



Colorado Springs Police Department

General Order

1040 Handling Gang Contacts

Section 1000 – Patrol Functions

Effective Date: 1/22/2025

Supersedes Date: 8/21/2020

.01 Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to define, describe, and set guidelines for the handling of gang contacts.

.02 Cross Reference

[GO 102 Citizen Contacts](#)

[GO 1002 Field Interviews](#)

[GO 1036 Identifications](#)

[GO 1100 Investigative Procedures](#)

[GO 1102 Interviews and Interrogations](#)

[DL-1036-01 Show up Identifications](#)

[DL-1040-01 Gang Intervention Network](#)

[DL-1100-01 Initial Investigation Procedures](#)

[INTEL-31 Intelligence Files & Information](#)

.03 Discussion

In the department's continuing effort to properly identify, track and interdict gang-related activity and crimes, criteria must be established that will guide officers in their contacts with gang members.

.04 Policy

All sworn personnel of the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) are responsible for locating, identifying, investigating, and providing appropriate tracking documentation of gangs, gang activity and crime, gang members and their associates.

.05 Definitions

Criminal Activity: For purposes of this policy, is defined as the commission of any offense that is a violation of Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 18, or of any federal or municipal violation that also would be an offense under Title 18 of the CRS.

Gang: (1) any enterprise, organization, association or group comprised of three or more people; and (2) whose members collectively identify themselves by adopting a group identity which they use to create an atmosphere of fear or intimidation by employing one or more of the following: a common name, slogan, identifying sign, symbol, tattoo or other physical marking, style or color of clothing, hand sign or graffiti; and (3) the association's purpose is, in part, to engage in criminal or delinquent activity and the association uses violence or intimidation to further its criminal objectives; and (4) its members engage in criminal or delinquent activity; and (5) with the intent to enhance or preserve the associations power, reputation, or economic resources; and (6) the association may also possess some of the following characteristics:

- a) The members may employ rules for joining and operating within the association
- b) The members may meet on a recurring basis
- c) The association may provide physical protection of its members from other criminals and gangs
- d) The association may seek to exercise control over a particular location or region, or it may simply defend its perceived interests or
- e) The association may have an identifiable structure

Gang Member: Gang membership may involve different levels of participation. The type of commitment and participation needs to be delineated to establish the level of membership of each identified participant. A person is considered a gang member when that person has self-proclaimed gang membership and/or has been identified as being involved in criminal activity, gang activity, enterprise, or juvenile delinquency, and that person meets the following criteria.

1. The individual proclaims or admits their association, affiliation, or allegiance with an identified gang (self-proclamation).
 - a. For purposes of this policy, displaying or wearing "cuts" of one-percenter Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs (e.g., Sons of Silence, Hells Angels, etc.) will be sufficient for self-proclamation.

OR

2. An outside law enforcement agency identifies an individual as a gang member and that agency is recognized by CSPD as having met similar criteria as outlined in this policy for the confirmation of gang members.

OR

3. The individual has been identified as being involved in criminal or gang-related activity or enterprise and meets at least two of the following criteria:
 - a. The individual has been identified as a gang member by a reliable informant or source (e.g., a parent/guardian, confidential informant, another gang member, etc.).
 - b. The individual has been contacted or observed associating with other identified gang members (in addition to traditional contact with gang members, this may include information observed on social media platforms or via other electronic methods).
 - c. The individual has documented gang related tattoos and/or a uses a gang moniker
 - d. The individual has been identified as a gang member using physical evidence to include but not limited to: written or electronic correspondence including photographs, rosters, or other documentation.
 - e. The individual admits to detailed knowledge of a gang or gang activities.
 - f. The individual authors gang graffiti.
 - g. The individual has been contacted or observed (includes social media or other digital communication) exhibiting behaviors consistent with gang activity; e.g., wearing/possessing gang-specific attire, using gang-specific terminology, or displaying gang signs.
 - h. The individual authors or participates in social media content or other digital communication where one or more of the following are present:
 - i. Displays a gang's hand sign or other methods of communication specific to the gang in a photograph or other online post, etc.
 - ii. Wearing of gang attire and displays gang hand sign or other method of communication specific to the gang.
 - iii. Posts or reposts includes other gang member's names/roster.
 - iv. Posts or reposts includes pictures of fellow gang members dressed in gang attire and/or displaying gang hand signs or communications together.
 - v. Videos on social media talking about the gang or gang crime
 - vi. Emojis for the gang [REDACTED]
 - vii. Using terminology identified as being specific to the gang.
 - viii. Individual displays gang tattoos or other markings in photographs or other electronic documentation.

