



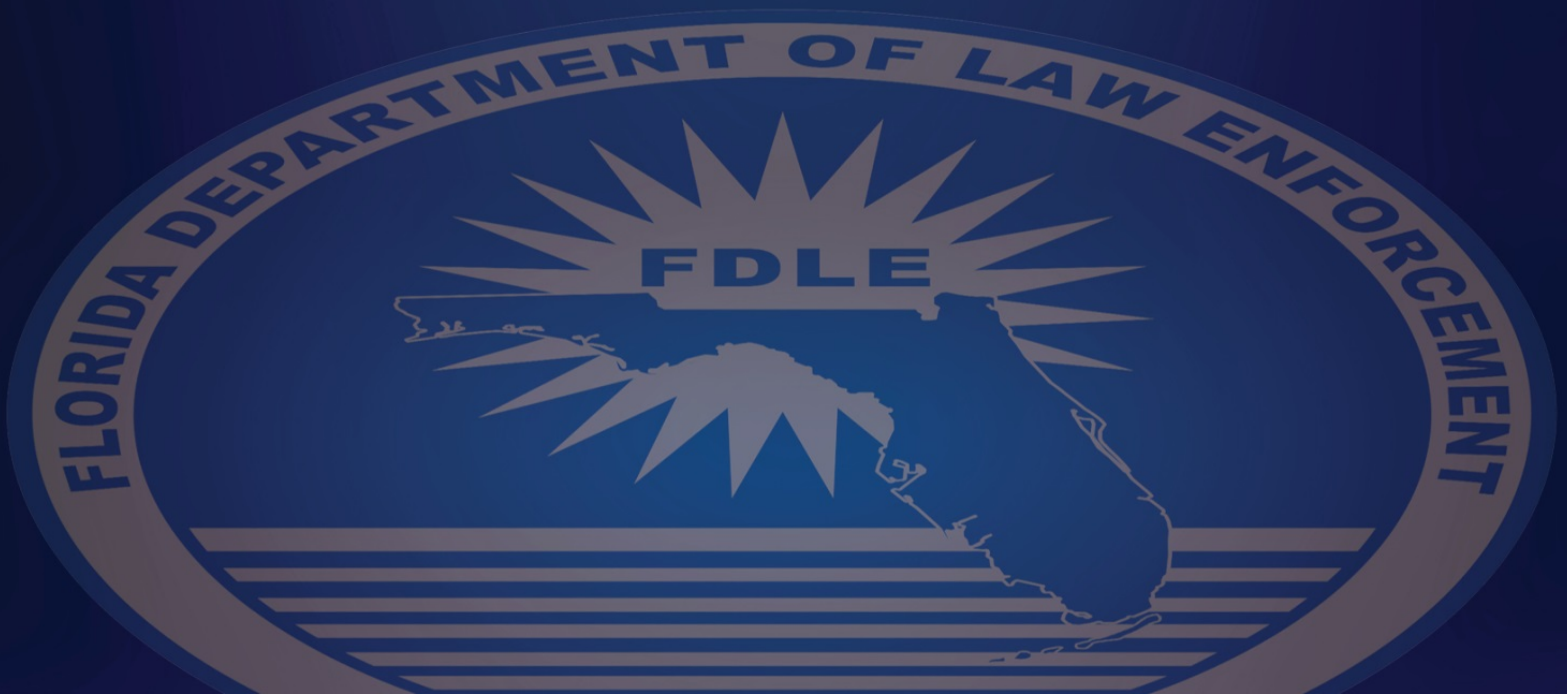
# **Florida's Strategy for Targeted Violence Prevention**

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## **Behavioral Threat Assessment & Management**

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### **Intervention & Prevention**



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## Executive Summary

Over the past two decades, the public has become increasingly concerned about a perceived increase in both the frequency and lethality of mass casualty attacks in the United States (US), most of which were perpetrated by lone actors. While this perceived trend is concerning, when compared against a continuing decline in the US violent crime rate, it remains debatable, given the various definitions used to measure such attacks. Nevertheless, the public's concern is well-founded. Within the past few years alone, the state of Florida has endured several mass casualty attacks, including Pulse (Orlando), Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (Fort Lauderdale), Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (Parkland), Jacksonville Landing (Jacksonville), Hot Yoga Tallahassee (Tallahassee), and SunTrust Bank (Sebring). These attacks occurred throughout Florida and across various social domains. Some involved ideological motives, while others did not. Sadly, a few are counted among the worst mass casualty attacks in US history.

All of these attacks are extreme examples of **targeted violence**; situations wherein an identifiable person of concern poses, and carries out, a threat of violence toward a specific, identifiable target. Targeted violence, especially mass targeted violence, often devastates and traumatizes local communities disproportionate to its statistical likelihood because of cascading consequences. Despite its statistical rarity, the targets, magnitude, and mass media exposure of recent attacks have increased public fear and anxiety nationwide, particularly in Florida. Cumulatively, these recent attacks have shocked the public conscience into demanding both legislative and executive action.

Criminal investigations conducted after each of these attacks revealed behavioral information relating to the perpetrators, which in hindsight could have provided some warning of their impending violence and thereby facilitated prevention<sup>1</sup>. Targeted violence prevention is possible, but only when such behavioral information is recognized, reported, analyzed, and acted upon in a structured, systematic and timely manner. In each attack noted, one or more of these critical links in the chain of opportunity for prevention were missed, and the resulting cost in innocent human lives was tragic. Even worse, the same disheartening scenario has played out in numerous mass targeted violence attacks across the US in recent years. Fortunately, a consensus in published academic research and law enforcement operational experience strongly suggests that targeted violence is indeed preventable, and that a viable prevention strategy exists; behavioral threat assessment and management (BTAM).

Targeted violence, especially mass targeted violence, has become a clear and present threat to Florida's domestic security and public safety. To successfully counter this persistent threat in all its forms and domains, Florida must commit to a bold vision and resolute strategy that aims to change the cultural fabric of law enforcement throughout the state from a primarily reactive, response-oriented mindset to one that is more proactive and prevention-oriented. The time for change is now, and Florida's law enforcement community must lead the way.

This strategy provides a baseline understanding of targeted violence and BTAM, which is the foundation for operationalizing BTAM within Florida's law enforcement community. It also proposes to establish a regionalized BTAM program throughout Florida, based on a common operating lexicon and process, including the timely sharing of critical information with and between law enforcement agencies. While intended for a law enforcement audience, this strategy may be useful to other professional disciplines within state and local government for better understanding the nature of targeted violence, the value of BTAM in its prevention, and the necessity of shared responsibility for targeted violence prevention within local communities.

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<sup>1</sup> James Silver, Andre Simons, and Sarah Craun, *A Study of the Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters in the United States Between 2000 and 2013*. (Washington, DC, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018).

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) recently implemented BTAM within Florida's public-school system, as required by current Florida law. Similarly, some Florida law enforcement agencies currently operate, or may intend to implement, BTAM programs independent of the envisioned regional BTAM program. This strategy only intends to augment, not impede or supplant, any such independent programs. A collaborative, integrated systems approach is necessary to ensure that no identified person of concern who poses a threat of targeted violence is left unmanaged while transiting various social domains. Additionally, any Florida law enforcement agency currently operating, or intending to implement, an independent BTAM program will have a right of first refusal regarding any request for BTAM assistance arising from within its jurisdiction.

## Introduction

### Targeted Violence

**Targeted violence** is intentional, instrumental, and proactive violence, as opposed to impulsive, emotional, and reactive violence. It is rarely, if ever, sudden or spontaneous. In fact, it is nearly always premeditated and planned, even if done over a relatively short period of time. Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and often discernible, process of thinking and behavior. It arises from the dynamic interactions between an identifiable person of concern, their intended target, their current situation or life circumstances, and the operational setting for their intended violence<sup>2</sup>. Targeted violence is a highly individualized crime, driven by highly-individualized, variable, and often multiple motivations, which sometimes remain undiscovered or undetermined.

Targeted violence, particularly mass targeted violence, is a low probability, high impact event that cannot be reliably and validly predicted, nor can the likelihood of its occurrence or timing be precisely estimated. While some research indicates that general patterns of human behavior may be forecasted through predictive analysis, the occurrence and timing of specific human behavior like targeted violence certainly cannot<sup>3</sup>. At best, given current research and experience, the perceived threat of targeted violence posed in a given situation may only be assessed as a level of professional concern for its possible occurrence and imminence. However, an assessed level of professional concern for targeted violence (i.e., perceived threat) does not denote any specific legal threshold. Operational threat assessment for targeted violence, as opposed to clinical risk assessment for general violence, is based on the structured, systematic investigation and fact-based analysis of behavioral information<sup>4</sup>.

The operational nature of targeted violence makes it amenable to mitigation and prevention through proactive investigation, behavioral analysis, and strategic intervention. Persons of concern for targeted violence do not snap; they decide. They decide that interpersonal violence is a necessary, justified, or acceptable solution to some grievance or overwhelming combination of life stressors. When a person of concern is unable to adequately cope, and maintain a sense of cognitive, emotional, and social stability, targeted violence may result. It is a lethal concoction of individual, social, and environmental factors that leads a person of concern down a **pathway to targeted violence**; a sequenced pattern of observable attack-related behaviors that enable targeted violence. This pathway to targeted violence is depicted in the diagram below and is prominently featured in the published research on BTAM<sup>5</sup>.

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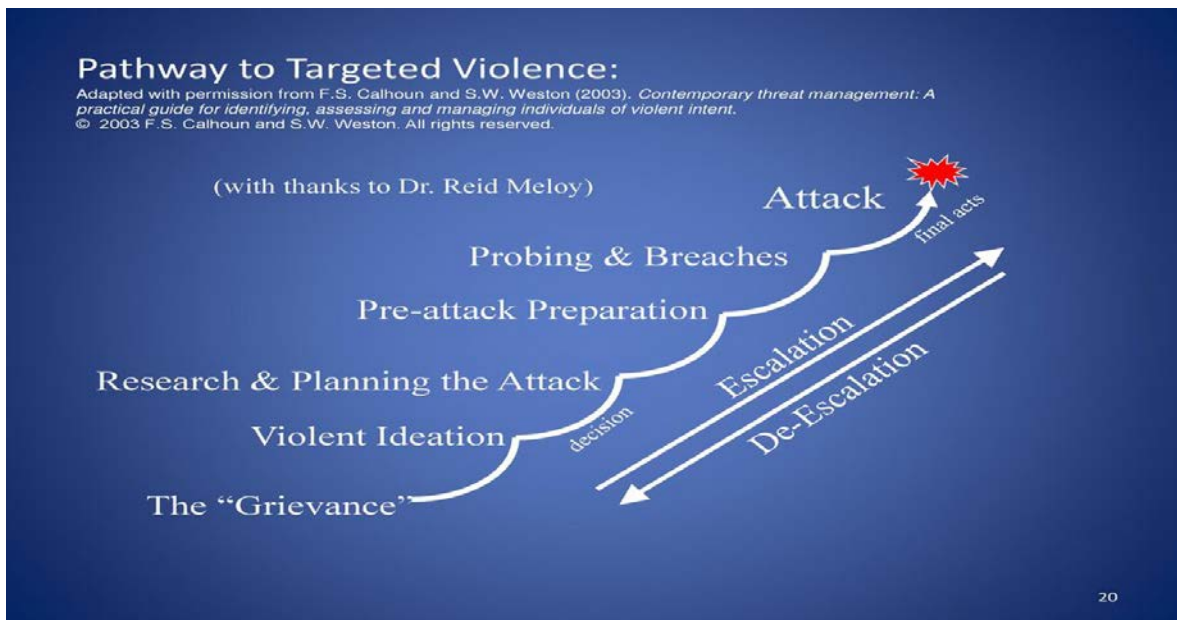
<sup>2</sup> Robert A. Fein and Bryan Vossekuil, *Protective Intelligence & Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State and Local Law Enforcement*. (Washington, DC, United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 2000); Randy Borum, Robert Fein, Bryan Vossekuil, and John Berglund, "Threat Assessment: Defining an Approach for Evaluating Risk of Targeted Violence." *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* 17, no. 3 (1999): 323-337; Bryan Vossekuil, Robert A. Fein, and John M. Berglund, "Threat Assessment: Assessing the Risk of Targeted Violence." *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 2, no. 3-4 (2015): 243-254.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense, *Task Force Report: Predicting Violent Behavior*. (Washington, DC: Defense Science Board, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Borum, et al, "Threat Assessment," 323-337.

