



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 2-20

Effective: 08/05/19 Review: 08/05/20 Replaces: 10/16/17

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

Related SOP(s):

[2-8 Use of On-Body Recording Devices](#)
[2-19 Response to Behavioral Health Issues](#)
6-8 Specialized Tactical Units (Restricted)

2-20-1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the field service officers' response to calls involving hostage situations, and barricaded individual(s). This policy describes how to assess such situations for possible tactical deployment while considering the tools and tactics that will increase the likelihood of a safe resolution to these incidents. If there is a tactical deployment to a hostage situations and barricaded individuals, those specialized response protocols are set forth in SOP – Specialized Tactical Units.

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 officers will work closely with trained crisis intervention personnel and Tactical officers to ensure the appropriate and coordinated response to these incidents.

The Department's policy is to avoid the unreasonable risk of harm to hostage situations and barricaded individuals, civilians, and officers, while using the minimum amount of force necessary. Such responses will require personnel to slow or calm the situation when practicable and use de-escalation techniques, which may serve to lessen the tension and safely diffuse a crisis.

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(s)

A person in a location that provides a barrier or spatial separation, assisting them to avoid apprehension by law enforcement officers.



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C. Crisis Intervention Trained Officers (CITO)

Crisis Intervention Trained Officers (CITO) are Field Services Bureau officers who successfully completed the 40-hour basic crisis intervention team training.

D. Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT)

A team comprised of supervisors and officers who serve in an additional or collateral duty capacity. When called upon to do so, these supervisors and officers respond with every tactical deployment 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

The Enhanced Crisis Intervention Team (ECIT) is comprised of specially trained uniformed officers who function as specialists to handle calls involving individuals affected by a behavioral health disorder or experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

F. Hostage Situation

One person holding another person against his or her will through the use or threat of force.

G. Inner Perimeter

A perimeter established to keep the incident and suspect contained. Establishing a perimeter will vary based upon the dynamics of each incident.

H. Mobile Crisis Team (MCT)

A Mobile Crisis Team (MCT) is a two-person unit comprised of mental health professionals who work with ECIT officers and are responsible for responding to priority calls with a behavioral health component. MCT provides immediate behavioral health services once the scene is secured. The MCT is trained to complement the ECIT and 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.

J. Outer Perimeter



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A perimeter established to keep the public safely away from the incident and to divert traffic successfully. Establishing a perimeter will vary based upon the dynamics of each incident.

2-20-4 Procedures

A. On-Body Recording Devices (OBRD)

Officers should recognize that hostage situations and barricaded individuals pose situations that are considered mandatory recording incidents under SOP – Use of On-Body Recording Device.

B. Dispatch and Initial Assessment Protocol

1. If the initial call alerts ECC that a situation may involve a hostage situation or a barricaded individual, ECC will dispatch a Field Services supervisor and the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant. If these situations involve a behavioral health crisis, ECC will dispatch an ECIT officer or MCT, if available.
2. Using the protocols regarding hostage situations, below, specialized responders will assess the situation and determine whether Field Services personnel can use their crisis intervention training to resolve successfully an incident or whether a tactical deployment will be necessary.
3. If the call is not initially categorized for an ECIT or MCT response, the primary objectives of the first responding officer will be to attempt to slow the situation, assess the nature of the call, and gather the appropriate personnel and resources to respond effectively to the incident according to the protocols set forth below.

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C. Hostage Situation

1. Field Services Officers Duties and Responsibilities
 - a. Field Services officers responding to a hostage situation will:
 - i. Notify a Field Services supervisor and ECC, as soon as possible, that there is a probable hostage situation. To the extent possible, the officer will 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.



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- 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 dispatch 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, officers will direct them to shelter in place until evacuation can be safely accomplished.
- vi. If needed to confirm the actual status of the situation and if safe to do so, begin a dialogue with the individual causing the crisis to determine the nature of the situation and to confirm whether there are hostages involved. If the officer has a good rapport with the individual, the officer may continue the communication in an attempt to de-escalate the situation until the CNT arrives.
- vii. Officers will not exchange themselves for hostages or surrender their weapons.
- viii. Officers should not allow the offender to leave the area with hostages, except under the most extreme circumstances. If there is a possibility that the offender can leave the area, make preparations to provide surveillance and control travel routes.

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2. Field Services Supervisor Response to Hostage Situation

- a. When notified of a hostage situation, Field Services supervisors will take these actions:
 - i. Assume initial incident command, conduct a preliminary investigation, and assess the scope and intensity of the situation.
 - ii. Request sufficient manpower to handle the call, with an emphasis on enough officers to establish an inner and outer perimeter around the location.
 - iii. Request ECC to dispatch the on-duty Lieutenant, if the Lieutenant is not already on scene.
 - iv. Set up a command post in an appropriate area.
 - v. Notify the Tactical Lieutenant.
 - vi. Retain command until the arrival of the Tactical Lieutenant.
 - vii. Ensure that Field Services units maintain an outer perimeter.
 - viii. If outside agencies are involved, designate the on-duty Lieutenant to be the Department point person, ensuring that proper communications are established and maintained among all responders.
 - ix. Designate a media staging area and request a public information officer through ECC.



