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PRESS RELEASE

**Chester County Records Zero
Homicides for First Six Months of Year**

Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan announced that the county recorded no homicides during the first six months of 2019.

District Attorney Hogan stated, "News from the world of criminal justice is often negative, about crimes committed and people arrested. It is refreshing to announce good news instead. The fact that Chester County has made it through the first six months of the year without a homicide is a testament to good policing, good medical care, and good luck."

East Coventry Police Chief Bill Mossman, who also is President of the Chester County Police Chiefs Association, added, "Chester County law enforcement has embraced the concept of community policing. We try very hard to get to know the people we serve and to develop good relationships. It is those relationships and the willingness of our citizens to interact with us, and partner with us, in our crime fighting efforts that sets Chester County apart from other regions that struggle with crime prevention."

A few comparative statistics are useful. In 2018, there were 13 homicides in Chester County. That is about average for the county. There was an 84% clearance rate for those homicides, meaning that the cases were solved by arrests or the death of the defendant.

By comparison, in 2018, there were 351 homicides in Philadelphia. The clearance rate was 44%. While Chester County has recorded no homicides in the first six months of 2019, Philadelphia is on pace to surpass their homicide total for 2018, with the homicide rate up over 10% than at the same time as last year.

District Attorney Hogan credits multiple factors for Chester County's lack of homicides. First, Chester County law enforcement uses strong anti-crime initiatives. Operation Silent Night in Coatesville targets drug-related violence, seeking to take potential killers off the streets with drug and gun arrests before a homicide happens. For domestic violence, often a source of homicides, Chester County uses the Lethality Assessment Protocol ("LAP"). LAP is a predictive tool used by the police and the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County to anticipate extreme cases of domestic violence and protect the victim before a homicide occurs. In addition, the strong community policing described by Chief Mossman allows law enforcement to intervene before violence turns deadly.

"Preventing a homicide takes planning and hard work," said District Attorney Hogan. "But every life we save spares some family from a tragedy. And we would rather spend our time and money on preventing a homicide than the enormous expense of investigating, prosecuting, and incarcerating a murderer."

The second factor in Chester County's 0% homicide rate is medical services. The medical care offered in Chester County, particularly through the trauma unit at Paoli Hospital, turns many potential homicide cases into attempted homicide cases, as victims are saved from death by skilled surgeons. Having a trauma unit in Chester County is an invaluable resource.

The third factor in Chester County's homicide rate is simply good luck. As Chief Mossman noted, "We know that we can't go forever without another homicide. But Chester County law enforcement believes that the harder we work, the luckier we get."

District Attorney Hogan added, "Chester County has the lowest crime rate in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The good citizens of Chester County should celebrate their good fortune in living in this county, and thank the police officers who make it possible. I wish I could tell Chester County that we have permanently won the

war on crime, but the county will have to settle for the security of knowing that Chester County law enforcement is ever-vigilant.”

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Approved for release:

Thomas P. Hogan