<sup>5</sup> Borum, et al, "Threat Assessment," 323-337; Silver, James, John Horgan, and Paul Gill. "Foreshadowing targeted violence: Assessing leakage of intent by public mass murderers." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 38 (2018): 94-100; Calhoun, Frederick S., and Stephen W. Weston. *Contemporary threat management: A practical guide for identifying, assessing, and managing individuals of violent intent*. San Diego: Specialized Training Services, 2003.





**Mental Health and Firearms in Targeted Violence**

Two frequently cited issues of public concern and debate relating to targeted violence are the prevalence of mental illness and use of firearms as a method of attack. Despite common misperceptions, a significant body of research indicates that mental illness is not wholly, or even primarily, responsible for targeted violence<sup>6</sup>. While this same research indicates that active symptoms of mental illness are often observed in targeted violence perpetrators, and that some serious mental illness diagnoses may be considered risk-enhancing factors, it must be clearly understood that mental illness is neither necessary, nor sufficient, for targeted violence to occur.

A similarly large body of research addresses the use of firearms in targeted violence, particularly mass targeted violence. While firearms, particularly handguns, are the most common method of attack employed in US-based incidents of mass targeted violence, and may contribute to increased lethality, firearms are merely the instruments of violence<sup>7</sup>. This is also true of many other readily available methods of attack, including the use of vehicle ramming and improvised explosive devices. Again, as with mental illness, firearms do not cause or primarily motivate targeted violence. While easy access to firearms is considered a risk-enhancing factor, the method of attack chosen is typically based on availability, reliability and lethality in achieving the desired result – interpersonal violence.

**Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management**

A modern, operational methodology that offers a viable solution to the growing problem of targeted violence is **behavioral threat assessment and management** (BTAM). Conceptually defined, BTAM is both a professional body of knowledge and specialized investigative discipline, based on operational tactics, techniques, and procedures applied proactively to mitigate and prevent targeted violence, including mass targeted violence. Operationally defined, BTAM is a specific application of intelligence-led policing, based on a structured, iterative, and interactive process that may be

<sup>6</sup> Borum, et al., "Threat Assessment," 323-337; Mario J Scalora, Jerome V. Baumgartner, and Gary L. Plank. "The relationship of mental illness to targeted contact behavior toward state government agencies and officials." *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* 21, no. 2 (2003): 239-249; Heath J. Hodges, and Mario J. Scalora. "Challenging the political assumption that "Guns don't kill people, crazy people kill people!"" *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 85, no. 3 (2015): 211-216; Silver, Horgan, and Gill, "Foreshadowing targeted violence," 94-100  
<sup>7</sup> Thomas Gabor, *Confronting Gun Violence in America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

implemented as a formal program, if properly resourced. BTAM relies heavily on an integrated systems approach driven by collaborative, multi-disciplinary, and multi-jurisdictional partnerships focused on intervention and prevention<sup>8</sup>.

Until recently, BTAM remained a niche area of law enforcement practice, employed primarily in educational and protective settings. However, BTAM has since gained recognition as a viable and successful strategy for mitigating and preventing targeted violence, regardless of its form, motivation, location, or method of attack. BTAM is an emerging best practice employed worldwide in both the public and private sectors to protect personnel and critical assets against internal and external threats of targeted violence.

As practiced within law enforcement, BTAM does not focus solely on arrest and prosecution as the only, or even best, intervention strategy available in situations where a person of concern poses a threat of targeted violence. Instead, arrest and prosecution are viewed as merely one of several options available along a continuum of passive to active intervention strategies designed to effectively mitigate the threat of targeted violence. However, in targeted violence cases where a threat persists without abatement at a high level of professional concern, arrest and prosecution may indeed be the only strategy available to ultimately prevent an attack. Despite BTAM becoming more broadly accepted and applied in law enforcement as a violence prevention strategy, it should be clearly understood that no strategy can prevent all targeted violence attacks.

The evolution of BTAM began in the early 1990s, after researchers with the United States Secret Service (USSS), led by Robert Fein and Bryan Vossekuil, conducted an in-depth operational study examining the thinking and behavior of all persons who attacked, or approached to attack, notable public figures and officials in the US between 1949 and 1996<sup>9</sup>. Some of the key findings in this research dispelled several commonly held misconceptions about public figure and official assassins (i.e., one type of targeted violence perpetrator), including but not limited to:

- 1) Attackers and near-lethal approachers do not fit any one descriptive or demographic profile, or even several descriptive or demographic profiles;
- 2) Mental illness rarely plays a key role in assassination; and
- 3) Persons who pose an actual threat often do not communicate threats, especially direct threats.

This pioneering research informed a structured, systematic methodology for identifying, assessing and managing persons of concern for targeted violence (i.e., BTAM). The foundational principles of BTAM include:

- 1) Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and often discernible, process of thinking and behavior;
- 2) Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the potential attacker, past stressful events, a current situation, and the target; and
- 3) The key to investigating and preventing targeted violence is identifying a person of concern's "attack-related" behaviors<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Molly Amman, Matther Bowlin, Lesley Buckles, Kevin C. Burton, Kimberly F. Brunell, Karie A. Gibson, et al., *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*. (Washington, DC, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Robert A. Fein and Bryan Vossekuil, "Assassination in the United States: An Operational Study of Recent Assassins, Attackers, and Near-Lethal Approachers." *Journal of Forensic Science* 44, no. 2 (1999): 321-333; Robert A. Fein, Bryan Vossekuil, and Gwen Holden, *Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence*. (Washington, DC, United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Fein and Vossekuil, "Assassination," 321-333.



BTAM has matured into a specialized field of professional practice, based on peer-reviewed interdisciplinary scientific research and operational experience<sup>11</sup>. Continued academic research and operational refinement of the BTAM methodology has led to its implementation in various operational models and settings to mitigate and prevent targeted violence across all social domains, including domestic violence and stalking, workplace violence, school violence, extremist violence, and public figure and official assassination, among others<sup>12</sup>. BTAM has been implemented most often within the educational setting to mitigate and prevent targeted violence in public schools at all levels, including Florida, following passage of the *Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act*.

## **A Bold Vision for a Brighter Future in Florida**

In February 2019, following a surge in mass targeted violence attacks across the US and Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis recognized an urgent need to commit additional state resources to address the persistent threat of targeted violence, especially mass targeted violence, to Florida's domestic security and public safety. Specifically, Governor DeSantis envisioned the need for a unified, statewide strategy that enables Florida's law enforcement community to effectively counter all forms of targeted violence, across all social domains, by leveraging proactive initiatives, such as community-oriented and intelligence-led policing, as well as established domestic security and public safety networks. To lead this effort, Governor DeSantis tasked the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) with developing and implementing a comprehensive, community-based law enforcement strategy to prevent targeted violence that is grounded in modern, operational methodologies and best practices, including BTAM.

## **Methodology**

To formulate the envisioned strategy, FDLE convened a statewide law enforcement Executive Steering Committee (ESC) and consulted internationally recognized subject matter experts (SME) in BTAM. FDLE recognized that consistent collaboration through shared responsibility with its law enforcement, and other state and local government, partners is the only way to successfully implement such a bold vision for Florida. An effective strategy to mitigate and prevent targeted violence requires an integrated, whole-of-government approach.

FDLE reviewed a significant volume of published scientific research regarding targeted violence and BTAM to properly inform the way forward. It also presented and discussed many of the key findings and lessons learned from this research via its consulting SMEs, including an introduction to BTAM provided to all Florida state agency heads, to develop a shared, baseline understanding among the ESC. Ultimately, this shared knowledge base enabled the ESC to make informed and responsible decisions in short order through several meetings and conferences, which culminated in this strategy. This strategy embodies the collective and considered judgement of the ESC and addresses several primary issues of concern for implementing BTAM throughout Florida, including: organizational structure; operational model; legal and ethical considerations; statewide information and intelligence sharing; and professional education, training and consultation.

While several other US states have implemented, or are developing, an operational BTAM capability, Florida is currently the only state to pursue a unified, statewide strategy for comprehensive,

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<sup>11</sup> Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP), *Risk Assessment Guideline Elements for Violence (RAGE-V): Considerations for Assessing the Risk of Future Violent Behavior*. (Sacramento, ATAP, 2006); J. Reid Meloy, "Threat assessment: Scholars, operators, our past, our future." *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 2, no. 3-4 (2015): 231; Andre Simons and J. Reid Meloy, "Foundations of Threat Assessment and Management," in *Handbook of Behavioral Criminology*, ed. Vincent Van Hasselt and Michael Bourke (NY: Springer, 2017), 627-644.

<sup>12</sup> Amman, et al., *Making Prevention a Reality*, 2017; Calhoun and Weston, *Contemporary*, 2003.

community-based BTAM addressing all forms of targeted violence across all social domains. Florida's strategy for targeted violence prevention aims to close any remaining gaps in the state's domestic security and public safety infrastructure following the prompt and decisive legislative action taken in response to the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. This strategy is a living document that will be updated annually to account for emerging developments in the national and state threat environments, published scientific research, changes in state or federal legislation, available information technology, and operational tactics, techniques, and procedures.

### **Mission**

The mission embodied within this strategy is to strengthen domestic security and promote public safety throughout Florida by developing and implementing a permanent, operational BTAM capability to mitigate and prevent all forms of targeted violence, including mass targeted violence, across all social domains via Florida's Regional Domestic Security Task Forces (RDSTF). The RDSTFs will execute this mission by deploying and supporting regional, multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional BTAM teams that provide collaborative, investigative assistance to all partnering state and local law enforcement agencies in a shared effort to identify, assess, and manage threats of targeted violence within Florida's local communities. The primary goals of this strategy are to:

- 1) Build and maintain a permanent, operational capability for comprehensive, community-based BTAM via Florida's RDSTFs;
- 2) Provide Florida's law enforcement community with a roadmap for independently establishing a BTAM capability that may integrate and collaborate with the RDSTF's regional BTAM teams; and
- 3) Inspire a proactive culture of shared responsibility for targeted violence prevention throughout Florida, particularly within state and local government.

### **Organizational Structure**

#### **Florida's Domestic Security Oversight Council (Governance)**

In September 2019, the ESC agreed the most efficient and effective vehicle for implementing a permanent, operational BTAM capability throughout Florida is the state's robust domestic security framework. Florida's domestic security framework was initially created by executive order and subsequently formalized via legislative action following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Florida's Domestic Security Oversight Council (DSOC), along with its corresponding RDSTFs, provide a familiar and proven governance structure, based on multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional collaboration. Such a framework and operating environment is well-suited to support a statewide, operational BTAM program, and thereby further the prevention goal in Florida's Domestic Security Strategy. The ESC recommends that DSOC embrace this new prevention capability by creating a BTAM Focus Group, which will be staffed by selected individuals with applicable and varied subject matter expertise, to advise and assist DSOC in all matters relating to statewide BTAM program governance, administration, and operations.

