



ALBUQUERQUE POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL ORDERS

SOP 2-20

Effective: 05/27/16 Expires: 11/23/16 Replaces: 04/25/16

**2-20 HOSTAGE, SUICIDAL/BARRICADED SUBJECT, AND TACTICAL
THREAT ASSESSMENT**

Related Policies:

- 2-8 On Body Recording Device
- 2-19 Response to Behavioral Health Issues
- 6-8 Specialized Tactical Units

2-20-1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to describe the field service response to calls involving hostage, barricaded, and suicidal/barricaded subjects. This policy describes how to assess the situation for possible tactical deployment. If there is a tactical deployment, those procedures are described in the Specialized Tactical Units SOP.

2-20-2 Policy

Hostage rescue and barricaded or suicidal/barricaded subjects are among the most dangerous and volatile situations facing an officer. These crisis situations present the potential of violence, serious bodily injury or death. Therefore, this standard operating policy is established so as to safely resolve these crisis incidents, to avoid the unreasonable risk of harm to hostages, suicidal persons, citizens and officers, while using the minimum amount of force necessary. The method by which these crisis situations are resolved is largely dependent on the subject's conduct. However, the use of de-escalation techniques may serve to lessen tension, and safely diffuse the crisis situation. Accordingly, it is this policy's goal to first attempt to de-escalate and safely resolve the situation and thereby protect the hostage, the barricaded subject, citizens and officers. If, however, the assessment of the situation indicates that a tactical deployment is necessary, this SOP sets out the procedures that will be used. Field services officers will work closely with specially trained crisis intervention personnel and with tactical to ensure coordinated and appropriate responses to these situations.



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2-20-3 Definitions

A. Active listening

A way of listening and responding to another person by non-verbal cues, tone of voice, facial expressions and body posture that improves mutual understanding. It is attentive listening without being distracted.

B. Barricaded Subject

A person or persons in a location that provides a means of spatial separation that assists them in avoiding apprehension from law enforcement.

C. Crisis Intervention Trained Officer (CITO)

Field Services Bureau officers who have successfully completed the basic crisis intervention team training.

D. Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT)

The Crisis Negotiation Team is composed of supervisors and officers who serve in an additional/collateral duty capacity. These supervisors and officers respond with every tactical deployment to serve as specialists who focus on and utilize verbal de-escalation skills to assist in safely defusing dangerous, life threatening situations or specific critical incidents, when called upon to do so.

E. Enhanced Crisis Intervention Trained Officer (ECIT Officer)

Field Services Bureau officers who function as specialists in handling calls involving individuals experiencing a behavioral health disorders, and other calls of crisis not related to behavioral health issues. ECIT officers receive the same training as CITOs and additional advanced behavioral health training to be certified as ECIT officers.

F. Hostage Situation

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

G. Inner Perimeter

A perimeter established to keep the incident and suspect contained. The perimeter will vary depending on the location of the incident.



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H. Mobile Crisis Team(s) (MCT):

Composed of ECIT officers, who respond to priority behavioral health crisis calls for service. They are partnered with a mental health professional who can provide immediate behavioral health services once the scene is made safe. MCT does not respond to tactical deployments because CNT will be present.

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

A perimeter established to keep the public safely away from the incident and successfully divert traffic. The perimeter will vary depending on the location of the incident.



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2-20-4 Procedures

A. On Body Recording Devices

Officers should recognize that hostage situations, barricaded subjects, and suicidal/barricaded subjects are likely to involve a mandatory recording incident under the On Body Recording Device SOP, and should activate their on-body recording devices as soon as they arrive on scene. If the incident lasts an extended period of time, officers may turn off their recording devices when not engaged with the subject in order to conserve battery life, but should reactivate when appropriate or necessary.

B. Dispatch and Initial Assessment Protocol

If the initial call alerts Communications that a situation may involve a behavioral health crisis such as hostage situation, or a barricading subject who may be suicidal, Communications will dispatch a field services supervisor, the field services on-duty lieutenant, and an ECIT officer or MCT as available. Using the protocols below, specialized responders will assess the situation to determine the nature of the situation and whether field services can use their crisis intervention training to successfully resolve the situation, or whether a tactical deployment will be necessary.

If the call is not initially categorized for ECIT or MCT response, the first responding officer's primary objective will be to slow the situation, assess the nature of the situation, and gather the appropriate manpower and resources according to the protocols below.

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C. Hostage Situation

1. Field Services Officers Duties and Responsibilities

Field Services officers responding to a hostage situation will:

- a. Notify a field services supervisor and Emergency Communications as soon as possible that there appears to be a hostage situation. The officer, to the greatest extent possible, will identify the address, the suspect's identity, the number and identity of any hostages, and any information regarding whether the suspect is armed or has made specific threats.
- b. Request immediate backup.
- c. Set up an inner perimeter, and as needed, an outer perimeter to exclude non-law enforcement pedestrians and vehicular traffic.
- d. Maintain radio contact with dispatch and other responders.
- e. 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.



