- 3.2 The Special Enforcement Section (SES) Commander shall oversee the actions of the GSI Unit.
- 3.3 The GSI Unit Commander shall monitor the GSI's operations to ensure that information is gathered, stored, analyzed, and disseminated to appropriate units in accordance with State and Federal Laws.
- 3.4 The GSI Unit Commander shall manage the operations of the GSI.



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- 3.5 The GSI Unit supervisors shall evaluate, assess, identify, verify, monitor, and disseminate intelligence and information to appropriate units. Supervisors shall ensure that personnel assigned to the unit are proactively conducting investigations and enforcement actions in effort to reduce criminal activity.
- 3.6 The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall develop constructive and working relationships with police units and community leaders in incidents of gang involvement.
4. ACTION
- 4.1 Duties of the Gangs & Special Investigations Unit
- 4.1.1 The GSI Unit shall be responsible for gathering, documenting, tracking, and disseminating intelligence information from various sources in relation to criminal street gang activity. In addition, GSI shall be responsible for targeted proactive enforcement and investigations against criminal gang members and gang enterprises. The GSI Unit shall be authorized to assist and lead specialized investigations into criminal activity in collaboration with internal and external partners, including but not limited to: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) and Fulton County Sheriff's Office (FCSO).
1. The GSI Unit shall gather and analyze criminal intelligence information and disseminate it to the proper authority, to include:
 - a. Providing a descriptive analysis of crime systems operating in the City of Atlanta;
 - b. Depicting the capabilities of these crime systems and providing alternatives to reduce the effectiveness of these systems;
 - c. Identifying the major crime problems affecting the City of Atlanta and provide recommendations for action; and,
 - d. Assessing the efforts of law enforcement in the control of gang-related crime in the City of Atlanta.
 2. Frequent monitoring of Field Contact Information (FCI), arrests on incident reports, Significant Incident Reports, information requests from unit's electronic communication, and other miscellaneous departmental documentation of arrest sheets.
 3. Networking with other CID Units, Field Operations Division (Zone Units), outside jurisdictions, prosecutors, probation and parole authorities.
 4. Tracking, monitoring, and targeting violent and repeat offender (VRO) candidates monthly to determine qualified offenders and purge offenders from list.
- 4.1.2 The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall gather all evidence relative to gang motivation and gang participation in a specific act; including, physical evidence and information gained through interrogations, interviews and debriefings.
- 4.1.3 The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall determine whether the victim and offender was or is currently a gang member and document the history of related or similar crimes by the offender's gang and the victim's gang.



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- 4.1.4 The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives/Strategic Atlanta Firearms Enforcement Task Force (ATF/SAFE) Officers shall partner with the ATF to remove firearms, violent and repeat offenders from the City of Atlanta through proactive investigations.
- 4.1.5 The GSI Unit shall monitor criminal activity at festivals, sporting events, parades, funerals of gang members, and other special events within the City of Atlanta in order to monitor gang presence and to deter violent criminal behavior.
1. The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall collect data on gangs and gang members and develop intelligence files to monitor the activities of criminal gangs and their members.
 2. The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall coordinate with gang intelligence systematically within the Department and other law enforcement agencies from surrounding areas to track gang activity.
 3. The GSI Unit investigators and officers shall work closely with prosecutors to provide or gather additional information and evidence required for case preparation and prosecution.
 4. All GSI Unit investigators and officers shall complete case files for all investigative leads and criminal arrests. (These files shall be retained in compliance with APD.SOP.1050 "Records Management and Retention"). GSI Unit supervisors shall be responsible for case reviews to ensure compliance with this directive. When a file is completed and closed, the file shall be submitted to the Unit Commander for reviewing.
- 4.1.6 The GSI Unit supervisors shall ensure intelligence information and data related to criminal street gang activity is disseminated to other units within the Department and with outside agencies to ensure ~~that~~ their respective activities do not conflict or interfere with each other.
- 4.1.7 The GSI Unit Commander shall file a weekly report with the commander of the Special Enforcement Section, or his or her designee(s), that includes the following:
1. Copies and/or summaries of all intelligence reports and weekly activities;
 2. A Violent and Repeat Offender (VRO) tracking sheet with active and closed VRO cases including those presented for prosecution and adjudicated; and,
 3. Reports on newly identified gangs, their membership, leaders and base of operations will be included if new information is obtained.
- 4.1.8 The SES Commander, or his or her designee(s), shall ensure that information and intelligence relevant to the zones or outside agencies is forwarded in an accurate and timely manner.
- 4.1.9 The SES Commander, or his or her designee(s), shall forward a weekly summary report to the CID Commander.
- 4.2 The GSI Unit Organization
- 4.2.1 Security
1. The GSI Unit Commander shall provide a secure area for the GSI equipment, which will limit access to only authorized personnel.