If a person is confirmed as a member or associate of more than one gang, that person shall be classified as affiliated with both gangs as outlined in this policy.

If a self-proclamation is the only criteria being used for classification, the 'date of classification' will be the date the self-proclamation was made.

If an outside agency identification is the only criteria being used for classification, the ‘date of classification’ will be the person’s last date of gang activity, as provided by the outside agency.

If multiple criteria in this list are met during a classification, the ‘date of classification’ will be the most recent date of qualifying activity (e.g., self-proclamation date; FIR date, arrest date, etc.).

Gang Associate: An individual shall be considered a “Gang Associate” when that person meets any of the above criteria not sufficient to classify them as a gang member (e.g., only one subsection under Section 3, etc.), and that person’s affiliation or allegiance is to an identified and classified gang.

Gang Related Activity: An incident will be considered a “Gang Related Activity” when any one of the following criteria are met:

- When an officer reasonably suspects the incident or activity is gang-related and the suspicion is based on the officer’s experience and/or training; or if the suspects, victims, or participants are identified as, or believed to be, gang members. Formal documentation, as outlined in Section .06, Reporting Requirements, must support this suspicion.
- When any participant, suspect or victim, in an incident or activity is identified as a gang member or gang associate and the criminal/delinquent act, or enterprise develops out of a gang motivation, interest, and/or special set of circumstances or otherwise furthers the beliefs or function of the gang. (e.g., activity to promote, recruit, finance, intimidate, initiate, harass, retaliate, terrorize or otherwise further the beliefs and interests of the gang).
- When an outside law enforcement agency has identified an incident as gang-related activity and that agency and CSPD have similar criteria for classification of gang-related activities.
- When a reliable informant has identified an incident as being gang-related and the information can be corroborated through independent sources.
- When an officer reasonably suspects an incident may motivate a delinquent group to form a common alliance for self-protection, retaliation or any other motivation which propels them into the level of an emerging gang. Formal documentation, as outlined in Section .06 Reporting Requirements, must support this suspicion.

.06 Reporting Procedures

Department members will use either a case report or Gang Field Interview Report (FIR) to document gang-related information. No other methods should be used to report this information, as these systems comply with intelligence system requirements and allow for consistent, professional analysis of gang activity within the city.

In the event a case report is initiated to document an incident, and either the victim(s) or suspect(s) are believed to be gang members, associates, or involved in gang activity, the following information will be reflected in the associated Offense Report or Supplemental Report:

- Gang-related reports or supplements will be identified as such by selecting the ‘Gang-Related’ attribute in the Mobile Field Reporting system at the time the report or supplement is created. The attribute will be selected in both the offense and subject tabs at the time of the report submission.
- Within the narrative portion of the report, determine and record the nature of the gang association of the victim(s) and/or suspect(s).
- Within the narrative portion of the report list or explain any/all gang involvement and/or motivation for the incident/crime.

If a case report is not initiated but a person is believed to be involved in gang activity or be a gang member or associate, officers will complete a detailed FIR in the Mobile Field Reporting system. Officers will note the FIR is gang-related by selecting the “Gang” checkbox on the FIR form in MFR. A Gang FIR will be completed, if a case report is not initiated, in any of the following instances:

- When contact is made with an individual(s) who self-proclaims membership in a gang.
- When contact is made with individuals who are associating with identified gang members.
- When contact is made with individuals who have adopted the manner, style and dress of a street gang or display gang-related tattoos, signs, or symbols.
- When an officer has a reasonable belief an activity, persons, or other circumstances they contact or investigate are gang-related.

When completing a Gang FIR, officers should include detailed information on the person and circumstances involved. Documenting specific tattoos, gang signs, self-proclamations, and other detailed information aids analytical staff in the confirmation process. If there is no self-proclamation, the completing officer should explain in detail how the gang association was identified or obtained.

Before using or sharing gang alert information from a subject’s global LERMS jacket, the officer must review that information to ensure it has not expired. An expiration date is attached to the alert. If the information has expired, the officer cannot refer to the information as current or deem a person to be a confirmed gang member.

Officers will note all gang-related calls for service with the appropriate clearance code (#gang related#) on their MDC.

Case Report Reviews

The Crime Analysis Section will conduct a monthly review of gang-related field interview reports, case reports, and other sources of information (social media, outside agency records, etc.) to determine the gang status of identified persons. The information will be evaluated using the

aforementioned criteria for processing gang confirmation and entry into the LERMS Gang Module.