#### **FDLE Headquarters Component (Administration)**

FDLE's Headquarters will assume primary responsibility for administering and coordinating all BTAM program activities statewide. BTAM will be incorporated and administered as a special program within the scope of FDLE's Statewide Investigative Strategy. This headquarters component will be led by a designated statewide BTAM program manager who will be responsible for ensuring the following critical functions are efficiently and effectively executed:

- 1) Program strategy, planning, funding, and performance measurement;
- 2) Program coordination of statewide BTAM operations;

- 3) Program representation and administrative support to the BTAM Focus Group;
- 4) Program psychological services deployment;
- 5) Program education and training development;
- 6) Program partner and community engagement; and
- 7) Program policy and standard operating procedure.

**FDLE Regional Component (Operations)**

FDLE's Regional Operations Centers (ROC) will assume primary responsibility for conducting all BTAM program operations within their geographic areas of responsibility via the deployment of a regional BTAM team. Each ROC will host, staff, and equip a regional BTAM team comprised of both core and ad hoc members who will be incorporated into their respective RDSTFs. Core team members will include a minimum number of FDLE special agents and crime intelligence analysts augmented by a variable number of FDLE-sponsored task force agents and analysts selected from partnering local law enforcement agencies within each ROC's area of responsibility. Task force agents and analysts will be assigned to a regional BTAM team on a rotational basis for a minimum term of service to ensure consistency, proficiency, and continuity in regional BTAM operations. Additional core team members will include each ROC's assigned Regional Legal Advisor (RLA) and a shared operational or clinical-forensic psychologist who will both provide professional consultation within their SME. This core BTAM team membership structure is intended to encourage and facilitate the development of BTAM knowledge, skills, and abilities within partnering local law enforcement agencies throughout Florida.

Ad hoc team members may include designated representatives from any state or local government agency operating within each ROC's area of responsibility who may contribute relevant expertise or information to BTAM operations. For example, some relevant ad hoc team members may include, but are not limited to, representatives from Florida's Office of the Attorney General, its various Offices of the State Attorney, or its Departments of Education, Health, Children and Families, Corrections, and Juvenile Justice. Ad hoc team members should be considered subject matter experts within their respective disciplines to meaningfully contribute in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, and multi-jurisdictional operating environment. Ad hoc team members may collaborate via teleconference or video-teleconference from their respective office locations, or they may do so in-person at the regional BTAM team's designated office location. Additionally, ad hoc team members must successfully pass an FDLE-sponsored background investigation to access sensitive criminal justice information, unless already so qualified, and should be empowered, when time is of the essence, to decide and act on behalf of their respective agencies to avoid unnecessary delay.

Maintaining a collaborative team environment, based on trusted working relationships between the various professional disciplines, is essential to ensure efficient and effective BTAM operations, especially consistent access to relevant information for investigation. FDLE will provide clear guidance and expectations via Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) to all partnering state and local government agencies regarding the duties, responsibilities and privileges of all regional BTAM team members. This will allow prospective partnering agencies to best determine and structure their resource contributions to a regional BTAM team. Finally, all regional BTAM team members will be required to attend and successfully complete both initial and continuing specialized education and training in BTAM.

**Operational Model**

A functionally integrated, regional team approach is the operational model best suited to enable a unified, statewide strategy for comprehensive, community-based BTAM, as envisioned in Florida. This model will ensure that responsibility for preventing targeted violence is shared between local

communities, local law enforcement agencies and Florida's regional BTAM teams. This model will efficiently and effectively identify, assess, and manage persons of concern for targeted violence within local communities. Florida's law enforcement agencies have varied, and often limited, operational resources or capabilities, which necessitates leveraging established domestic security and public safety networks through integration. These networks include, but are not limited to, proactive community-oriented and intelligence-led policing initiatives, such as local crisis intervention programs and regional intelligence fusion centers.

A strategy that functionally integrates existing networks requires currently siloed systems and processes to be made interoperable. By doing so, state and local law enforcement agencies' initiatives, resources, and capabilities can be layered to allow persons of concern to be identified, assessed, and managed at the lowest possible level of government with escalation to higher levels only when deemed necessary and prudent. The operational model developed to implement this strategy is explained further below and is depicted in the diagram appended to this document.

First, persons of concern for targeted violence detected within a local community should be immediately reported to the local law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction. Second, the local law enforcement agency receiving such a report should conduct an initial inquiry to positively identify the person of concern, to the extent possible, and determine whether that person may be most efficiently and effectively managed via local initiatives, resources, or capabilities, including any independently established BTAM team. Third, where a local law enforcement agency determines that BTAM assistance is required or preferred, then a positively identified person of concern may be referred to a regional BTAM team for threat assessment. Fourth, and finally, once a local law enforcement agency's threat assessment referral is accepted and completed, the regional BTAM team and partnering local law enforcement agency will collaborate on a continuing basis to efficiently and effectively manage any threat posed by the identified person of concern, until such time as the perceived threat is mitigated to being no longer cognizable and articulable.

Local law enforcement agencies will retain primary responsibility for managing all identified persons of concern originally reported within their jurisdictions, as well as any criminal charges that may arise from the BTAM process. The only exception will be when a local law enforcement agency requests, and FDLE formally accepts, primary responsibility for an identified person of concern requiring specialized investigative expertise or operations within FDLE's mission, resources and capabilities, such as persons who may be inspired, enabled or directed by a foreign or domestic terrorist organization.

This operational model ensures that all local law enforcement agencies in Florida serve as gatekeepers for referring identified persons of concern who reside or operate within their respective jurisdictions to a regional BTAM team for threat assessment. This gatekeeper function includes any requests for BTAM assistance that may be received from state or local government agencies operating outside of Florida or within the federal government, except for those involving the protection of elected or appointed public officials being targeted. In such instances, any identified persons of concern should be immediately and directly referred to the law enforcement agency primarily responsible for protecting the targeted public official.

### **Threat Identification**

***Threat Identification***, within the scope of this strategy, includes the detection, reporting, referral, and initial review of concerning or threatening behavior relating to an identifiable person of concern within a local community. Such behavior may be verbal or non-verbal in nature. Identification is an essential first phase in the BTAM process, and it should operate as a consistent, systematic, and collaborative effort. The primary objective is to positively identify any person to whom concerning or threatening behavior is attributed, while safeguarding their privacy, civil rights and civil liberties. Given the

operational model described, threat identification is subdivided into the following sequential steps: detection, reporting, referral, and initial review.

Local Community or Law Enforcement Agency Threat Detection – Research has consistently found there is no reliable and valid demographic or psychological “profile” for who will become a targeted violence perpetrator. This finding is consistent with the previously mentioned research indicating that targeted violence is not subject to any reliable and valid prediction. BTAM is clearly distinguishable from “behavioral profiling” (i.e., criminal investigative analysis). The only commonality between these two practices is applying behavioral analysis to investigated facts and circumstances. Criminal investigative analysis applies behavioral analysis retrospectively within the context of criminal investigations to identify the “type” of offender most likely to have committed a given series of violent crimes, whereas BTAM applies it prospectively within the context of intelligence investigations to understand the threat an identified person of concern may pose toward an identified or identifiable target.

BTAM relies heavily on the proper observation or detection and reporting of behaviors associated with targeted violence. Anyone within a local community, including law enforcement officers, may observe or detect and report concerning or threatening behavior attributable to a person of concern for targeted violence at any time and place. Recognizing observable behavior that may prompt reporting requires situational awareness informed by education and training. Local communities, law enforcement agencies and regional BTAM teams throughout Florida will be educated and trained in the observation or detection, recognition and reporting of concerning or threatening behaviors pertinent to targeted violence.

While law enforcement officers, through their operational experience, are accustomed to skilled observation and reporting, much of the general public is not. As such, local law enforcement agencies and regional BTAM teams must collaboratively engage local communities to increase public awareness and encourage reporting of persons who may pose a threat of targeted violence. Another goal of this public outreach, education, and training will be to encourage a culture of shared responsibility for targeted violence prevention within local communities.

Local Law Enforcement Agency Threat Reporting – Targeted violence may arise from, or occur in, any social domain within a local community. To encourage proactive and timely reporting of identifiable persons of concern, law enforcement agencies must build trust and situational awareness within their local communities. Because BTAM is best practiced using an integrated systems approach, law enforcement must also recognize and overcome systemic barriers to information sharing that may impede timely threat reporting. Additionally, local community members must be educated and trained to recognize concerning or threatening behaviors that merit reporting and the available modes for reporting.

Threshold for Reporting – A consensus of research and experience in BTAM recommends establishing a relatively low threshold for reporting identifiable persons of concern, based on their observable and recognizable behavior of a concerning or threatening nature. Neither probable cause nor reasonable suspicion is required for the reporting, documentation, and initial review of concerning or threatening behavior, whether verbal or non-verbal in nature. This is consistent with established law and operational practice in reporting suspicious activities or investigative tips and leads to law enforcement.

Once reported and documented, concerning or threatening behaviors should be reviewed to determine whether the information provides a reliable and valid basis for articulating a reasonable suspicion of possible criminal activity (i.e., concern for future targeted violence), or whether it requires some initial inquiry to substantiate or eliminate such suspicion. All

concerning or threatening behaviors reported should be considered with regard to their content and context within the totality of known facts and circumstances<sup>13</sup>.

Research and experience also indicate that proactively engaging bystanders is absolutely critical to preventing targeted violence. Bystanders are individuals who directly observe, or indirectly learn about, concerning or threatening behaviors attributable to a person of concern. Because of their proximity, relationship, or close association to persons of concern, bystanders are often positioned to observe, recognize, report, and possibly even influence a person of concern's behavior before targeted violence occurs. A recent study of *thwarted* mass murders, for example, found that plots were most often detected through information provided by the suspect's family, friends or acquaintances, but also members of the general public<sup>14</sup>.

While bystanders are often the best source of probative behavioral information regarding persons of concern within a local community, they often face systemic barriers to reporting that must be overcome through the concerted efforts of BTAM professionals in law enforcement. Understanding these barriers will assist law enforcement in providing *safe, accessible and credible* modes for bystander reporting, training those who receive bystander reporting, and in training bystanders on when and how to report. In particular, it is essential that bystanders perceive law enforcement to be both *receptive and competent*<sup>15</sup>. Through collaborative, rapport-based engagement that builds mutual respect and trust within local communities, bystanders can become valuable force multipliers in the BTAM process. The value of bystanders in BTAM cannot be overstated.

Mode of Reporting – Numerous modes for reporting suspicious activities, including observable and recognizable behaviors of concern for targeted violence, are available in Florida. These include national, state, and local reporting systems via telephone, internet, and mobile applications. A few prominent reporting systems include the Department of Homeland Security's "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Threat Operations Center, and Florida's FortifyFL. All of these systems facilitate anonymous public reporting of concerning or threatening behaviors related to identifiable persons of concern.

Additionally, law enforcement officers may detect and report suspicious activities through proactive or routine operations and standardized procedures within their respective jurisdictions and agencies, such as field encounters with known or identifiable persons of concern. Some common modes for reporting to be considered by law enforcement officers include, but are not limited to, field interview reports, Baker and Marchman Act submission forms, and risk protection orders issued by a court of law. Some of these possible modes of reporting, however, may require changes in applicable law, policy, or procedure to effectively integrate with the BTAM process. In any case, all available modes of reporting identifiable persons of concern in Florida should be directed to the local law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction for initial inquiry before any referral to a regional BTAM team.

Local Law Enforcement Agency Threat Referral – Regional BTAM teams will only accept referral of positively identified persons of concern reported to local law enforcement agencies. These teams will not accept referral of anonymously communicated statements of concern, including threatening

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<sup>13</sup> Amman, et al., *Making Prevention a Reality*, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Christine M. Sarteschi, "An Examination of Thwarted Mass Homicide Plots and Threateners." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 30 (2016): 88-93.

