



MEDFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICY NO. 7.03

HOSTAGE AND BARRICADED PERSONS

MASSACHUSETTS POLICE
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS
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Michelle Guerette
Chief of Police

POLICY:

The primary mission of the Department in hostage/barricaded person situations is the protection and preservation of life. Tactical decisions that are made in these instances shall be guided by the premise that preservation of life extends to all persons, including suspects, perpetrators, hostages, barricaded persons and uninvolved bystanders.

PROCEDURES:

Hostage/barricaded person situations may result from the unexpected arrival of police officers during the commission of a crime. If the perpetrators have not seized hostages or gained physical control of the crime scene, patrol officers should consider immediate intervention provided the highest degree of care is exercised in order to ensure that undue loss of life does not occur. Immediate intervention by officers is usually not appropriate when the suspects have gained control of the crime scene area and/or have either barricaded themselves or seized hostages. Police assaults in these cases may needlessly endanger the lives of the police officers and others concerned.

Officers should not act impulsively when a hostage situation or barricaded person has been declared. A hasty decision could minimize the effectiveness of specialized personnel such as trained negotiators and emergency service technicians. Officers are

reminded that due to the unique circumstances of a hostage situation or barricaded person, they must exercise the highest degree of care in order to ensure that undue loss of life does not occur. If, however, during the course of the hostage confrontation, one or more hostages are killed, direct action may be necessary to immediately subdue the offender.

These procedures are not intended for use with an active shooter. Active shooters shall be engaged immediately according to current tactics whether or not hostages are present.

First Unit on Scene

The first officers to arrive at the scene of a hostage situation or barricaded person shall immediately notify Dispatch, take a quick survey of the situation, then notify the Shift Commander of the circumstances and the need for additional resources.

Shift Commander Responsibilities

The Shift Commander shall immediately respond to any hostage situation or barricaded person and:

1. Contain the scene;
2. Notify the Chief of Police or her designee, request additional assets as necessary via mutual aid and/or Metro-LEC resources, and activate the Incident Command System. See the department policies on Special Operations and All Hazards Plan/ICS;
3. Prevent further danger to citizens or bystanders by removing them from the immediate area and restricting entry;
4. Seek to confine the captor(s) to the smallest possible area consistent with their own safety and establish an outer perimeter if sufficient personnel are available;
5. Immediately notify Dispatch if an injured victim needs assistance or an ambulance;
6. Coordinate ambulance evacuation of any victim(s);
7. Assign personnel to interview relatives and associates of the hostage taker or barricaded person.
8. Notify the Metro-STAR Investigative Support Unit (ISU) to develop background information on the hostage taker and hostage(s).

Negotiators

In the event a hostage negotiator is need, the Metro-STAR negotiators will be requested. They will do the negotiating if requested by the Incident Commander on scene. If prolonged contact is made before the arrival of trained negotiators, one officer shall be assigned as the contact person. All other officers will refrain from direct contact with the suspect.

The negotiator(s), when notified of a hostage situation or barricaded person, will respond to the scene and report to the Incident Commander on scene for briefing instructions. Once briefed, the negotiator(s) will:

1. Interview police personnel and citizens to gather intelligence;
2. Establish contact with the hostage taker(s) or barricaded subjects;
3. Determine the primary negotiator, (the negotiator best able to establish a rapport with the hostage/barricaded person will be the primary negotiator);
4. Advise and assist the Incident Commander in developing strategies for defusing the situation.

Mobile Hostage Situations

Every effort should be made to keep a hostage situation or barricaded person(s) from becoming mobile, since mobility substantially increases the element of danger. Should a situation become mobile, in spite of efforts to the contrary, the following procedures will apply:

1. The Incident Commander shall ensure an unmarked unit is assigned to follow and maintain surveillance of the situation. The Incident Commander shall also assign other marked units as necessary to monitor/control the travel route.
2. The unmarked unit shall follow and maintain surveillance of the situation as long as hostages are being held; maintain contact with Incident Command through communications and advise as to the location and progress of the situation. If a chase situation develops, units will be guided by the department's policy on Vehicle Pursuits.
3. Should the hostage/barricaded person situation move to another municipality, the Incident Commander shall notify the local authorities affected. The Incident Commander and the negotiators shall maintain contact and cooperate fully with the other local authorities so that any rapport established between the suspect and negotiators is maintained.

Demands

The Incident Commander shall make all decisions regarding the demands of the hostage taker or barricaded subject. The following restrictions apply to all demands in hostage situations or with regard to barricaded persons:

1. No weapons will be supplied to the hostage taker or barricaded person;
2. No additional hostages will be given; and
3. A hostage taker will not be allowed to move a hostage to a more secure location.