



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 2-20 (Formerly 2-42)

Effective: 10/11/2023 Review: 10/11/2024 Replaces: 04/13/2022

## **2-20 HOSTAGE SITUATIONS, BARRICADED INDIVIDUALS, AND TACTICAL THREAT ASSESSMENTS**

### **Related SOP(s), Form(s), Other Resource(s), and Rescinded Special Order(s):**

A. Related SOP(s)

[1-92 Specialized Tactical Units \(Formerly 6-8\)](#)

[2-8 Use of On-Body Recording Devices \(Formerly 1-39\)](#)

[2-19 Response to Behavioral Health Issues](#)

B. Form(s)

None

C. Other Resource(s)

None

D. Rescinded Special Order(s)

SO 22-93 Amendment to SOP 2-20 Hostage, Situations, Barricaded Individuals, and Tactical Threat Assessments

### **2-20-1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to describe the appropriate response by Albuquerque Police Department (Department) personnel to calls involving hostage situations and barricaded individuals. This policy describes how to assess such situations for possible tactical activations while considering the tools and tactics that increase the likelihood of a safe resolution to these incidents. Department personnel shall follow the specialized response protocols set forth in Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Specialized Tactical Units when there is a tactical activation to hostage situations and barricaded individuals.

### **2-20-2 Policy**

It is the policy of the Department to employ tactics and tools that increase the likelihood of safely resolving incidents involving hostage situations and barricaded individuals. In order to accomplish this, Field Services Bureau (FSB) personnel shall work closely with trained crisis intervention personnel and tactical sworn personnel to ensure that they employ appropriate and coordinated responses to these incidents.

It is also the policy of the Department to avoid the unreasonable risk of harm while responding to hostage situations or barricaded individuals, community members, and sworn personnel, when feasible, while using the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation. Such responses shall require personnel to slow or calm the situation when



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practicable and to use de-escalation techniques, which may serve to lessen the tension and safely diffuse a crisis.

**N/A 2-20-3 Definitions**

**A. Active Listening**

A way of listening and responding to another person by using nonverbal cues, tone of voice, facial expressions, and body posture, all of which can improve mutual understanding.

**B. Barricaded Individual**

A person in a location that provides a barrier or spatial separation, assisting them to avoid apprehension by sworn personnel.

**C. Crisis Intervention Trained Officer (CITO)**

A CITO is an officer who has successfully completed the forty (40) hour basic CIT training.

**D. Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT)**

A team comprised of supervisors and sworn personnel who serve in an additional or collateral duty capacity. When requested, supervisors and sworn personnel respond with every tactical activation to serve as specialists who use verbal de-escalation skills to assist in safely defusing dangerous, life-threatening situations or specific critical incidents.

**E. Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team (ECIT)**

The ECIT is comprised of specially-trained, uniformed sworn personnel who function as specialists to respond to calls involving individuals affected by a behavioral health disorder or experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

**F. Hostage Situation**

A person or persons holding another person or persons against their will through intimidation, deception, duress, coercion, with force or threat of force.

**G. Inner Perimeter**

A perimeter established to keep the incident and involved individual(s) contained. Methods for establishing an inner perimeter shall vary based upon the dynamics and location of each incident.



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H. Mobile Crisis Team (MCT)

The MCT is a two-person unit comprised of one (1) licensed mental health professional and one (1) ECIT officer who jointly respond to calls with a behavioral health component. The MCT provides immediate behavioral health services once the scene is secured. The MCT is trained to complement the ECIT and Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU).

I. Media Staging Area

A designated area immediately outside the outer perimeter where news media may set up, film, and receive briefings from the Public Information Officer (PIO). This location is established taking into consideration the location, potential volatility, and known weapons involved with the police action involved.

J. Outer Perimeter

A perimeter established to keep the public safely away from the incident and successfully to divert traffic. The location of the outer perimeter shall vary based upon the dynamics of each incident.