<sup>15</sup> Randy Borum and Mary Rowe, "The Role of Bystanders in Threat Assessment," in *International Handbook of Threat Assessment, Second Edition*, ed. J.Reid Meloy and J. Hoffman (New York: Oxford University Press, Submitted).

statements, without positive identification and attribution. Instead, local law enforcement agencies will retain primary responsibility for investigating anonymously communicated statements of concern, unless and until a person of concern is positively identified. Current realities regarding communication encryption technology and limited operational resources, justify this policy decision. However, regional BTAM teams will remain available and responsive to local law enforcement agency requests for investigative or technical assistance, as FDLE is otherwise accustomed to providing.

Threshold for Referral – All regional BTAM teams and local law enforcement agencies in Florida will receive standardized, baseline requirements to guide the collection and compilation of probative behavioral information from all available sources regarding a positively identified person of concern. Any local law enforcement agency referring an identified person of concern to a regional BTAM team will be required to fulfill these baseline requirements, to the extent possible, before any referral is accepted. This initial inquiry will then be packaged and securely transmitted to the regional BTAM team for initial review, deconfliction, and assignment.

Mode of Referral – FDLE will provide all local law enforcement agencies with a confidential, secure mode of referral to request BTAM assistance, while avoiding the unlawful compromise or inadvertent public exposure of confidential or exempt information. A confidential, secure mode of referral is necessary to safeguard the privacy, civil rights and civil liberties of identified persons of concern, as well as any identifiable targets. FDLE proposes to use its Criminal Justice Information Network (CJ-Net), which is a proven and reliable network currently available to all criminal justice agencies operating within Florida. CJ-Net, operating through a secure portal, will provide local law enforcement agencies a unique e-mail address to use in referring identified persons of concern to a regional BTAM team, or otherwise requesting BTAM assistance.

Regional BTAM Team Initial Review, Deconfliction and Assignment – Once a referral is received, the regional BTAM team will initially review it for completeness, and adherence to the baseline collection requirements. If further baseline collection is deemed necessary, the regional BTAM team will advise and assist the local law enforcement agency to complete its referral package. Once accepted, the regional BTAM team will ensure investigative and operational deconfliction between other local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in Florida, thus preserving intervention synergy during the threat management phase. To facilitate BTAM deconfliction throughout Florida, FDLE proposes to use its Florida Crime Information Center (FCIC), as discussed further below in the section regarding statewide information and intelligence sharing.

Once deconfliction is reasonably assured, the regional BTAM team will assign a core team member to coordinate the local law enforcement agency's referral throughout the BTAM process. The assigned core team member will serve as lead case agent for the regional BTAM team and primary liaison to the referring local law enforcement agency. The case lead agent will coordinate all operational activities throughout the BTAM process, including investigative assistance, operational guidance, and administrative documentation. Additionally, each referring local law enforcement agency will be expected to designate or assign their own lead case agent to collaborate with the BTAM team's lead case agent throughout the BTAM process. The local case agent should be empowered to decide and act on behalf of their agency. This will ensure a reliable line of communication and collaboration between referring local law enforcement agencies and the regional BTAM teams.

## **Threat Assessment**

***Threat Assessment*** is a multi-step, iterative process of collecting, corroborating, and analyzing probative information from all available sources, including published academic and operational research, to contextualize and understand the patterned thinking and behavior of an identifiable



person of concern<sup>16</sup>. This second phase in the BTAM process primarily aims to determine whether, and to what extent, a person of concern may be moving along a pathway to violence. Threat assessment is closely analogous to the law enforcement intelligence process, and it should be treated as such with regard to legal and operational guidelines<sup>17</sup>.

Threat assessment should be a regionally coordinated, standardized, and collaborative effort.

Threat Triage (Preliminary Investigation) – All positively identified persons of concern referred to, and accepted by, a regional BTAM team will first be subject to a standardized triage process. Threat triage should be focused on corroborating, to the extent possible within an established but limited timeframe, the existence of observed behaviors that may indicate and warn of *imminent* violent action. Given limited time and operational resources, the need for triage in BTAM is essential for threat prioritization, especially when multiple referrals may be received simultaneously or in close succession. Triage must be pursued with a sense of controlled urgency, but also a patient understanding that not all probative behavioral information will be readily available during preliminary investigation and analysis. Informed discretion and sound judgement are the keys to an effective triage process<sup>18</sup>.

During triage, law enforcement discretion may be exercised responsibly by distinguishing between threats requiring an immediate, urgent response, based on incomplete and uncorroborated facts or circumstances, and those permitting a delayed, non-urgent response. Making this distinction requires understanding the difference between a person of concern who *poses a threat* and one who merely *communicates a threat*. Research indicates that while some persons who communicate a threat also pose a threat, some persons who pose a threat never communicate a threat. More importantly, however, many persons who communicate a threat never pose a threat.

Traditional law enforcement practice in responding to communicated threats varies widely, especially threats communicated directly toward an identifiable target or law enforcement. Unnecessary and inappropriate responses to such communications may inadvertently undermine the BTAM process. Often times, the default response is to immediately confront an identified person of concern regarding their reported communication of concerning or threatening statements. Because many persons of concern who communicate direct threats never pose a threat, precipitous responses to communicated threats may complicate or impede subsequent threat management efforts. Immediate confrontation might counterintuitively increase the level of concern by exposing an active BTAM investigation, triggering the identified person of concern, or further destabilizing that person's current situation. When a communicated threat is criminally predicated, however, arrest and prosecution may provide operational leverage for effective threat management.

The triage of communicated threats, or lesser statements of concern is inherently challenging. Effective triage assessment requires an understanding the person of concern responsible for the communication, the content and context of their communication and any other observed behavior, and the nature of any relationship between the person of concern and any identified target. Again, not all concerning or threatening communications are linked to subsequent violent behavior. The prognostic value of communicated threats, and lesser statements of concern, may vary depending on the real or perceived presence and intimacy of any relationship between the person of concern and their target. Likewise, discretion and judgement are key.

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<sup>16</sup> Vossekui, Fein, and Berglund, "Threat assessment," 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Rick Malone, "Protective Intelligence: Applying the Intelligence Cycle Model to Threat Assessment." *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management* 2, no. 1 (2015): 53-62.

<sup>18</sup> Amman, et al., *Making Prevention a Reality*, 2017.

Threat Assessment (Full Investigation) – All positively identified persons of concern who are initially determined through triage to pose an articulable and reasonable threat toward an identifiable target will be subject to a standardized threat assessment. The primary objective in threat assessment is to corroborate, to the extent possible within an established but flexible time period, the existence of observed behaviors, particularly patterned or clustered behaviors, that may indicate and warn of *future* violent action, particularly whether that person is currently moving along a pathway to targeted violence<sup>19</sup>. Threat assessment and threat management are inextricably linked in the BTAM process. The assessment necessarily informs management, and management inevitably changes the assessment. As with threat triage, it must be understood that not all probative behavioral information will be, and in fact may never be, readily available for threat assessment. For example, the need to serve legal process to obtain particular records or information during investigation may significantly delay or obstruct the threat assessment phase. Regional BTAM teams will make the best possible assessment with the information available at the time.

Planning and Requirements – Before collection can proceed for a formal threat assessment, the regional BTAM team must plan to account for a holistic, 360-degree view of an identified person of concern within the totality of known or knowable facts and circumstances. Investigative activities should be focused on collecting probative behavioral information about the person of concern's past and present pattern of life, including personal finances, physical and mental health, intimate relationships, family and other close relationships, as well as education, training, employment, and criminal histories. The person of concern's pattern of life may then be considered within the context of the initial incident that prompted reporting and referral, their current situation, the operational setting for any potential attack, and any identifiable target's vulnerabilities.

Collection, Compilation and Processing – A threat assessment is only valid at the time it is completed, based on both the quantity and quality of corroborated behavioral information collected for analysis. All probative behavioral information lawfully collected through investigation must be compiled and processed in preparing for behavioral intelligence analysis. Sworn law enforcement officers assigned to a regional BTAM team should be primarily responsible for all investigative activities focused on the collection and corroboration of information required for the threat assessment. Additionally, all available sources of probative behavioral information should be developed and systematically assessed for their reliability and validity. While behavioral information probative to threat assessment may be collected from any available source, local law enforcement agencies and regional BTAM teams should focus their collection efforts on open and human sources of information, particularly collateral interviews through the recruitment of bystanders within the person of concern's immediate social network.

Analysis, Production and Dissemination – The core of any threat assessment is behavioral intelligence analysis. All regional BTAM team members should actively participate in the threat assessment phase, especially the behavioral analysis. Meaningful analysis requires a systematic, interactive, and collaborative effort. All probative and corroborated behavioral information collected should be analyzed in context for indications that a person of concern is currently moving along a pathway to targeted violence, and with due regard for mitigating human biases, given their potential to negatively impact collaborative group processes. The central question to be answered in any threat assessment is whether an identified person of

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<sup>19</sup> J. Reid Meloy, Jens Hoffmann, Angela Guldemann, and David James, "The Role of Warning Behaviors in Threat Assessment: An Exploration and Suggested Typology." *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* 30, no. 3 (2012): 256-279.

concern *poses a threat* of targeted violence toward an identifiable target; not whether that person merely *communicated a threat* which constitutes a criminal violation.

Additionally, human emotion, cognition, and behavior are interactively linked; a change in one inevitably changes the others. As such, professional input from an operational or clinical-forensic psychologist is indispensable to threat assessment. Psychologists will assist regional BTAM teams in applying relevant scientific research and structured professional judgement tools, as well as providing operational guidance to law enforcement personnel regarding the conduct of behavioral interviews and development of management strategies.

Threat analysis should aim to provide a contextualized understanding of observed pathway behaviors, and any closely associated thoughts, that may be discovered among a broader constellation of potential warning behaviors and risk-enhancing or risk-mitigating factors that are either static or dynamic in nature. Additionally, it should be noted that persons of concern who pose a threat of targeted violence may cross multiple social domains to locate and attack a target (e.g. moving from domestic to workplace settings), so any contextualized understanding of their pathway thinking and behavior is subject to change over time and across different settings. Threat assessments only provide an articulable level of concern for targeted violence; not a measurable prediction, or a quantitative likelihood of occurrence. The ultimate goal of analysis is to 'connect the dots' and 'paint a picture' that enables a regional BTAM team to determine:

- 1) Whether a person of concern is presently moving along a pathway to violence? This indicates the person of concern poses a threat of targeted violence.
- 2) Where a person of concern is presently positioned along a pathway to violence? This indicates the objective level of concern for targeted violence. Analysis should always error on the side of caution in this regard.
- 3) How fast a person of concern is moving along a pathway to violence? This indicates the potential imminence in the threat posed.
- 4) When and how best to intervene and disrupt a pathway to violence? This informs the development of a viable threat management strategy<sup>20</sup>.

Threat assessment results in a finished, but not necessarily final, product that precedes and informs threat management by revealing the current nature and extent of the threat posed toward an identifiable target. It suggests when and how best to intervene and manage a person of concern, and thereby mitigate and prevent targeted violence. A regional BTAM team's completed threat assessment on a person of concern will be disseminated in summary format with a recommended threat management plan to the referring local law enforcement agency with instructions and markings limiting further dissemination to third parties. In the interest of domestic security and public safety, completed threat assessments should only be disseminated in summary format to authorized persons or entities with an operational need-to-know.

## **Threat Management**

**Threat Management** is the process of developing, implementing, and monitoring a strategic, individualized plan to directly or indirectly intervene in an identified person of concern's pattern of life through coordinated, operational activities designed to:

- 1) Stabilize and support, to the extent possible, an identified person of concern's current situation;

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<sup>20</sup> Borum, et al, "Threat assessment," 1999; Vossekuil et al., "Threat assessment," 2015.

