



NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS MANUAL

CHAPTER: 46.1

TITLE: HOSTAGE, BARRICADE AND SNIPER INCIDENTS

EFFECTIVE: 11/26/2017

REVISED: Replaces Policy/Procedure 414

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide guidelines for situations where a person refuses to submit to the lawful requests of the officers by barricading themselves in a structure or vehicle, creating a sniper situation and/or by taking a hostage.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. It is the policy of the New Orleans Police Department to address snipers, hostage and barricade situations with due regard for the preservation of life and balancing the risk of injury, while obtaining the safe release of hostages, apprehending offenders and securing available evidence.
2. The scope of this Chapter is not intended to address all variables that officers encounter during their initial response or when a sniper, hostage or barricade situation has developed nor does it require or purport to recommend specific strategies or tactics for resolution as each incident is a dynamic and rapidly evolving event.

DEFINITIONS:

Definitions relevant to this Chapter include:

Hostage Situation—An incident where it is reasonable to believe a person is unlawfully held by a hostage-taker as security so that specified terms or conditions will be met.

Barricade Situation—An incident where a person maintains a position of cover or concealment and ignores or resists law enforcement personnel, and it is reasonable to believe the subject is armed with a dangerous or deadly weapon.

Sniper Situation—An incident where an individual is armed and has announced intentions or apparently intends to harm life or property, and such report has been confirmed. An incident where shots have been or are being fired placing lives and or property in danger, and responding officers through their assessment have reason to believe that the perpetrator is still on the scene.

COMMUNICATION WITH SUBJECTS ON SCENE

3. Responding officers shall not bargain with, negotiate with or entertain any requests made by persons holding hostages nor allow them to leave the area except as authorized by the Special Operations Division (SOD) Tactical Commander. Officers should only attempt to identify any additional subjects, inquire about victims and injuries and gather intelligence information.
4. When available, Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) members shall respond to the scene as soon as practicable and take over communication responsibilities, at the direction of the SOD and Incident Commander. CNT members are permitted to exercise flexibility in each situation based upon their training, the circumstances presented, suspect actions or demands and the available resources. (See: **Chapter 46.7 – Crisis Response Unit**).

FIRST RESPONDING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

5. First responding officers should promptly and carefully evaluate all available information to determine whether an incident involves, or may later develop into, a hostage or barricade situation.
6. In those incidents where the suspect is obviously on the scene in a fixed or static location, the first unit(s) on the scene shall contain the situation by forming a perimeter around the scene. Officers should not be in direct line of fire but should be situated in such a way that no suspect(s) can escape.
7. During sniper situations, officers should determine areas vulnerable to the suspect shooter's field of fire. Officers should attempt to determine the number, type, and range of the suspect's weapons. If possible, officers should determine the probable location of the suspect and safe access routes for responding support units.
8. The first responding officer should immediately request a supervisor respond to the scene as soon as he/she has determined that a hostage or barricade situation exists.
9. The first responding officer shall assume the duties of the Incident Commander until relieved by a supervisor or a more qualified responder. The officer shall continually evaluate the situation, including the level of risk to other officers, to the persons involved, to bystanders, and the resources currently available.
10. The Incident Commander should brief the arriving supervisor of the incident, including information about suspects and victims, the extent of any injuries, additional resources or equipment that may be needed and current perimeters and evacuation areas.
11. All transfers of command shall be broadcast to Communications Services on air and specifically identify the ranking members involved and the specific time of transfer.

BARRICADE SITUATION

12. Unless circumstances require otherwise, officers handling a barricade situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of controlling the incident in anticipation of the arrival of specialized personnel and trained negotiators. Based upon the level of risk, while waiting for the Crisis Response Unit, District personnel should, if safe, practicable and if sufficient resources exist:
 - (a) Establish an inner and outer perimeter.
 - (b) Establish a command post outside of the inner perimeter but inside the outer perimeter.
 - (c) Establish a patrol emergency/arrest response team prior to SWAT arrival. The

team actions may include:

- Securing any subject or suspect who may surrender.
- Taking action to mitigate a lethal threat or behavior.
- Evacuate any injured persons or citizens in the zone of danger if it can be done without placing them at risk.
- Attempt to establish preliminary communications with the suspect.

(NOTE: Once the CRU has arrived, all negotiations should generally be halted to allow the negotiators and SWAT team time to set up.)

- (d) Be prepared to brief the SOD Commander on the situation.
- (e) Plan for and stage anticipated resources.

13. If necessary and available, establish a tactical or exclusive radio frequency for the incident through Communications Services. Have Communications Services broadcast the location of the incident on all channels to let other officers know to avoid the area.