K. Unwilling Individual

An individual who is unable to remove themselves from a location due to an extenuating circumstance, such as their proximity to the barricaded/suicidal individual, their belief that leaving may escalate the situation, or their inability to physically remove themselves from a location without assistance.

**6** 2-20-4 **Procedures**

**N/A** A. On-Body Recording Devices (OBRD)

Sworn personnel shall comply with SOP Use of On-Body Recording Devices during hostage situations and calls involving barricaded individuals (refer to SOP Use of On-Body Recording Devices for sanction classifications and additional duties).

B. Dispatch and Initial Assessment Protocol

1. If the initial call alerts the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) that a situation may involve a hostage situation or a barricaded individual, ECC shall dispatch an FSB supervisor and the on-duty FSB Lieutenant. If the situation involves a behavioral health crisis, ECC shall dispatch an Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team (ECIT) officer, consistent with SOP Responses to Behavioral Health Issues.
2. The Incident Commander (IC) shall assess the situation and determine whether FSB personnel can use their crisis intervention training successfully to resolve an incident or whether a tactical activation shall be necessary.



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3. If the call is not initially categorized for an ECIT or Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) response, the primary objectives of the first responding officer shall be to attempt to slow the situation, assess the nature of the call, and gather the appropriate information, personnel, and resources to respond effectively to the incident according to the protocols set forth below.

C. Response to a Hostage Situation

1. FSB Sworn Personnel Duties and Responsibilities

a. FSB sworn personnel shall:

- i. Notify an FSB supervisor and the ECC, as soon as possible, that there is a possible hostage situation. To the extent possible, the officer shall identify:
  1. The address;
  2. The suspect's identity or description;
  3. The number and identity of any hostages; and
  4. Any information indicating the suspect is armed or has made specific threats.
- ii. Request immediate backup;
- iii. Set up an inner perimeter and, as needed, an outer perimeter to exclude non-law enforcement pedestrians and vehicular traffic;
- iv. Maintain radio contact with ECC and other responders;
- v. If the officer deems evacuation necessary and it can be done safely, evacuate civilians from within the perimeter(s). If members of the public are within the inner perimeter and cannot be evacuated safely, sworn personnel shall direct them to shelter in place until evacuation can be safely accomplished; and
- vi. If needed to confirm the actual status of the situation and if safe to do so, begin a dialogue with the individual who is in crisis to determine the nature of the situation and to confirm whether there are hostages and/or weapons involved. If the officer has built rapport with the individual, the officer may continue the communication in an attempt to de-escalate the situation until the CNT arrives.

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b. FSB sworn personnel shall not:

- i. Exchange themselves for hostages or surrender their weapons; or
- ii. Allow the individual to leave the area with hostages, except under the most extreme circumstances. If there is a possibility that the individual can leave the area, FSB sworn personnel shall make initial preparations to provide surveillance and control travel routes.

2. FSB Supervisor Duties and Responsibilities

a. The FSB supervisor shall:

- i. Assume initial incident command, conduct a preliminary investigation, and assess the scope and intensity of the situation;



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- ii. Request sufficient personnel to handle the call, with an emphasis on enough personnel to establish an inner and outer perimeter around the location;
- iii. Request that ECC dispatch the on-duty lieutenant or their designee, if the lieutenant is not already on-scene;
- iv. Set up a command post in an appropriate and safe area;
- v. Notify the Tactical Commander;
- vi. Retain command until the Tactical Commander arrives;
- vii. Ensure that FSB units maintain an outer perimeter;
- viii. If outside agencies are involved, designate the FSB supervisor to be the Department point of contact, ensuring that proper communications are established and maintained among all responders;
- ix. Designate a media staging area and request a PIO through ECC;
- x. Transfer command of the scene to the Tactical Commander once a tactical activation has been authorized. The Tactical Commander shall then notify ECC they have assumed command of the incident and inner perimeter. The FSB supervisor shall then be solely responsible for maintaining the integrity of the outer perimeter;
- xi. Remain at the scene for the duration of the incident while reporting to the Tactical Commander;
- xii. Secure a radio frequency for the operation;
- xiii. Notify rescue, ambulance, and the fire department, as needed; and
- xiv. Upon the Incident Commander's determination that the suspected hostage situation does not involve hostages, follow the protocols for a barricaded individual as outlined in this SOP.