- 2) Influence, control, or incapacitate an identified person of concern's threat-enhancing thinking and behavior;
- 3) Harden and protect any identifiable targets; and
- 4) Mitigate concern to prevent targeted violence<sup>21</sup>.

Threat management should be a locally coordinated, individualized, and collaborative effort.

Intervention and Prevention – The primary objective in threat management is to strategically intervene and redirect an identified person of concern off their pathway to targeted violence, and thereby facilitate prevention. Throughout the management phase, the referring local law enforcement agency will work closely with their assigned regional BTAM team liaison to collaboratively and periodically monitor the person of concern via a spectrum of available passive or active measures that recursively inform the need for continued management or further assessment. All intervention strategies implemented should be tailored to the person of concern, as informed by a completed threat assessment. Generally, a low level of concern calls for support strategies, a moderate level of concern calls for control strategies, and a high level of concern calls for incapacitation strategies, such as civil commitment or criminal arrest and prosecution. FDLE will create and publish a standardized system of classification to guide all regional BTAM teams and local law enforcement agencies in conducting BTAM operations.

Given the individualized intervention strategies employed in threat management, regional BTAM teams will establish and cultivate collaborative relationships with Florida's system of specialized, problem-solving courts, which is administered by Florida's Office of the State Courts Administrator. Because of their focus on addressing special issues, such as mental illness and substance abuse, and special populations, including veterans, the homeless, and juveniles, these courts are uniquely positioned and resourced to directly support the BTAM process. This specialized judicial system in Florida is consistent with the theme for this strategy; intervention and prevention.

Threat Monitoring, Target Hardening and Case Management – Informed and guided by the threat assessment, threat management aims to develop and implement operational strategies that will effectively mitigate and manage the threat posed by an identified person of concern, harden and protect any identifiable target, and facilitate long-term case management. All BTAM activities and information should be documented as criminal intelligence files, which should remain active and exempt from public records disclosure while an articulable and reasonable suspicion of future targeted violence persists. However, additional and separate documentation as criminal investigative files is advisable in cases where criminal violations are predicated. BTAM cases will be subject to strict access and dissemination controls, direct supervisory oversight, and periodic audit to ensure information integrity and that privacy, civil rights and civil liberties are protected.

## **Legal and Ethical Considerations**

Numerous legal and ethical issues impact BTAM practice, particularly within the law enforcement context. Such issues may arise under civil, criminal, or administrative law in both the state and federal courts. Some of the most commonly encountered legal and ethical issues involve the collection, compilation, retention, sharing, and purging of personally identifiable or other legally protected information that may impact privacy, civil rights and civil liberties, particularly in collaborative, multi-disciplinary, and multi-jurisdictional contexts. Such information may include, but is not limited to,

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<sup>21</sup> Calhoun and Weston, *Contemporary*, 2003; Amman et al., *Making Prevention*, 2017.

criminal investigative and intelligence information, criminal history information, educational information<sup>22</sup>, physical or mental health information<sup>23</sup>, and financial information<sup>24</sup>.

To promote consistency, proficiency, and continuity in BTAM operations throughout Florida, and ensure that privacy, civil rights and civil liberties are protected, all partnering state and local government agencies that engage, or contribute resources to, a regional BTAM team will be required to enter into a MOU with FDLE. This MOU will clearly delineate shared program goals and objectives, duties and responsibilities, as well as operational and legal guidelines for the conduct of BTAM operations. Florida law enforcement agencies should anticipate some public concern and debate regarding the practice of BTAM, which may require continuing communication and coordination between local law enforcement agencies, regional BTAM teams, and their respective legal counsels and public information officers. Additionally, all regional BTAM team members will receive training on the protection of privacy, civil rights and civil liberties, as well as other pertinent legal and ethical considerations.

As previously noted, BTAM is analogous to the law enforcement intelligence process and may be considered an operational application of intelligence-led policing. Implementing BTAM as an intelligence function is both practical and efficient since law enforcement personnel are already educated, trained, and experienced in the operational and legal guidelines of developing and handling criminal intelligence information, specifically 28 CFR Part 23. This federal regulation is the standard to which many law enforcement agencies are held, and is widely accepted as a law enforcement best practice to ensure that intelligence activities do not violate privacy, civil rights and civil liberties. Accordingly, all law enforcement agencies in Florida independently or collaboratively conducting BTAM operations should do so within the established operational and legal guidelines imposed by 28 CFR Part 23, and should have specific, standardized operating procedures to guide their BTAM operations.

Ultimately, all Florida law enforcement agencies involved in BTAM must ensure, to the extent possible, that all active criminal investigative and intelligence information remains exempt from public records disclosure, particularly when sharing such information with non-law enforcement agencies in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, and multi-jurisdictional environment. Currently, BTAM teams operating outside the educational environment in Florida are not legally authorized to share information across disciplines, as are school-based BTAM teams pursuant to S.B. 7026 (2018). As such, amendments or additions to state law may be necessary and prudent to enable this strategy.

### **Statewide Information and Intelligence Sharing**

The trusted sharing of information and intelligence, and elimination of information silos, is critical to Florida's domestic security and public safety, particularly with regard to BTAM and targeted violence

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<sup>22</sup> U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Department of Education, *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. A Guide for First Responders and Law Enforcement*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). Accessed December 12, 2019. <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/ferpa-guide.pdf/view>

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act. HIPAA Privacy Rule: A Guide for Law Enforcement. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). Accessed December 12, 2019.

[https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/special/emergency/final\\_hipaa\\_guide\\_la\\_w\\_enforcement.pdf](https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/special/emergency/final_hipaa_guide_la_w_enforcement.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Matthew Doherty, "From protective intelligence to threat assessment: Strategies critical to preventing targeted violence and the active shooter." *Journal of Business Continuity & Emergency Planning* 10, no. 1 (2016): 9-17.

prevention. Florida maintains one of the most robust and vibrant networks in the US for all-hazards information and intelligence sharing to support domestic security and public safety initiatives via its Network of Florida Fusion Centers. As such, regional BTAM teams will integrate and collaborate with this existing network to enable the BTAM process statewide. Specifically, regional BTAM teams will establish and maintain a collaborative, operational relationship with their corresponding regional fusion center for the efficient and effective exchange of information and intelligence relating to identified persons of concern for targeted violence. Florida's regional fusion centers should, to the extent possible, prioritize a regional BTAM team's request for information regarding an identified person of concern to facilitate threat assessments, including the dissemination of warning intelligence that promotes statewide situational awareness of imminent targeted violence threats.

Persons of concern who are subject to ongoing or completed threat assessments should be identifiable in statewide law enforcement information systems. Sworn law enforcement officers, for example, require immediate access to such information for their situational awareness and personal safety during field encounters. Currently, there is no pertinent 'hot file' available in the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) or FCIC that is clearly suited for the entry of identified persons of concern for targeted violence. While several hot files currently available in both systems address persons of concern for targeted violence in some specific settings or situations, none are suited to encompass persons who pose threats of targeted violence, regardless of motive, target, or method of attack. As such, FDLE proposes to create a new hot file; one particularly suited for the entry and monitoring of identified persons of concern for targeted violence in Florida. This will **ensure** the regional BTAM teams' situational awareness with regard to any law enforcement or other government field encounters with the identified person of concern. This new hot file will assist law enforcement in the initial and continuing collection of probative behavioral information regarding an identified person of concern referred to a local or regional BTAM team for threat triage and assessment.

The specific criteria for hot file entry, and other necessary procedures, will be developed by FDLE's Criminal Justice Information Systems Division and Office of General Counsel, then submitted to the ESC for consideration and approval. The new hot file will be available only to law enforcement agencies, and the entry and removal of identified persons of concern will be restricted by Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) to those agencies with an established BTAM process or program. FCIC hit responses to the new hot file will be considered active criminal intelligence with restricted access. All details relating to the new hot file will be outlined in separate, subsequent documentation. Ultimately, hot file management will reside with local or regional BTAM units, but information in the file will be available to any law enforcement officer during field encounters with an identified person of concern subject to threat assessment. Law enforcement agencies should remove persons from the hot file once all articulable concern for future targeted violence is no longer cognizable. The new hot file will be audited on a routine, periodic basis to ensure that entering agencies are following appropriate procedures.

### **Professional Education, Training and Consultation**

BTAM is an interdisciplinary, professional practice that includes numerous stakeholders who collaborate within an operational, small-team environment to conduct behavioral investigations and intelligence analysis, but do so with varying levels of professional experience, subject matter expertise and responsibility. Given the numerous variables and inherent challenges in targeted violence prevention, professional education and training in BTAM is paramount. All law enforcement and civilian personnel permanently assigned to a regional BTAM team will be educated and trained in the principals and practices of BTAM to a minimum standard throughout their term of service. This education and training will focus on foundational BTAM principles and practices, emergent trends in relevant research, applicable law and policy, as well as privacy, civil rights and civil liberties.

**FLORIDA’S STRATEGY FOR TARGETED VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

***BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT – INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION***

All law enforcement education and training curricula to be delivered pursuant to this strategy will be developed and implemented by FDLE in close consultation with internationally recognized subject matter experts in BTAM to ensure structural consistency and content accuracy. These curricula will also be reviewed and approved, as applicable, by Florida’s Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission for statewide delivery at varying levels:

<b>Basic Recruit</b>	<b>Online</b>	<b>Practitioner</b>	<b>Executive</b>
Level: Awareness  Goal: Understand the basic structure and operation of Florida’s BTAM process. Recognize and report communications and other behaviors of concern indicative of potential targeted violence.	Level: Awareness  Goal: Understand the basic structure and operation of Florida’s BTAM process. Recognize and report communications and other behaviors of concern indicative of potential targeted violence.	Level: Specialized  Goal: Understand the basic structure and operation of Florida’s BTAM process, as well as conduct BTAM operations to mitigate and prevent targeted violence. This course should be available to both sworn and civilian personnel.	Level: Awareness  Goal: Understand the basic structure and operation of Florida’s BTAM process, as well as enable executive leadership support to building and sustaining operational BTAM capabilities.

To implement this strategy and ensure consistency, proficiency, and continuity in regional BTAM operations statewide, FDLE adopted with permission a BTAM glossary previously published and copyrighted by the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) in collaboration with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. Florida’s law enforcement community will find the glossary appended to this document and should use it as a common vocabulary for BTAM operations. Additionally, FDLE will deliver approximately 40 hours of initial, specialized education and training in BTAM to all selected regional BTAM team members. This initial education and training will focus on basic BTAM principles and practices. Finally, all personnel assigned to either independently established local law enforcement or regional BTAM teams should be strongly encouraged, but not required, to individually pursue professional certification as a BTAM practitioner via the ATAP’s Certified Threat Manager program. This professional certification requires a minimum amount of operational experience in BTAM, along with successful testing on a core professional body of knowledge, and may bolster a BTAM practitioner’s professional reputation and credibility.



## **Appendix A – Supporting Documentation**

Although the below listed documents are not specifically referenced in this document, they were utilized for research and have been shared with parties outside of the steering committee in furtherance of this initiative.

Appelbaum, Paul S. "Violence and Mental Disorders: Data and Public Policy," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 163, no. 8 (2006): 1319-1321.

Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents, 2014 and 2015*. Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center at Texas State University and Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016.

Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents, 2016 and 2017*. Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center at Texas State University and Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018.

Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center and U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. *A Study of Active Shooter Incidents, 2018*. Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERT) Center at Texas State University and Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018.

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Leading Causes of Death Reports. National and Regional, 1999-2015*. Accessed December 12, 2019.  
[https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10\\_us.html](https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/leadcaus10_us.html)

Corner, Emily, Paul Gill, and Oliver Mason. "Mental Health Disorders and the Terrorist: A Research Note Probing Selection Effects and Disorder Prevalence." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 39, no. 6 (2016): 560-568.