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- f. If needed to confirm the actual status of the situation, begin a dialogue with the suspect(s) to determine the nature of the situation and to confirm whether there are hostages involved. If the officer has a good rapport with the subject, the officer may continue communication to attempt to de-escalate the situation until the arrival of CNT.
- g. Officers shall not exchange themselves for hostages or surrender their weapons.
- h. Officers should not allow the offender(s) to leave the area with the hostages, except under the most extreme circumstances. If there is a possibility that the offender(s) can leave the area, preparations will be made to provide surveillance and control of travel routes.

2. Field Services Supervisor Response to Hostage Situation

When notified of a hostage situation, field service supervisors will:

- a. Respond to the scene immediately.
- b. Request sufficient manpower to handle the call, with an emphasis on sufficient manpower to establish an inner and outer perimeter around the location.
- c. Request Emergency Communications to dispatch the on-duty lieutenant, if the lieutenant is not already on scene.
- d. Set up a command post in an appropriate area.
- e. Notify the tactical lieutenant.
- f. Retain command until the arrival of the tactical lieutenant.
- g. Ensure that Field Services units maintain an outer perimeter.
- h. If outside agencies are involved, coordinate with the on-duty lieutenant to ensure that proper communications are established and maintained by being the department point person for such communications.
- i. Designate a media staging area and request a public information officer through Emergency Communications.
- j. Turn over command of the scene to the tactical lieutenant upon the tactical unit's arrival. The Field Services supervisor will then only be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the outer perimeter.
- k. Remain at the scene for the duration of the incident, reporting to the tactical lieutenant.
- l. Secure a radio frequency for the operation.
- m. Notify rescue, ambulance, and fire department as needed.
- n. If the field services supervisor or tactical lieutenant determine that a suspected hostage situation does not involve hostages, the field services supervisor will follow the protocols for a barricaded subject in Paragraph D below.



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3. The field services on-duty lieutenant will monitor the incident and have overall oversight of the situation. The field services supervisor will be the incident commander and will collaborate with the on-duty lieutenant regarding strategy and coordination of resources and different agencies. In particularly complex or volatile situations, the on-duty lieutenant or higher ranking officer may assume incident command.
4. The field services supervisor will notify the tactical lieutenant as soon as possible. The tactical lieutenant will consider the following guidelines:
 - a. The tactical lieutenant will call out CNT immediately when responding to the scene.
 - b. The top priority 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.
 - c. The safety of the hostages, public, and officers and the successful resolution of the situation take precedence over the time of the officers deployed and the inconvenience to the community.
 - d. If negotiations are moving in a positive direction and the hostages are not deemed to be in immediate danger, negotiations should continue.
 - e. Force is authorized where necessary to ensure the safety of the hostages when negotiations are moving in a negative direction and the lives of the hostages are in imminent danger.
 - f. The tactical lieutenant will follow the Tactical and Crisis Negotiation Team SOP.

D. Field Services Response to Barricaded or Suicidal/Barricaded Subjects

1. When an officer is dispatched to a call of a subject who is barricaded or suicidal/barricaded, 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 the subject once backup officers are present. If an MCT or enhanced CITO is on scene, they will make the initial contact. When possible, the supervisor will ensure that a layered, less-lethal response is in place prior to making any contact with the subject.
3. Emergency Communications will ensure that the on-duty field services supervisor is dispatched to the call, together with the field services on-duty lieutenant. If the supervisor is unavailable, another on-duty supervisor will be notified and dispatched. If the nature of the call out did not alert Emergency Communications to dispatch a supervisor, the officer encountering a barricaded or suicidal/barricaded subject will notify a supervisor and Emergency Communications as soon as possible.



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4. As soon as the field services supervisor determines from consultation with the field services on-duty lieutenant and the tactical lieutenant that the incident is not appropriate for a tactical response, the supervisor will notify Emergency Communications to dispatch a mobile crisis team or enhanced CITO to assist with the response. The supervisor will retain command of the scene, but the MCT or enhanced CITO will take the lead on interactions with the subject and will provide input to the supervisor regarding strategies for resolving the incident.
5. The field services on-duty lieutenant will monitor the incident and have overall oversight of the situation. The field services supervisor will be the incident commander and will collaborate with the on-duty lieutenant and enhanced CITO or MCT regarding strategy and coordination of resources to resolve the situation. These officers will continually assess and communicate with one another regarding tactics. In particularly complex or volatile situations, the on-duty lieutenant or higher ranking officer may assume incident command.
6. Officers will make an attempt to obtain any information on the subject from family or friends. The Real Time Crime Center will be contacted to use the Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU) case management system and other available resources to obtain any available additional information on the location or subject(s). CIU will be available for on-call consultation.
7. Responding to the scene:
 - a. Officers responding to the scene 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 subject's safety, the community's safety, and the officers' safety.
 - c. If family and/or friends are present at the location, every attempt should be made to separate them from the subject. Once the family and friends are separated from the subject, the family member or friend(s) should be interviewed to gain additional information.
 - d. The supervisor and the CITO should consult and develop a plan of action prior to contacting the subject.
8. Communicating with the subject through De-Escalation

When a CITO, an enhanced CITO, or MCT initiates communication with a subject, they should follow these guidelines:

During a crisis situation, officer(s) should attempt to engage the individual in de-escalation techniques. When contacting the subject, officers should evaluate all available information. Face-to-face contact shall not be attempted unless the officers are certain the subject is not armed or there is sufficient cover and protection to ensure safety. Officers shall ensure that adequate distance from the subject is maintained, considering the threat the subject poses.