**3. Tactical Commander Duties and Responsibilities**

- a. Based on the briefing provided by the FSB supervisor, determine whether the call meets the criteria of tactical activation. When there is a tactical activation, the Tactical Commander shall:
  - i. Advise the ECC and all sworn personnel on-scene that the call meets the criteria of a tactical activation;
  - ii. Assume command and control;
  - iii. Call out the CNT immediately upon responding to the scene;
  - iv. Resolve the situation safely, while using the minimum amount of force necessary to protect the lives of the hostages and other people at or near the scene;
  - v. Prioritize the safety of the hostages, public, and sworn personnel through a non-violent resolution of the situation which considers:
    - 1. The amount of time sworn personnel have been deployed; and
    - 2. Any inconvenience to the community.
  - vi. Continue negotiations, if they are progressing and hostages are not in immediate danger;
  - vii. Cease negotiations and authorize force if communication with the individual is not progressing based upon articulable facts and circumstances or if it is progressing in a negative direction and the lives of hostages are in imminent danger; and



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N/A

viii. Follow the protocols in SOP Specialized Tactical Units (refer to SOP Specialized Tactical Units for sanction classifications and additional duties).

D. Response to a Barricaded Individual

1. When sworn personnel are dispatched to a call of a barricaded individual, personnel shall first gather information to assess whether there is a need for a tactical response.
2. The responding officer shall ensure that backup sworn personnel are present before initiating contact. An FSB officer may make contact with the barricaded individual once backup sworn personnel are present. If an ECIT officer is on-scene, they shall make the initial contact with the barricaded individual. When possible, the supervisor shall ensure that a force array response is in place before making any contact with the barricaded individual.
3. If the nature of the call out did not alert the ECC to dispatch a supervisor, the officer encountering a barricaded individual shall notify a supervisor and ECC as soon as possible.
4. ECC shall ensure that the on-duty FSB supervisor is dispatched to the call, together with the on-duty FSB Lieutenant.
  - a. If the on-duty FSB supervisor is unavailable, another on-duty supervisor shall be notified and dispatched.
5. If the FSB supervisor determines, through consultation with the on-duty FSB Lieutenant and the Tactical Commander, that the incident is not appropriate for a tactical response, then the FSB supervisor shall notify ECC as soon as practicable.
  - a. ECC shall dispatch an ECIT officer to assist with the response.
  - b. The FSB supervisor shall retain command of the scene, but the ECIT officer shall take the lead on interactions with the barricaded individual and shall provide input to the FSB supervisor regarding strategies for resolving the incident.
6. The on-duty FSB Lieutenant shall monitor the incident and have oversight of the outer perimeter and FSB personnel.
  - a. The FSB supervisor shall be the Incident Commander and shall collaborate with the on-duty FSB Lieutenant and an ECIT officer regarding strategy and coordination of resources to resolve the situation. These sworn personnel shall continually reassess and communicate with one another regarding tactics.
  - b. In particularly complex or volatile situations, the on-duty FSB Lieutenant or higher-ranking officer may assume incident command.