The reviewing analyst will document their actions and recommendation for classification on a “Gang Verification & Classification Request” form, which will include relevant materials and information used to make the request. The request packet will be provided to the Intelligence Unit Sergeant responsible for approving or denying the request.

- If the Intelligence Unit supervisor determines the individual has met the established criteria, they will return the packet to the submitting analyst. The analyst will enter the new record, or update any existing record, for that person in the LERMS Gang Module. The packet used to complete the confirmation will be digitally uploaded into the Gang Module record for that person.
- If the Intelligence Unit supervisor determines that the individual has not met the established criteria, the packet will be returned to the submitting analyst and the individual will not be placed in the database. The associated paperwork and information will be destroyed immediately.

If less than three members of a nationally or state-recognized gang are identified in Colorado Springs, those individuals may be tracked as gang members or associates, so long as their affiliated gang is listed by the National Gang Intelligence Center (NGIC), National Gang Center (NGC), or the Colorado Gang Database (COG).

Colorado Gang Database

The Colorado Gang Database (CoG) is a statewide database consisting of information regarding gangs and their members as entered by law enforcement agencies across the state. The CoG database complies with 28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 23. It is subject to rules and regulations set forth by the United States Department of Justice and has been functional since March 2005. The CoG is managed by an advisory board facilitated by the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

For the department, the gang module is maintained by the Crime Analysis Section. It includes relevant source information needed to explain confirmation in the event of a system audit.

The Crime Analysis Section will enter confirmed gang members of a CoG-approved gang into the database. The membership information is retained in CoG’s database for five years and will be purged if not updated during the timeframe. Homegrown and/or hybrid gangs must go through a gang identification process and be classified by the CoG advisory board before those gangs can be entered into the CoG database. Requests for gang identification can be directed to: [REDACTED].

Criteria for Access to the CoG database:

- 1) Only employees of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies with primary enforcement and/or prosecutorial responsibility are given authorization to access the CoG system.
- 2) Access to the CoG system, and the information contained therein, is restricted to those with a need-to-know and a right-to-know such information in the performance of a law enforcement activity.
- 3) Only persons authorized by the chief executive officer of the applicable agency (Chief of Police, Sheriff, Marshal, Director of Public Safety, District Attorney, et al.) are granted access to the CoG system.
- 4) Only persons who have completed the CoG user-training course are granted direct terminal access.
- 5) Only persons who have signed a personal user agreement are granted direct terminal access.

Mechanism for Access:

- 1) The CEO of the applicable agency will sign the official access request form (provided by CBI). The signed form will be sent to the following email address for processing: [REDACTED]
- 2) The user agency will ensure the person named has successfully completed the necessary steps for CoG system operation.

Purging of Records

The timelines associated with purging temporary and permanent criminal intelligence records is found in INTEL-31 Intelligence Files and Information.

The Crime Analysis Section is responsible for purging intelligence and gang records in accordance with retention policies in [INTEL-31 Intelligence Files & Information](#).

- The Crime Analysis Section will review gang classifications of individuals and make recommendations to the Intelligence Unit supervisor 90 days prior to expiration. This review will determine if the gang member/associate meets the criteria for continued classification using the criteria outlined for initial entry into the Gang Module.
- The Intelligence Unit Supervisor is responsible for reviewing and returning the classification request to the submitting analyst within 45 days of receipt.
- The analyst will input the returned packet/information within 10 days of receiving it from the Intelligence Unit supervisor.
- If a person meets the criteria for continued classification, the reviewing analyst will submit

an updated classification packet to the Intelligence Unit supervisor for approval. The process will then mirror the process for initial entry into the Gang Module.

- If the person does not meet the criteria for continued classification, the reviewing analyst will notify the Intelligence Unit supervisor.
- If the supervisor concurs, the person will be immediately removed from the Gang Module and all related paperwork and documentation must be destroyed.
- The reviewing analyst is responsible for updating the Gang Module information once approved by the Intelligence Unit supervisor. The analyst will ensure the date of review is updated in LERMS, to reflect an accurate five-year window for review and purge.

Crime Analysis Section Supervisor Responsibilities

A Crime Analysis Section Supervisor is responsible for ensuring analysts conducting gang information reviews are properly trained per this directive, the Gang Module, and intelligence systems requirements.

Internal Audits

The Crime Analysis Section Manager is responsible for conducting an annual audit of the Gang Module for compliance with this directive. The audit and findings will be documented in the review described in INTEL-31 Intelligence File and Information. A copy of the audit will be forwarded to the ISOB Deputy Chief through the chain of command.

Attachments

[Gang Verification & Classification Request](#)