Corner, Emily, Paul Gill, Ronald Schouten & Frank Farnham. "Mental Disorders, Personality Traits, and Grievance-Fueled Targeted Violence: The Evidence Base and Implications for Research and Practice." *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 100, no. 5 (2018): 459-470.

Fazel, Seena, and Martin Grann. "The Population Impact of Severe Mental Illness on Violent Crime." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 163, no. 8 (2006): 1397-1403.

Gill, Paul, John Horgan, and Paige Deckert, "Bombing Alone: Tracing the Motivations and Antecedent Behaviors of Lone-Actor Terrorists," *Journal of Forensic Science* 59 (2014): 425–435.

Hempel, Anthony G., and T. C. Richards. "Offender and offense characteristics of a nonrandom sample of mass murderers." *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law Online* 27, no. 2 (1999): 213-225.

Lankford, Adam. "Identifying potential mass shooters and suicide terrorists with warning signs of suicide, perceived victimization, and desires for attention or fame." *Journal of Personality Assessment* 100, no. 5 (2018): 471-482

Lankford, Adam, Krista Grace Adkins, and Eric Madfis. "Are the Deadliest Mass Shootings Preventable? An Assessment of Leakage, Information Reported to Law Enforcement, and Firearms Acquisition Prior to Attacks in the United States." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* (April 2, 2019): DOI: 1043986219840231.

Sarteschi, Christine M. "An Examination of Thwarted Mass Homicide Plots and Threateners." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 30 (2016): 88-93.

Silver, James, John Horgan, and Paul Gill. "Foreshadowing Targeted Violence: Assessing Leakage of Intent by Public Mass Murderers." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 38 (2018): 94-100.

Wintemute, Garen J., Veronica A. Pear, Julia P. Schleimer, Rocco Pallin, Sydney Sohl, Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz, and Elizabeth A. Tomsich. "Extreme Risk Protection Orders Intended to Prevent Mass Shootings: A Case Series." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 171, no. 9 (2019): 655-658.

## **Appendix B – Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Glossary**

This glossary represents the collaborative efforts of a work group formed by the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) in partnership with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. ©Association of Threat Assessment Professionals; CRC Press, A Taylor Francis Group; University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (2012). The definition of those terms without reference to a specific source is based on common usage in the field of behavioral threat assessment and management. The FDLE adopted this glossary with permission from the ATAP and University of Nebraska Public Policy Center.

### **Administrative Action**

A threat management intervention involving the use of disciplinary action within an organization or structure to manage problem individuals (e.g., firing, withholding services, suspension, barring from a particular location or activity; Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

### **Affective Violence**

Affective violence, sometimes called impulsive, emotional or reactive violence, is an unplanned act of violence that occurs in response to a perceived threat in the immediate environment (Meloy, 2006).

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 established comprehensive legislation covering civil rights for people with disabilities. It is published in the United States Code and is often referred to by the titles and chapters of the code that contain the law. More information about the ADA is available at <http://www.ada.gov>.

### **Anchors**

Anchors are factors that provide stability; in threat assessment, anchors could be used to provide support or stability to a subject who is struggling or represent reasons that an individual would not engage in targeted violence (de Becker, 1997).

### **Approach Behavior**

This refers to the type, frequency and intensity of the subject's attempts to be physically proximal (close) to the target. Approach behavior includes successful and unsuccessful attempts to approach the target.

### **Arrest**

An arrest can be a threat management intervention. It is the act of detaining someone in legal custody, usually by a law enforcement officer. The actual deprivation of a person's liberty can be physical detention for a short or prolonged period of time in response to a criminal charge (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011).

### **Attack**

Carrying out (or attempting to carry out) the intended violence against the target (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

### **Attack Related Behaviors**

Specific behaviors that are needed in order to launch a physical assault on a target. These behaviors are displayed as steps on the pathway to violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

### **Behavioral Indicator**

An observable action that provides evidence of an underlying element that may be relevant to a threat assessment and management case – for example, a subject's actions (e.g., talking to

himself or herself) might lead the threat assessor to believe the person has a mental health disorder that influences the level of threat posed by that individual (Bulling et al., 2008).

**Behavioral Threat Assessment**

Threat assessment orientation based on the idea that the subject will exhibit identifiable behaviors indicating the intent to commit an act of targeted of violence.

**Behaviors of Concern**

Behaviors of concern are the observable, identifiable behaviors that an individual exhibits while they are progressing on the pathway of violence.

**Black Swan Event**

An event that is rare, predictable only in retrospect, with extreme impacts (Meloy, 2011; Talib, 2007).

**Breach**

The word breach is commonly used when referring to a gap or break. In threat assessment contexts, this usually refers to a situation where usual security measures have been circumvented (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Bunkers**

The use of the term “bunker” is linked to the common use of the phrase “bunker mentality,” in which an individual or group becomes defensive and surrounded by fortifications (real and virtual) to keep information in or detractors out. Adopting a bunker mentality in threat assessment can lead to under or over estimation of risk (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Case Dynamics**

The continuous interaction between what is known and unknown in a particular case, and the evolving assessments used to determine the appropriate protective response at any given point in time (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Chain of Custody**

This is a process used to document the chronological history of evidence to maintain the security, integrity and accountability of its handling.

**CirCon Factors**

“CirCon” is an acronym for “circumstances, content and contextual factors” related to a subject’s inappropriate communication or contact (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Civil Action**

Civil actions are orders issued by a court to convince the subject to stop threatening behaviors or stay away from the target, periodically employed as a threat management intervention (e.g., restraining, stay-away, protective orders) (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Code of Ethics**

Refers to the ethical code developed by the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals outlining appropriate behavior and decision making in threat assessment and management (Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, 2010).

**Cognition**

The simplest definition of cognition is thinking; in more complex terms, it is the processes in the human mind involved in acquisition, storage, retrieval and processing of information. Individuals with poor cognition may have difficulty visualizing alternatives to violence and receiving assistance for grievances.

**Cognitive Complexity**

This is a psychological construct that refers to a person's ability to perceive nuances or subtle differences. A person who has high cognitive complexity is sensitive to small changes in a task, activity, behavior or the environment; someone with low cognitive complexity is less likely to detect these differences. Sometimes this is referred to as intuition or street smarts. A person may have high cognitive complexity but little formal education (Scott, 1962).

**Communication Channels**

The medium used to transmit messages are referred to as "communication channels." Threat assessment uses this phrase when referring to the ways that information about threatening individuals can be gained by threat assessment teams (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality refers to the process of safeguarding sensitive information, usually involving case intelligence or personal information. Confidentiality is sometimes framed as an individual's right to have their personal information kept private.

**Content Factors**

The information contained and conveyed in the words, style and method of a threat.

**Contextual Factors**

Sometimes referred to as situational factors. In threat assessment, the context refers to the situation and environment surrounding the subject or the target. These can be personal, organizational, or on a larger scale (e.g., economic climate, world news, etc.) (Scalora & Bulling, 2007).

**Credible Threat**

A threat, direct or veiled, that is thought to be real, not just hypothetical. One test of whether a threat is credible is the ability and intent of the entity posing the threat (de Becker, 1997).

**Criminal Intelligence**

This phrase refers to any information which is collected, analyzed, or distributed for use in inhibiting or monitoring criminal activity (International Association of Chiefs of Police National Law Enforcement Policy Center, 1998).

**Cultural Competence**

Organizationally, this is a set of behaviors, attitudes, and policies that make it possible for people to work effectively across cultures. In threat assessment, it is having knowledge of culture differences and the ability to foresee how those differences may impact the investigation, analysis, or management of a case (US Department of Health & Human Service, 2005).

**Directly Communicated Threat**

This is an unambiguous statement of threat to either the target or law enforcement detailing intention to commit an act of targeted violence (Meloy, 2011).

**Domino Effect**

This phrase is used generally when referring to the cumulative effect an event can have when it initiates a succession of similar events. In threat assessment and management, it is often used to describe the tendency for the loss of one inhibitor to affect other aspects of a subject's life and create a downward spiral where other inhibitors are compromised as well (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Duty to Warn/Protect**

Legal directive to mental health professionals in most states with knowledge of a possible act of harm by someone in their care directed at a third party that they are required to act reasonably to protect the potential victim from the threat. This stems from a US Supreme Court decision in the 1970's (Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California) that established the professional's duty to provide warning as a way to protect the third party from danger.

**Empathy**

In mental health empathy typically means being able to recognize and feel what another is feeling, usually in a therapeutic context. In threat assessment empathy is often used as a way to build rapport with the target or subject.

**Energy Burst**

A subject may have what is termed an "energy burst" as part of the pathway to violence. This is a pre-attack increase in intensity (frequency and/or duration) or variety of warning behaviors, usually indicating an attack is imminent (Meloy, 2011).

**Environmental Influences**

The sum of background factors (peer group, security, access to weapons, etc.) affecting the situation of both the subject and the target. This includes organizational or cultural factors that impact tolerance or reporting of behaviors on the pathway to violence.

**Evidence Collection**

The process of gathering, maintaining, and preserving evidence for use in investigation and prosecution.

**Evidence Preservation**

Ensuring that evidence is collected and maintained in a proper manner which will preserve the forensic value of the evidence.

**Extremist Violence**

Violent action for which the impetus of the attack is born out of an ideological system, usually intended to enact some change or disrupt activities deemed unacceptable by followers of that ideology (Gerwehr & Hubbard, 2007).

**Fact Finding**

Process of acquiring information and evidence (about the target, the subject, contacts, communication, past and present behavior, context) to support accurate and complete assessment of risks and the best way to defuse them (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**FERPA**

Acronym for Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. This federal law (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) governs the gathering, maintenance, and accessibility of educational records. Schools need written permission from the student to release educational records to anyone other than the student. Schools may disclose records, without consent, to certain parties under specific conditions including: complying with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; to appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and to state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

**Final act behavior**

Pre-breach preparations made by the person(s) posing a threat right before the threat is carried out. This can include acts like disseminating reasons for the attack or executing a last will and testament (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Fixation**

A fixation is generally an extreme preoccupation with something, be it another person, an activity, or an idea. It can be adaptive in the form of romantic love, parental love, or loyalty, but can also cross into pathology when it involves a grievance, personal cause, or a public figure (Meloy, 2011).

**Grievance**

A grievance is generally defined as the cause of someone's distress or reason for complaint/resentment; in threat assessment contexts, it takes on additional meaning to include a highly personal meaning for the subject, often fueling a feeling of being wronged and translating into behaviors related to a sense of mission, destiny, loss, or desire for revenge (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**HIPAA**

Acronym for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act – The HIPAA Privacy Rule requires covered entities to protect individuals' health records and other identifiable health information. Of primary importance to threat assessment professionals is the security, accountability, and confidentiality of medical records covered by this act. The Privacy Rule permits use and disclosure of protected health information, without an individual's authorization or permission, for national priority purposes to law enforcement officials under specific circumstances (See 45 C.F.R. § 164.512). Disclosure must also be made to someone they believe can prevent or lessen a threat or to law enforcement if the information is needed to identify or apprehend an escapee or violent criminal.

**Howlers (AKA Barkers)**

Howlers are individuals who, though they have inappropriate, bizarre or threatening contact with the target, never intend on following a path to violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Howler Types (Calhoun & Weston, 2009):**

**Binder Howlers** – Individuals who threaten to facilitate a personal relationship with the target.

**Celebrity-seeking Howlers** – Individuals who are motivated to threaten individuals because of their high public profile.

**Controller Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as means of control over the target, usually a partner or family member.

**Copycat Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a reaction to other threats or reports of violence.

**Crusader Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a means to further a personal cause.

**Deluded Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a result of delusional relationship (or potential relationship) with the target.