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7. Sworn personnel shall attempt to obtain any information about the barricaded individual from family or friends. The FSB Lieutenant shall contact the Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) to use the CIU case management system and other available resources to obtain any available additional information on the location of the incident or barricaded individual. CIU shall be available for on-call consultation.
8. Sworn personnel responding to the scene shall:
  - a. Use invisible deployment as much as possible, including cover and concealment;
  - b. Contain the immediate area as soon as practicable to ensure the individual's safety, the community's safety, and sworn personnel's safety; and
  - c. Separate the individual's family and/or friends from the individual if they are present at the location. Once family and/or friends are separated from the individual and moved to a safe location, they should be interviewed to gain additional information.
9. Communicating with the Individual and De-escalation
  - a. When feasible, in communicating with the individual in crisis, the Crisis Intervention Trained Officer (CITO) or ECIT officer shall:
    - i. Attempt to engage the individual by using de-escalation techniques;
    - ii. Evaluate all available information when contacting the individual;
    - iii. Not attempt face-to-face contact when an individual is armed, unless there is sufficient cover and protection to ensure the safety of sworn personnel;
    - iv. Maintain an adequate distance from the individual after considering the threat presented;
  - v. When possible, attempt to contact the individual via telephone. If unable to make contact via telephone, alternate means of communication, such as public-address announcements, social media, or any other electronic communication should be attempted. If contact is made with the individual, sworn personnel shall take the following actions:
    1. Provide reassurance that the police are there to help and that appropriate care will be provided.
    2. Attempt to find out the nature of the crisis the individual is experiencing.
    3. While listening to the individual's concerns, allow the individual to express his or her feelings.
    4. Avoid threatening the individual with arrest or physical harm.
    5. Attempt to guide the conversation towards topics that seem to ease the situation.
    6. Always be truthful. If the individual perceives deception, he or she may withdraw, which will further complicate the situation.
    7. Ask the individual to willingly disarm and follow the exit plan provided by sworn personnel and supervisors who are on-scene.
    8. Engage in active listening and non-threatening, non-judgmental verbal exchanges.



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- b. If there is no search warrant, and reasonable attempts have been made to contact the barricaded individual, and the situation remains unresolved and does not meet the criteria outlined in the Tactical Threat Assessment section of this SOP, the Incident Commander shall instruct sworn personnel to withdraw from the area, consistent with the disengagement procedures below in this SOP.
- 10. If a suicidal individual is barricaded, refer to the Disengagement and the Tactical Threat Assessment sections of this SOP.
- 11. Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) Response to Individuals Who Are in Crisis and in An Elevated Position
  - a. The Tactical Commander or Special Operations Division (SOD) Commander shall approve CNT response to individuals who are in crisis and in an elevated position only.
    - i. An elevated position is one that an individual is using to cause spatial separation from law enforcement or to resist arrest, or one from which a person could cause self-harm.
  - b. Prior to calling CIU, FSB officers shall request the ECC to dispatch an ECIT officer or MCT to the scene. Sworn personnel are also reminded that prior to calling CIU they should request ECIT or MCT to respond to the scene.
  - c. The FSB Incident Commander can request the ECC to dispatch a CIU detective if ECIT or MCT has not been successful in resolving the situation. Once the CIU Detective responds, the CIU Detective shall determine if additional assistance from a trained negotiator assigned to CNT shall be required to assist. If CIU responds to the incident and the individual is determined to have contact history with CIU, CIU will be the primary incident management unit.
  - d. A CNT response to a scene of an individual in crisis in an elevated position is not considered a tactical activation.
  - e. Incident command shall be maintained by the FSB Incident Commander at the scene and not the Tactical Section. This shall include any documentation needed as a result of the incident.
- 12. Pick-Up Orders and Certificates for Evaluation are civil orders. Mental health orders shall not be used as a basis for forced entry in order to take the individual into custody.