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- x. Turn over command of the scene to the Tactical Lieutenant once a tactical activation has been authorized. The Tactical Lieutenant will then notify ECC and assume command of the incident. The Field Services supervisor will then be solely responsible for maintaining the integrity of the outer perimeter.
 - xi. Remain at the scene for the duration of the incident, reporting to the Tactical Lieutenant.
 - xii. Secure a radio frequency for the operation.
 - xiii. Notify rescue, ambulance, and fire department as needed.
 - xiv. Upon the Incident Commander's determination that the suspected hostage situation does not involve hostages, follow the protocols for a barricaded individual(s) in paragraph D below.
3. The on-duty Field Services Lieutenant will monitor the incident and have oversight of the situation until relieved by the Tactical Lieutenant. Once relieved, the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant will assume responsibility for maintaining the perimeter.
 4. The Field Services supervisor will be the Incident Commander and will collaborate with the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant regarding strategy and coordination of resources and participation of different agencies.
 5. In particularly complex or volatile situations, the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant or higher-ranking officer may assume incident command.
 6. The Field Services supervisor will notify the Tactical Lieutenant as soon as possible.
 - a. The Tactical Lieutenant will take these actions:
 - i. The Tactical Lieutenant will advise the ECC and all officers on scene that the call meets the criteria of a tactical activation. The Tactical Lieutenant will assume command and control.
 - ii. The Tactical Lieutenant will call out CNT immediately upon responding to the scene.
 - iii. The top priority of the Tactical Lieutenant is to 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.
 - iv. The safety of the hostages, public, and officers through a non-violent resolution of the situation takes precedent over the amount of time officers have been deployed and any inconvenience to the community.
 - v. Negotiations should continue if they are progressing and hostages are not in immediate danger.



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- vi. Negotiations should cease, and force is authorized, if communication with an individual is not progressing or it is progressing in a negative direction and the lives of hostages are considered to be in imminent danger.
- vii. The Tactical Lieutenant will follow SOP – Specialized Tactical Units.

D. Field Services Response to Barricaded Individual(s)

1. When an officer is dispatched to a call of a barricaded individual, the officer should begin gathering information to assess whether there is a need for a tactical response.
2. The responding officer will ensure that backup officers are present before initiating contact. A CITO may make contact with an individual once backup officers are present. If an MCT or CITO is on scene, he or she will make the initial contact with an individual. When possible, the supervisor will ensure that a layered, less-lethal response is in place prior to making any contact with an individual.
3. If the nature of the call out did not alert ECC to dispatch a supervisor, the officer encountering a barricaded individual will notify a supervisor and ECC as soon as possible.
4. ECC will ensure that the on-duty Field Services supervisor is dispatched to the call, together with the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant.
 - a. If the on-duty Field Services supervisor is unavailable, another on-duty supervisor will be notified and dispatched.
5. If the Field Services supervisor determines, through consultation with the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant and the Tactical Lieutenant, that the incident is not appropriate for a tactical response, then the Field Services supervisor will notify ECC.
 - a. ECC will dispatch a MCT or ECIT officer to assist with the response.
 - b. The Field Services supervisor will retain command of the scene, but the MCT or ECIT officer will take the lead on interactions with the individual and will provide input to the Field Services supervisor regarding strategies for resolving the incident.
6. The on-duty Field Services Lieutenant will monitor the incident and have oversight of the situation.



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- a. The Field Services supervisor will be the Incident Commander and will collaborate with the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant and an ECIT officer or the MCT regarding strategy and coordination of resources to resolve the situation. These officers will continually assess and communicate with one another regarding tactics.
 - b. In particularly complex or volatile situations, the on-duty Field Services Lieutenant or higher-ranking officer may assume incident command.
7. Officers will attempt to obtain any information about the individual from family or friends. The Field Services Lieutenant will 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 individual(s). CIU will be available for on-call consultation.
8. The following actions will be taken when officers respond to a scene:
- a. Officers should use invisible deployment as much as possible, including cover and concealment.
 - b. Containment of the immediate area should be established as soon as possible to ensure the individual(s) safety, the community's safety, and the officers' safety.
 - c. If the individual's family and/or friends are present at the location, every attempt should be made to separate them from the individual. Once family and/or friends are separated from the individual and moved to a safe location, should be interviewed to gain additional information.
 - d. The Field Services supervisor and the CITO should consult and develop a plan of action prior to contacting the individual.
9. Communicating with the individual(s) and de-escalation:
- a. When a CITO, ECIT officer, or MCT initiates communication with an individual(s), they should follow these guidelines:
 - i. During a crisis situation, officer(s) should attempt to engage the individual by using de-escalation techniques.
 - ii. When contacting the individual(s), officers should evaluate all available information. Face-to-face contact shall not be attempted, unless the officers are certain the individual is not armed, or if there is sufficient cover and protection to ensure the safety of officers.
 - iii. Officers shall maintain an adequate distance from an individual after considering the threat presented.