**Delusional Howlers** – Individuals for whom delusional content plays a direct role in their threats.

**Dirty-trickster Howlers** – Individuals who threaten in order to implicate a third party as the perpetrator of the threats.

**Habitual Howlers** – Individuals who make threats on a continual basis, much like a hobby.

**Impersonal Howlers** – Individuals who threaten someone they do not know.

**Intimidator Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a way of intimidating the target, who is typically a member of one of their social circles (e.g. supervisor, coworker, teacher, classmate).

**Maintainer Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as an attempt to continue a relationship which the target wishes to end.

**Personal Howlers** – Individuals who threaten someone they know.

**Seeker Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a means to establish an intimate relationship with the target, even when the target has repeatedly rebuffed them.

**Self-defender Howlers** – Individuals who threaten as a defensive reaction to a perceived threat or attack from the target.



**Sinister Howlers** – Individuals who threaten in order to scare the target.

**Human-on-Human Violence**

Deliberate actions taken by a human against another human with the intention of causing harm.

**Hunters (AKA Biters)**

Hunters are individuals who intend to follow a path toward violence and behave in ways to further that goal (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Ideation**

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines ideation as “the capacity for or the act of forming or entertaining ideas.” In threat assessment contexts, this term takes on the added meaning of entertaining ideas specific to the utility and acceptability of violence as a means to address the subject’s particular grievance (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Identification**

Thoughts of the necessity and utility of violence by a subject that are made evident through behaviors like researching previous attackers and collecting, practicing, and fantasizing about weapons (Meloy, 2011).

**Impromptu Violence**

This is an act of spontaneous violence often sparked by situational or contextual triggers (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Inappropriate Communication or Contact**

Contact or communication with the target that is unwanted and intended by the subject to further the motives behind the threatening behavior. Contact can be written, verbal, or behavioral in nature and delivered in a variety of ways. These may be perceived by the target as intimidation, harassment, threatening, or out of context (abbreviated as IC&C) (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Information Analysis**

Careful consideration of converging evidence in a case to ascertain the level of threat posed and progress toward violence.

**Information Gathering**

Process of obtaining information from all available sources to inform the analysis and decision making in a threat assessment (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998).

**Information Sharing**

Facilitation of the flow of information among entities responsible for a case so that all parties have access to current, relevant information on which to base decision making (Department of Defense, 2007).

**Information Silos**

Information that is not shared across disciplines or agencies is sometimes referred to as being in a “silo”. The word silo originates from the towers or pits used to store grain. The term is also used to refer to information or knowledge that is kept separate, is tightly controlled, and not shared. When information about a threat or potentially threatening situation is not shared appropriately it can inhibit attempts to assess or manage it (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Inhibitors**

In threat assessment, this is anything that serves to decrease the likelihood that a subject's behavior will escalate to an act of targeted violence (e.g., familial bonds, strong friendships, or employment); sometimes referred to as buffers (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Insider threat**

An individual with access to a facility or organization who uses that access to disrupt or cause harm to the organization or others involved with that organization (Cappelli, 2005).

**Intended Violence**

Violent acts which meet the following criteria: intent to commit the act; selecting an attack mode that ensures injury, death, or property damage; and a motive that does not profit the attacker (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Interrogation**

Purposeful questioning of a subject to obtain accurate, useful, and timely information relevant to an investigation (Boetig & Bellmer, 2008).

**Intervention**

An action or process that has the effect of modifying behavior, thinking, or emotions – in threat assessment an intervention is the action taken in implementation of a threat management strategy (e.g., interviewing, monitoring, etc.) (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Intervention/Inhibitor dichotomy**

Disciplinary actions toward a subject are often required in threat management to ensure a target's safety; however, confrontational interventions can also negatively affect a subject's well-being. The relationship between the target's safety and the subject's well-being can be described as a dichotomy in some situations, because each impacts the other and often suggest different threat management decisions. Both should be considered and continuously assessed after intervention (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Intervention Synergy**

The case dynamic intensified by the stimulus of what the threat manager or target does or does not do in response to the threat situations (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Intervention Vectors**

Similar in concept to intervention strategies, it is the range of levels of confrontation with the subject of a threat management case (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Interview Approaches**

Strategies to engage a subject in the interview in order to elicit information.

**Interview Strategy**

Plan for the goals and approaches to an interview (i.e., deciding what information will be sought, how the subject will be redirected, where the interview will take place, etc.) (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Intimacy**

Real or perceived close personal relationship, sometimes accompanied by physical or sexual contact.

#### Intimacy Effect

The closer the interpersonal relationship (degree of intimacy) between the threatener (subject) and the threatened (target), the greater is the likelihood of threats being carried out. This intimacy is based upon the subject's perception of the relationship, which may be delusional and completely unknown to the target (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

#### Investigation

This is an active process of seeking out and finding information relevant to a threat assessment case.

#### Investigative Interview

Any verbal interaction between a law enforcement officer and a civilian for which the purpose is gathering information (Boetig & Bellmer, 2008).

#### JACA

JACA is an acronym for Justification – Alternatives – Consequences – Ability. This acronym suggests four questions that can help determine level of threat posed by a subject: J – Does the person feel justified in using violent means? A – Does the subject perceive they have alternatives to rectify the grievance? C – How salient are the consequences of this activity to the subject? A – Does the subject believe they have the ability to carry out the intended violence? (de Becker, 1997).

#### Last Resort

The subject's decision to end his or her life can lead to an act of targeted violence as a means of attaining fame or martyrdom in addition to their suicide attempt (Meloy, 2011).

#### Leakage

Leakage is an accidental or gradual escape – in threat assessment it is used to describe when a subject shares information with a third party that reveals clues related to his or her thinking, planning, or execution of an act of targeted violence (O'Toole, 2000).

#### Liability

Legal responsibility or obligation related to professional actions or inactions.

#### Mental Health Commitment

Sometimes referred to as civil commitment – this is a legal action that forces an individual into mental health care. Jurisdictions differ in the legal definitions and criteria for commitment, but generally two criteria must be met: 1) the person must have a mental disorder and 2) the mental disorder contributes to dangerousness that the subject exhibits by actions or threats to himself or herself (suicide or inability to care for self) or others (homicidal or actively threatening harm to another person).

#### Mental Illnesses

**Mood Disorders** – Disorders that include prolonged excessive emotion. Threat assessors should be aware that symptoms can include clouded judgment along with other symptoms:

- Depression – Depression can be a major mental disorder or a short term, reactive state. A major depressive episode includes symptoms that occur over two weeks or more. Symptoms of depression include sadness, loss of interest/pleasure, sleep disturbance, weight change, psychomotor disturbance, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness, cognitive disturbance, and recurring thoughts of death. Suicide is associated with major depression and is of great concern to threat assessors.
- Mania – Clinically, mania is a period in which an individual experiences elevated, expanded, or irritable mood and grandiosity; decreased sleep; increase in verbal

communication; distractibility; increase in activity or psychomotor agitation; and excessive involvement in pleasurable activities.

**Personality Disorders** – Mental disorders characterized by unhealthy patterns or thinking and behavior. There are several types of personality disorder, but three symptoms are of most concern to threat assessors:

- **Borderline** – Often characterized by desperate attempts to avoid abandonment (real or perceived), a pattern of frequent, unstable relationships, unstable self-image, impulsive behavior across multiple domains (including, sexual activity, spending money, substance abuse, driving recklessly, eating dysfunction) (American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2000).
- **Narcissistic** – Clinically characterized as having a grandiose sense of importance; a belief in being special or unique, fantasies of excessive intelligence, power, beauty, wealth etc., sense of entitlement, exploitative of those around them, need for admiration; arrogance, envious of others or believes that they are envious, lacking in empathy, and arrogance or superior attitude/behavior (APA, 2000).
- **Paranoid** – Unwarranted suspicion that others are harming them in some way, questioning of loyalty of those around them, bearing of grudges, reluctance to trust or confide in others for fear of exploitation, and perceiving of threats or sleights when none are present (APA, 2000; Meloy, 2001).

**Thought Disorders** – Mental disorders that include a variety of symptoms related to a disruption in the ability to communicate or think clearly. Two key symptoms of thought disorders are of concern to threat assessors:

- **Delusion** – A delusion is an incorrect belief that is caused by a thought disturbance; can be of a number of different types including grandiose, jealous, persecutory, somatic, and erotomanic (APA, 2000).
- **Hallucination** – In clinical terms a hallucination is any sensory experience that is perceived by someone to be occurring externally for which there is no stimulus present. These can take the form of any perceptual experience from any of the five senses (APA, 2000).

#### Monitoring

Monitoring falls into one of two types, active or passive, delineated as follows:

**Active** – Threat management interventions that are dynamic and involve real-time observation of a subject's behavior and/or movements through means such as surveillance or wiretapping.

**Passive** – Threat management interventions that involved the use of non-intensive methods of tracking subject's behavior, such as having a third party report on conduct (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

#### Multidisciplinary Team

A group of professionals from different disciplines assembled to provide their perspectives and expertise in the fulfillment of a function such as threat assessment and management

#### Myopic management

Myopia is a difficulty viewing distant things due to nearsightedness. "Myopic management" refers to the style of management that focuses on short-term goals with immediate payoffs at the expense of strategies with superior but distant payoffs (Mizik, 2010; Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Novel Aggression**

In threat assessment, this refers to new acts of violence committed by the subject that are unrelated to his or her planned act of targeted violence (Meloy, 2011).

**Opportunistic Violence**

These are acts of intended violence involving general or nonspecific selection of victim (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Overt Threat**

Threat of a direct nature, describing a possible future act against the target (e.g., I will kill you) (O'Toole, 2000).

**Pathway to Violence**

A series of sequential steps – from its beginning with a felt grievance, to violent ideation, research and planning, specific preparations for violence, critical breaches of security or other boundaries, to a concluding attack – which indicate that an individual is progressing towards an act of targeted violence (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski & Reddy, 2002).

**Physical Security**

Physical security is the sum of the physical protective measures (e.g., key locks, security guards, security cameras, etc.) designed to detect, mitigate, or eliminate a threat.

**Predatory Violence**

Predatory violence is an act that is planned for by the attacker and does not involve reactive emotional components or an imminent threat to the attacker. It is sometimes referred to as instrumental, premeditated, proactive, or cold-blooded violence (Meloy, 2006).

**Preparation**

After deciding on a course of action and conducting the necessary background work, the subject must prepare for the actual attack. Behaviors associated with this include acquiring weapons, assembling equipment, arranging transportation, observing significant dates, rehearsing, conducting final act behaviors, or costuming (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Proportionate Responses**

The principle of “proportionality” refers to the balance that is struck between achievement of a goal and the cost to achieve it. Legal use of proportionality usually refers to a legal punishment being equivalent to the severity of the crime. Military use of the phrase is often related to use of force in response to aggression. Proportionate responses in threat assessment and management refer to strategies that employ measures comparable to the level of risk presented by the subject (Gardam, 1993; Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Protective Fact Finding**

Process of gathering detailed information surrounding an inappropriate communication or contact, including background on the subject, current behaviors, links to the target, and triggers for the communication – this information is used to create safety plans for the target (Calhoun & Weston, 2006).

**Protective Response**

Actions taken in response to a criminal act or imminent threat to secure the target and ensure their safety (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Psychopathy**

In its clinical interpretation, psychopathy is generally conceptualized as a condition in which a specific combination of personality and behavioral factors exist. These factors include a superficiality and charming aspect, unreliability, lack of remorse, insight or affective reaction, dysfunction in interpersonal relationships, antisocial and dangerous/risky behavior, and lack of life planning (Meloy, 2001).

**Radicalization**

Conversion of a follower of a legitimate belief system to an extremist ideology based on that system, often with the intent of using them to commit or support a future act of violence (Silber & Bhatt, 2007).