HOSTAGE SITUATION

14. Unless circumstances require otherwise, officers handling a hostage situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of controlling the incident in anticipation of the arrival of specialized personnel and trained hostage negotiators. However, it is understood that hostage situations are dynamic and can require that officers react quickly to developing or changing threats. Based upon the level of risk, the following options, while not all-inclusive or in any particular order, should be considered:
- (a) Ensure injured persons are evacuated from the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so. Request medical assistance.
 - (b) Assign personnel to a contact team to control the suspect should he/she attempt to exit the building, structure or vehicle, and attack, use deadly force, attempt to escape or surrender prior to additional resources arriving.
 - (c) Establish a patrol emergency/arrest response team in the event it becomes necessary to enter a building, structure or vehicle, such as when the suspect is using deadly force against any hostages. (See: **Chapter 46.14 – Active Shooter.**)
 - (d) Assist hostages or potential hostages to escape if it is reasonably safe to do so.
 - (e) Request additional personnel, resources and equipment as needed (canine team, aircraft support).
 - (f) Provide responding emergency personnel with a safe arrival route to the location.
 - (g) Evacuate non-injured persons in the immediate threat area if it is reasonably safe to do so.
 - (h) Coordinate pursuit or surveillance vehicles and control of travel routes.
 - (i) Gather as much information about the suspect as possible, including any weapons, victims and their injuries, additional hazards, other involved parties and any other relevant intelligence information.
 - (j) Establish an inner and outer perimeter as resources and circumstances permit to prevent unauthorized access.
 - (k) Evacuate bystanders. Check for injuries, the presence of other involved subjects, witnesses, evidence or additional information.
 - (l) Determine the need for and notify the appropriate persons within and outside the Department, such as command officers and the Public Information Officer.
 - (m) If necessary and available, establish a tactical or exclusive radio frequency for the incident through Communications Services.
15. In those instances where the hostage situation is mobile in nature (by way of foot, automobile, train, airplane, boat, etc.) or a shooting situation is of a mobile or continually moving nature, the first unit in contact shall maintain surveillance and make notifications

to Communications Services and a District supervisor.

16. Supervisory personnel shall maintain control of the incident (traffic routes, responding units and accessibility) as they would for a foot or vehicle pursuit. (See: **Chapter 41.4 – Foot Pursuits and Chapter 41.5 – Vehicle Pursuits**).

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

17. Upon being notified that a hostage or barricade situation exists, the District supervisor should immediately respond to the scene, assess the risk level of the situation, establish a proper chain of command and assume the role of Incident Commander once briefed and until properly relieved. This includes requesting a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) response if appropriate and apprising the SWAT Commander of the circumstances. In addition, the following options, listed here in no particular order, should be considered:
 - (a) Ensure injured persons are evacuated and treated by medical personnel.
 - (b) Ensure the completion of necessary first responder responsibilities or assignments.
 - (c) Request crisis negotiators, specialized units, additional personnel, resources or equipment as appropriate.
 - (d) Establish a command post location as resources and circumstances permit.
 - (e) Designate assistants who can help with intelligence information and documentation of the incident.
 - (f) If it is practicable to do so, arrange for video documentation of the operation.
 - (g) Consider contacting utility and communication providers when restricting such services (e.g., restricting electric power, gas, and telephone service).
 - (h) Ensure adequate law enforcement coverage for the remainder of the District / City during the incident. The supervisor should direct non-essential personnel away from the scene unless they have been summoned by the supervisor or Communications Services.
 - (i) Identify a media staging area outside the outer perimeter and have the department Public Information Officer or a designated temporary media representative provide media access in accordance with department policy.
 - (j) Identify the need for mutual aid and the transition or relief of personnel for incidents of extended duration.
 - (k) Debrief personnel and review documentation as appropriate.

SWAT RESPONSIBILITIES

18. The highest ranking officer on the scene should assume the role of Incident Commander once briefed by the on scene IC and will utilize available on duty officers to maintain effective inner and outer perimeters until the arrival of the Special Operations Division Commander or his/her designee who shall assume tactical responsibility.
19. The Incident Commander will be responsible for setting up a Command Post, an outer perimeter utilizing on-duty District personnel unless or until sufficient Special Operations Division personnel or officers from other specialized assignments (i.e., SOD Traffic) are available for outer perimeter control.
20. The SOD Commander will be responsible for field related tactical measures from which to assure containment, control and handling of the incident.
21. The Incident Commander will provide for the evacuation of all other persons that might be in danger from actions of the police and/or perpetrator. These activities should be carried out without confronting the perpetrator or endangering police personnel. The

Incident Commander shall be responsible for control of all police personnel and the monitoring of police officer safety.

MEDIA COORDINATION

22. All media activities will be coordinated under the guidance of the department's Public Information Officer. The Public Information Officer is directed to contact the Incident Command Post on arrival at the scene of the incident. Media releases will be made in accordance with department policy and only with the acknowledgment and permission of the Commander of the Special Operations Division.

REPORTING

23. The first responding officer from the district of occurrence shall be responsible for the completion of the initial incident report (EPR).
24. District officers, assigned by the Incident Commander, shall be responsible for obtaining warrants and/or Order of Protective Custody (OPC) papers that are necessary.
25. Once they have assumed command of the scene the Special Operations Division shall complete a Supplemental Report, to the initial report written by the first responding officer from the district of occurrence.
26. The Special Operations Division shall complete reports of its deployments required by **Chapter 46.7 – Crisis Response Unit - SWAT**. A copy of SOD's reports shall be forwarded to the unit or division conducting the original investigation.