E. Disengagement Procedures

- 1. The on-scene supervisor shall ensure that every reasonable attempt is made to contact the individual. If the individual refuses to make contact with sworn personnel who are on scene and remains barricaded, the on-scene supervisor shall:





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- a. Ensure that an on-duty lieutenant responds to the scene, if the lieutenant is not already on-scene;
  - b. Ensure that all available resources are utilized in order to safely resolve the situation;
  - c. Avoid escalating or making a forced entry into the location;
  - d. Avoid closing distance on the individual;
  - e. Ensure that the family members, friends, and the individual are provided information about resources and services. A list of these resources is available through the RTCC;
  - f. Document the provision of resources and services through the use of an OBRD;
  - g. Use an OBRD to document any advisement to the family, friends, or others involved in the situation concerning the dangers of contacting a barricaded individual;
  - h. Ensure that a Uniform Incident Report is prepared, and includes:
    - i. All supplemental reports;
    - ii. Video or digital recordings;
    - iii. Victim and witness statements; and
    - iv. Any other pertinent documents related to the incident.
  - i. Ensure that copies of all reports and statements are forwarded to the CIU by the end of the officer's shift; and
  - j. Ensure that a periodic watch at the location is entered for each shift over a twenty-four (24) hour period. The watch is for area command information only and is not to be dispatched.
2. When sworn personnel clear the call, they cannot force the family, friends, or others who are present to leave the area. The Incident Commander shall ensure that any person who lives at the location of the incident and cannot safely return is offered a safe location to stay for the night.
  3. If the individual has pending misdemeanor charges or a misdemeanor warrant, sworn personnel shall not make forced entry to make an arrest. This does not prevent an officer from filing the appropriate criminal charges under the appropriate state statute or city ordinance.

F. Tactical Threat Assessment

1. The FSB Lieutenant and FSB supervisor shall consult with the Tactical Lieutenant in their capacity as the Tactical Commander if an incident for a potential hostage situation or barricaded individual involves one or more of the following:
  - a. The individual has a confirmed violent felony warrant;
  - b. The individual is currently committing a violent felony crime;
  - c. The individual is currently committing a non-violent felony and has a documented violent history or has recently demonstrated a propensity for violence/disregard for the life and safety of others;



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- d. The individual has a non-violent felony warrant and has a documented violent history or has recently demonstrated a propensity for violence/disregard for the life and safety of others;
    - e. The individual is armed with a firearm and the on-scene officer can confirm that the individual has discharged the firearm;
    - f. The individual is armed in a public area and displaying an imminent threat of violence; or
    - g. There is positive confirmation of the presence of an unwilling individual who is unable to leave the location of a suicidal and/or barricaded individual.
2. Tactical Unit personnel shall respond to the scene of an individual who has barricaded themselves in a vehicle when:
  - a. The above-listed tactical threat assessment criteria have been met;
  - b. The individual is verified to be armed with a firearm or another type of life-threatening weapon; and
  - c. The Tactical Commander or their designee authorizes the tactical activation.
3. The Tactical Commander shall have the final authority to determine whether to initiate a full Tactical Unit tactical activation.
  - a. If the Tactical Commander or their designee does not authorize a tactical activation, they shall consider using other SOD resources, such as the CNT, K-9 Handler, drones, or Bomb Squad Unit robots, to assist FSB sworn personnel in resolving the incident as safely as possible.
  - b. When the Tactical Commander authorizes a tactical activation, FSB sworn personnel shall understand that if the barricaded individual becomes mobile and leaves the inner perimeter, the FSB Incident Commander (IC) shall direct them whether or not to pursue the individual's vehicle.
  - c. When the Tactical Commander authorizes a tactical activation, they shall request a K-9 Handler to respond to the scene of the tactical activation.
    - i. The K-9 Handler shall not use their Police Service Dog (PSD) as an extraction tool unless other lower-level force options have been ineffective or have been deemed impracticable by the Tactical Commander.
    - ii. The Tactical Commander may request a K-9 Handler to respond to situations involving an individual who is armed or has committed a felony crime.
    - iii. The Tactical Commander may request a PSD to be deployed when an individual who is armed or committing a felony crime attempts to flee from a vehicle and the K-9 Handler determines the use of their PSD is appropriate and within policy.



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4. Any supervisor may contact the Tactical Commander at any time for incident consultation.