**Rapport Building**

Establishing a sense of connection between the interviewer and the interviewee to facilitate communication and information sharing (Keats, 1993)

**Redirection**

Technique of refocusing the subject's attention away from the target and toward another person, organization, or activity (e.g., toward the threat assessment professional or law enforcement agency) (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Referral**

Process of sending an individual to another professional with the proper expertise to address the particular situation.

**Research and Planning**

Seeking information about a target to facilitate an attack – can include any number of dimensions including surveillance of the target, Internet searches, testing security around the target, and researching methods of attack (Calhoun & Weston, 2003).

**Risk Assessment**

Risk assessment began in systems engineering – in threat assessment, it is used as a phrase that encompasses a process through which options for decreasing risk are considered along with the potential outcomes associated with their implementation, both positive and negative (Haines, 2004).

**Scope of Practice**

Recognizing the limits of knowledge, experience, and capabilities that one possesses and only performing functions within the boundaries of professional training and duties (American Psychological Association, Inc., 2002).

**Stalking**

A cluster of behaviors including unwanted communication, approach, or other contact, usually intended to threaten, harass, coerce, or intimidate the target into meeting the demands of the perpetrator (Kopp, Hart & Lyon, 2002). (It is important to review stalking laws in your jurisdiction to ensure you know the legal definition and specific behaviors listed in the law).

**Subject Interview**

A threat management intervention that involves direct contact with the subject and may or may not include questioning. The subject interview can have many different purposes, including information gathering, refocusing or redirecting the subject, and warning or confronting the subject (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Substance Abuse**

A maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress as manifested in one (or more) of the following: failure to fulfill obligations (family, work, school, etc.); use of substances in hazardous situations; recurrent substance-related legal troubles; or continued use despite frequent interpersonal difficulties related to this use. In threat contexts, substance abuse often has an impact on the subject's impulse control and may contribute to an erosion of inhibitors.

**Surveillance**

Actively but unobtrusively observing a subject to gather information about their activities and whereabouts.

**Tail Risk**

Probabilities of risk at the extreme ends (tails) of a normal distribution – in threat assessment this pertains because targeted violence has a very low rate of occurrence; however, the risk should not be underestimated based on statistical probability that it will or will not happen (Meloy, 2011).

**Take No Further Action at This Time**

A deliberate, justified decision to assign a case inactive status (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Target**

The general definition of a target is a person, object, or place that is the aim of an attack. In threat assessment and management, it is the point of fixation for intended violence. This can include people, buildings, or more general concepts (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Targeted Violence**

Violent incidents involving an identifiable subject (perpetrator) who possesses the intent and potential to cause harm to an identifiable target (Borum, Fein, Vossekuil, & Berglund, 1999; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998; Fein, Vossekuil, & Holden, 1995; Reddy, Borum, Berglund, Vossekuil, Fein & Modzeleski, 2001).

**Terrorism**

Act of violence or threats of violence used to further the agenda of the perpetrator while causing fear and psychological distress (Schmid, 2006).

**Third Party Control or Monitoring**

Using a reliable third party to exercise control over the subject or unobtrusively monitor their behavior (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Threat Assessment**

A fact-based method of assessment/investigation that focuses on an individual's patterns of thinking and behavior to determine whether, and to what extent, they are moving toward an attack on an identifiable target (Borum, Fein, Vossekuil & Berglund, 1999).

**Threat/Control Override**

A condition in which the individual believes they are not in control of his or her actions, but instead is being commanded by an outside, usually malevolent force (Link & Stueve, 1994).

**Threat Management**

Managing a subject's behavior through interventions and strategies designed to disrupt or prevent an act of targeted violence.

### Threat Management Process

The threat management process is the entirety of the steps taken to identify, assess, and manage a threat assessment case. This includes developing, implementing, and monitoring a thorough plan unique to each subject and situation that includes protective measures for the intended target (Fein, Vossekuil, & Holden, 1995; Fein, Vossekuil, Pollack, Borum, Modzeleski & Reddy, 2002).

### Threat Management Strategy

A coordinated plan of direct or indirect interventions with the subject that, based on current information regarding level of threat posed, is designed to defuse the risk in a given situation at a particular point in time.

### Threat Management Team

A cross functional, multidisciplinary team approach to assist in assessing threatening situations and developing threat management plans. The team meets regularly and as needed in crisis situations to review potential and active threat cases (Deisinger, Randazzo, O'Neill & Savage, 2008).

### Threat Manager

The person who has primary responsibility for initiating, investigating, assessing, and managing threat cases – This person should have experience and training in threat assessment/management before assuming the role of manager (Calhoun & Weston, 2003; Calhoun & Weston 2009).

### Triggers

A trigger is an event or action that initiates a response of some type. In threat assessment, a trigger initiates action on the part of the subject, moving them along the path to violence. Identifying potential triggers is part of the threat assessment process (Drysdale, Modzeleski, & Simons, 2010).

### Types of Targeted Violence

- Domestic Violence – Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior in which one intimate partner uses physical violence, coercion, threats, intimidation, isolation, and emotional, sexual, or economic abuse to control the other partner in a relationship (American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence, 1999).
- Workplace Violence – Targeted violence, threats, bullying, harassment, intimidation, etc. that occurs in the workplace – by someone within the organization (e.g., disgruntled employee) or from someone outside the organization (may or may not be associated with an employee of the organization) (Rugala, 2004).
- Public Figure – A target with high public profile, such as a government official, politician, or entertainer.
- Organizational – An act of violence in which the target is an organization or group, rather than an individual person, though individuals may be harmed during the act, they are not the primary objective of the attacker.

### Veiled Threat

Threat of an indirect nature, vaguely describing the possibility of negative consequences for the target (e.g. "Someday you will get what is coming to you") (O'Toole, 2000).

### Venues of Violence

Locations in which violence occurs or could potentially occur, including (but not limited to) workplaces, residences, and schools.



**Victim Interview**

Interview involving the target of the threatener (subject).

**Victim Management**

Working with the target to determine what a potential victim knows and needs to know, and how he or she finds out about the subject's behaviors. Providing too much information can unnecessarily cause distress for the victim, while not presenting enough can lead to unsafe situations.

**Victim Selection**

The process by which a subject focuses on a target for his or her intended violence. This can include specific selection or opportunistic victims that happen to be at the location of an attack or included in some broad group which the subject has a grievance toward (Calhoun & Weston, 2012).

**Violence**

An intentional act of harm.

**Violence Content**

The nature and intensity of violent rhetoric included in inappropriate contacts and communications (Meloy, 2011).

**Violence Risk Assessment**

A continuous investigative and analytical process of evaluating an individual's probability of committing an act of violence based on personal and situational variables by an individual qualified (through training, experience, or education) to make risk determinations and recommendations for response, management, and mitigation of that risk (Hart, 1998; Rogers, 2000; ASIS International [ASIS] & Society for Human Resources Management [SHRM], 2011).

**Violence Risk Factors**

Reliable factors that have an established correlation with violent crime (Meloy, 2001).

**Violence Risk Screening**

A broad determination by a threat management team as to whether individual's behavior shows cause for concern and thus threat management procedures should be initiated (ASIS & SHRM, 2011).

**Violent Ideation**

The process of forming and entertaining thoughts about violence as an acceptable means to address a grievance (Bruns, Disorbio & Hanks, 2007).

**Vulnerability**

Vulnerability has many meanings depending on context. According to Homeland Security definitions, it refers to degree to which a target is at risk for attack or disruption; in mental health circles, vulnerability is an innate propensity for a disorder or symptom cluster, which may only manifest given certain triggers. In threat assessment, vulnerability typically is closer to the Homeland Security definition, referring to the target's vulnerability to the subject's violent intent or threats (Department of Homeland Security [United States], 2006).

**Watch and Wait**

Unobtrusive monitoring of the subject while waiting to see if he or she will take additional actions in relation to the target (Calhoun & Weston, 2009).

**Witness Interview**

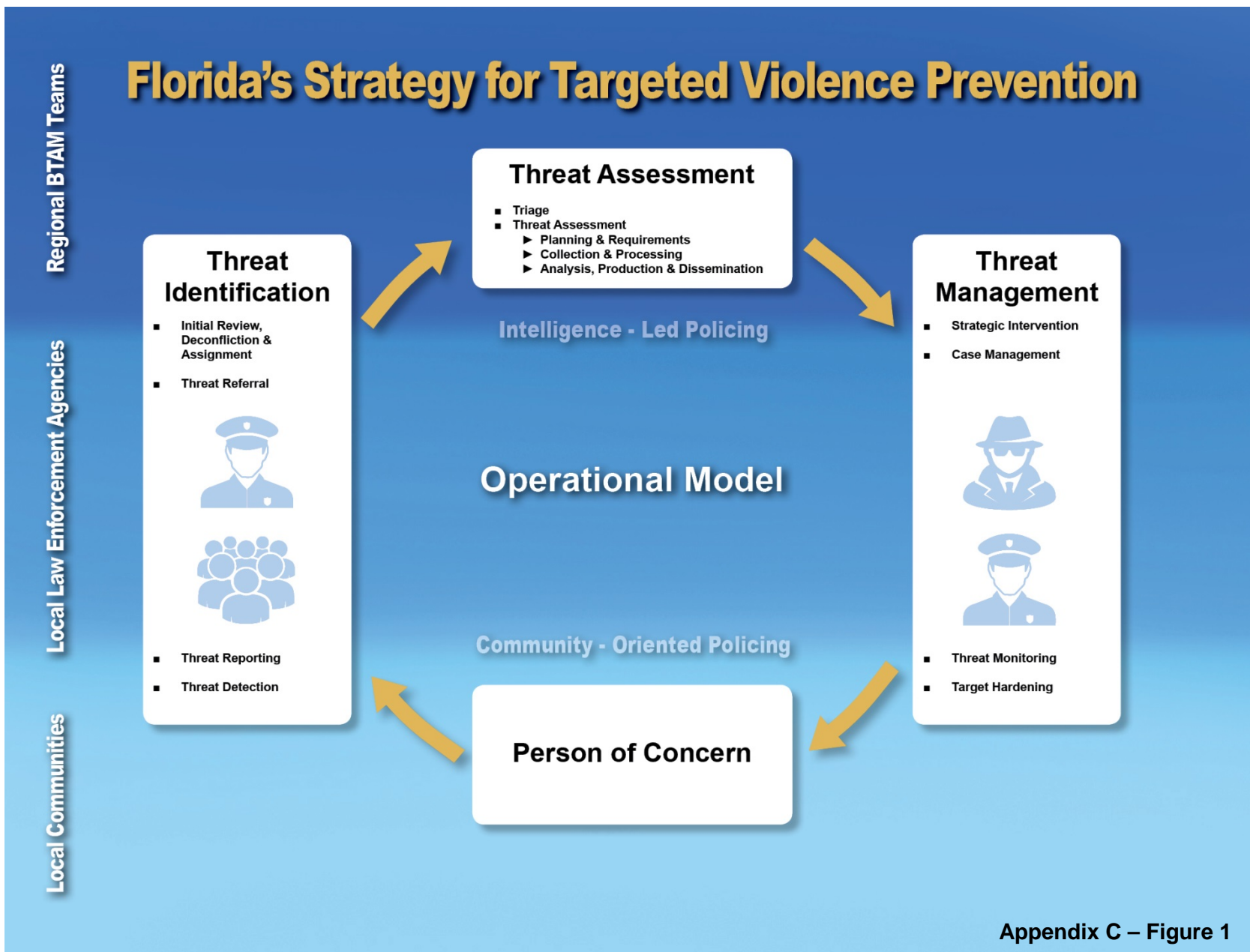
Interview involving a third party – usually to inquire about information concerning threatening behaviors or contacts by the subject, or background information on the subject's past or current behavior or mental status.

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Appendix C – Figure 1