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- iv. When possible, officers shall 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, officers will take the following actions:
 - Provide reassurance that the police are there to help and that appropriate care will be provided.
 - Attempt to find out the nature of the crisis the individual is experiencing.
 - While listening to the individual's concerns, allow the individual(s) to express his or her feelings.
 - Avoid threatening the individual with arrest or physical harm.
 - Attempt to guide the conversation towards topics that seem to ease the situation.
 - Always be truthful. If the individual perceives deception, he or she may withdraw, which will further complicate the situation.
 - Ask the individual to disarm and follow the exit plan provided by the officers and supervisors on scene.
 - Engage in active listening and non-threatening, non-judgmental verbal exchanges.
- b. If, after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the barricaded individual and the situation remains unresolved, and the situation does not meet the criteria outlined in the Tactical Threat Assessment paragraph, below, the Incident Commander will have officers withdraw from the area.
- c. When officers clear the call, they cannot force the family, friends, or others who are present to leave the area. The Incident Commander will 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.
- d. If the individual has pending misdemeanor charges or a misdemeanor warrant, officers will 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.
- e. The on-scene supervisor will ensure that an original incident report includes (1) all supplemental reports, (2) video or digital recordings, (3) victim and witness statements, and (4) any other pertinent documents related to the incident. Copies of all reports and statements will be forwarded to CIU by the end of their shift.
- f. The on-scene supervisor will ensure that a periodic watch at the location is entered for each shift over a 24-hour period. The watch is for area command information only and is not to be dispatched.



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10. Barricaded Suicidal Individuals

- a. 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. CNT response to this request will be approved through the Tactical Commander or SOD Commander only after the CIU Detective has been contacted and has responded to the scene.
- b. Officers are also reminded that prior to calling CIU they should request ECIT or MCT officers to respond to the scene.
- c. Once the CIU Detective responds, the CIU Detective will determine if additional assistance from a trained negotiator assigned to CNT will be required to assist.
- d. A CNT response to a scene is not considered a tactical activation.
- e. Incident command will be maintained by the Incident Commander at the scene and not the Tactical Section. This will include any documentation needed as a result of the incident.

12. Pick-Up Orders and Certificates of Evaluation are civil orders. Mental health orders will not be used as a basis for forced entry in order to take the individual(s) into custody.

E. Disengagement Procedures

- a. The on-scene supervisor will ensure that every reasonable attempt is made to contact the individual(s). If the individual(s) refuses to make contact with officers on scene and remains barricaded, the supervisor will:
 - i. Ensure that an on-duty Lieutenant responds to the scene, if the Lieutenant is not already on scene.
 - ii. Ensure all available resources are utilized in order to safely resolve the situation.
 - iii. Avoid escalating or making a forced entry into the location, as well as closing distance on the individual(s).
 - iv. Ensure that the family members, friends, and the individual are provided the appropriate resources and services. Document the provision of resources and services through the use of an OBRD. A list of these resources is available through the RTCC.
 - v. 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.



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F. Tactical Threat Assessment

1. The Field Services supervisor and his or her Lieutenant will consult with the Tactical Lieutenant if the potential hostage situation or barricaded individual scene involves any of the following factors:
 - a. The individual has a confirmed violent felony warrant;
 - b. The individual is currently in the commission of a violent felony crime;
 - c. The individual is currently in the commission of a nonviolent felony and has a documented violent history;
 - d. The individual has a nonviolent felony warrant and a documented violent history;
 - 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 immediate threat of violence; or
 - g. There is positive confirmation of an unwilling individual who is unable to leave the scene of a suicidal or barricaded incident.
2. The Tactical Unit and CNT will not respond to the scene of an individual that is someone who is mobile, e.g., walking on foot or driving a car, unless the situation requires a tactical response. The Tactical Lieutenant who will have the final authority to determine whether to initiate a full Tactical Unit deployment will determine any tactical response to such an incident.
3. The Tactical Lieutenant will advise Field Services whether or not Tactical will respond. Field Services will retain control of the scene if Tactical determines that a tactical response is not necessary.
4. Any supervisor may contact the Tactical Lieutenant at any time for incident consultation.

G. Use of Tactical Units in Response to Suicidal or Barricaded Individual(s)

1. At the discretion of the Tactical Lieutenant, the Tactical Unit will respond under these circumstances:
 - a. All hostage situations;
 - b. Any active shooter incidents; and
 - c. Any other violent incidents beyond the capabilities of the Field Services Bureau.



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2. The Tactical Lieutenant will monitor the threat assessment criteria, while an incident is taking place, to ensure that the incident meets Department policy and procedure for a continued tactical deployment.