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When possible, officers shall attempt to contact the subject via telephone. If unable to make contact via telephone, alternate means such as public address announcements, social media, or any other electronic communication should be attempted. If contact is made:

- a. Provide reassurance that the police are there to help and that appropriate care will be provided.
- b. Attempt to find out what the nature of the crisis the individual is experiencing
- c. While relating to the individual concerns, allow the subject to express their feelings.
- d. Do not threaten the individual with arrest or physical harm.
- e. Attempt to guide the conversation towards topics that seem to ease the situation.
- f. Always be truthful; if the individual perceives deception, he/she may withdraw and further complicate the situation.
- g. Ask the subject to disarm themselves and follow the exit plan provided by the officers/supervisors on scene.
- h. Engage in active listening and non-threatening, non-judgmental verbal exchange.

9. Disengagement Procedures

The supervisor on scene will ensure that every reasonable attempt is made to contact the subject. If the subject refuses to make contact with officers on scene and remains barricaded, the supervisor will:

- a. Ensure that an on-duty lieutenant responds to the scene, if the lieutenant is not already on scene.
- b. Ensure all available resources are utilized in order to safely resolve the situation
- c. The supervisor will not escalate or make forced entry into the location or close distance on the subject.
- d. The supervisor will ensure that the family members, friends, and subject are provided additional resources and services available to them. This will be documented by the on-body recording device. A list of these resources is available through the RTCC.
- e. The supervisor will document (via on-body recording device) advising the family, friends, or others involved of the dangers of contacting a barricaded or suicidal/barricaded subject.
- f. After reasonable attempts are made to contact the barricaded or suicidal/barricaded subject without resolution and the situation does not meet the criteria of 2-20-4-E, the incident commander will have officers withdraw from the area.



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- g. When officers clear the call, officers cannot force the family, friends, or others involved to leave the area. The supervisor will ensure that any subject who lives at the location of the incident and cannot safely return, was offered a safe location to stay for the night. Additional basic needs should also be considered.
- h. If the subject has pending misdemeanor charges or misdemeanor warrant, officers will not make forced entry to effect the arrest. This does not prevent the officer from filing the appropriate criminal charges under state statute or city ordinance.
- i. The on scene supervisor will ensure that an original incident report includes: all supplemental reports, video or digital recordings, victim/witness statements, and any other pertinent documents related to the incident. Copies of all reports and statements will be forwarded to the Crisis Intervention Unit by the end of their shift.
- j. On scene supervisor will ensure a periodic watch is entered for each shift for a 24-hour period at the location. The watch is for area command information only not to be dispatched.

10. Pick up order/Certificates of Evaluation are civil orders. Mental health orders will not be used as a basis for forced entry to take the subject into custody.

E. Tactical Threat Assessment

1. The field services supervisor and his/her lieutenant will contact the tactical lieutenant for consultation if the potential hostage situation or suicidal/barricaded or barricaded subject scene involves any of the following factors:
 - a. Subject has a confirmed felony warrant.
 - b. The subject is currently in the commission of a violent felony crime.
 - c. Subject has a confirmed non-violent felony warrant, currently in the commission of a non-violent felony crime, and has a documented violent history.
 - d. Subject is armed with a firearm and the on-scene officer can confirm that the subject is discharging the firearm.
 - e. Subject is armed in a public area displaying an immediate threat of violence in the public area.
 - f. There is positive confirmation of an unwilling subject who is unable to leave the location of the suicidal and/or barricaded subject.
2. Tactical and Crisis Negotiation Team will not respond to the scene of subjects threatening suicide from elevated positions or someone shifting their location (e.g. walking on foot or driving a car) unless the situation requires a tactical response, as determined by the tactical lieutenant. The tactical lieutenant will have the final authorization for a full Tactical Unit deployment.



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3. The tactical lieutenant will advise field services about whether tactical should respond and what further information is necessary to determine whether tactical should respond. The tactical lieutenant will make the final determination on the use of Tactical Units in all situations.
 4. Any supervisor may contact the tactical lieutenant at any time for incident consultation.
- F. Use of Tactical Units in Response to Suicidal and/or Barricaded Subjects:
1. At the discretion of the tactical lieutenant, the tactical unit will respond when:
 - a. A suspect barricades him/herself and is wanted for a felony.
 - b. All hostage situations
 - c. Any active shooter incident
 - d. Suicidal/barricaded or barricaded subjects who have a felony warrant or who appear to be an immediate threat to others
 - e. Any other violent incidents beyond the capabilities of the Field Services Bureau.
 2. Throughout the call the tactical lieutenant will continually monitor the threat assessment criteria to ensure that the incident meets policy and procedure for tactical deployment.