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2. The GSI Unit Commander shall safeguard equipment and communication lines connected to the GSI and ensure that only authorized employees are allowed access.
3. To effectively maintain confidentiality of data, all GSI members are responsible for safeguarding GSI manuals, updates and other information related to the CIU.
4. The GSI Unit intelligence files shall be housed in accordance with APD SOP.1050, "Records Management and Retention."
5. The GSI Unit supervisor shall take disciplinary action against any individual found to be violating state guidelines, federal guidelines, or this directive. (See APD.SOP.2020, "Disciplinary Process").

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Criminal Intelligence: Information gathered, analyzed, recorded/reported and disseminated by law enforcement agencies concerning types of crime, identified criminals and known or suspected criminal groups.
- 5.2 Gang/Criminal Street Gang: Any organization, association or group of three or more persons associated in fact, whether formal or informal, which engages in criminal gang activity as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-15-3. The existence of such organization, association or group of individuals associated in fact may be established by evidence of a common name or common identifying signs, symbols, tattoos, graffiti, attire or other distinguishing characteristics. Such term shall not include three or more persons, associated in fact, whether formal or informal, who are not engaged in criminal gang activity.
- 5.3 Gang-Related Crime: Crime where the suspect(s) and or victim(s) are known to be members or associates of a criminal street gang defined by O.C.G.A 16-15-3(3) are identified as a gang member or associate by a third party, or suspected of being a gang member or associate based on evidence discovered during an investigation.
- These are criminal acts that include:
1. Gang violence or gang retaliation related to turf protection, signing, recruitment or any criminal gang activity.
 2. Any incident wherein participants, suspects, or victims are identified as gang members or associates.
 3. When reliable informant, identifies an incident as gang activity.
 4. When an informant of previously untested reliability identifies an incident as gang activity and it is corroborated by other attendant circumstances or independent verification.
- 5.4 Gang-Related Crime Data: Data on gang related incidents involving the criminal acts of homicide, involuntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, simple assault, simple battery, robbery, armed robbery, aggravated battery, burglary, drug trafficking, disorderly conduct, aggravated sodomy, aggravated sexual battery, statutory rape, rape, stalking, theft, arson, vandalism, criminal trespass, threats, racketeering, damage or vandalism of property, violating the security protocols of any state or county correctional facility and aid or encourage a minor to escape from custody.



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5.5 Gang Member:

Gang member identification is based on the following criteria:

1. Gang membership is determined when "an individual admits membership to a law enforcement officer and such admission is recorded and dated."
2. When a reliable informant identifies an individual as a gang member.
3. When an informant of previously untested reliability identifies an individual as a gang member and it is corroborated by independent verification.
4. When an individual ~~resides in or~~ frequents a particular gang's area and affects their style of dress, use of hand signs, symbols, tattoos and associates with known gang members.
5. When an individual has been arrested several times in the company of identified gang members for offenses which are consistent with usual gang activity.
6. When there are strong indications that an individual has a close relationship with a gang but does not fit the above criteria, he or she should be identified as a "gang member."

5.6 Gang Symbols and Indicators:

1. Graffiti: may represent a gang name, the nickname of a gang member, denote turf boundaries, resemble graffiti of gangs in chronic problem neighborhoods or cities ("Hybrid") or indicate disrespect for rival gang symbols.
2. Colors: each gang is usually but not always identified by distinctive colors or color combinations of clothing, hats, shoe laces, bandanas and jewelries. Clothing, such as sweaters, gloves, hats and pants; may be worn in a particular manner to indicate gang affiliation.
3. Tattoos: usually illustrating gang symbols, gang nickname of the individual; usually found on different parts of the body.
4. Signing: hand and arm signals or special body expressions may be used to identify membership in a specific gang or confederation; or may signify a challenge to a rival gang.

6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP. 5070 "Targeted Enforcement Unit," effective June 1, 2018

7. REFERENCES

APD.SOP.1050 "Records Management and Retention"
APD.SOP.2020 "Disciplinary Process"

Federal Code of Regulations Part 23, Section 28

Georgia Code 16-15-3



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- 8. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES
 - 8.1 References to Criminal Intelligence Unit (CSU) replaced with Gangs and Special Investigations (GSI) throughout policy.
 - 8.2 Sections 3.5, 4.1.1, 4.1.5(4) amended to include new responsibilities