

COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Subject: EMERGENCY SERVICES UNIT / HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS

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I. Purpose

To establish guidelines for the notification of the Emergency Services Unit (ESU) and hostage negotiators.

II. Statement of Policy

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to select and continually train personnel to comprise an Emergency Services Unit and hostage negotiators.

III. Definitions

Barricaded Person – A person who has taken a position of confinement in a particular area to avoid arrest or apprehension. All barricaded persons will be considered armed until proven otherwise.

Crowd Control – Any civil disturbance or crowd control problem where countersniper tactics, gas munitions, or rescue/apprehension from the crowd is anticipated.

High Risk Situations – Incidents involving the use or the potential of extreme violence in which citizens and/or police officers are placed in a position of receiving serious physical injury or death.

Hostage Situation – The holding of a person or persons against their will through the use of force or the implied use of force.

Preplanned arrests – Any preplanned arrest situation where there is a high probability that the subject(s) will resist apprehension with the use of weapons.

Sniper Situation – A person who has placed himself in a position of concealment with a firearm and has fired or threatened to fire upon anyone.

Other – Any situation where the Watch Commander or other supervisor decides the response of the ESU Team is warranted.

IV. Selection Criteria

The following are the minimum qualifications for the ESU Team:

- A. Minimum of two (2) years of law enforcement experience.
- B. Ability to shoot a pistol qualifying score of 90 or better.
- C. A physical fitness assessment, which may include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. 50 push-ups.
 - 2. 50 sit-ups.
 - 3. 1.5 mile run.
- D. Tactical firearms skills assessment.
- E. Tactical scenarios assessment.
- F. Oral interview with current ESU Team members.

If changes are made to the above list of requirements, potential candidates will be notified prior to the assessments.

V. Notification

The Watch Commander/patrol supervisor shall, through the 911 Center, notify the ESU team when any of the following situations arise:

- A. High risk arrest situations.
- B. Barricaded suspects.
- C. Hostage situations.
- D. Civil disorder, riot, mobs.
- E. Sniper fire.
 - 1. Police officer pinned down;
 - 2. Anticipated sniper attacks.
- F. Special event where the possibility of violence exists.
- G. Any situation that the patrol supervisor determines the ESU team is needed.

VI. Mobilization of ESU Team

Whenever the patrol supervisor declares a situation to be an ESU operation, he shall notify the Communications Center and the dispatcher shall notify all ESU team members by the telephone list.

VII. Approved Weapons and Ammunition

The following weapons approved for use by members of the ESU Team include:

- 1. M4 Carbine

2. Remington Shotgun
3. Mossberg Shotgun
4. Armalite AR10 .308 Sniper Rifle
5. Colt AR15 .223 Assault Rifle

The following lethal and less lethal ammunition approved for use by members of the ESU Team includes:

1. Winchester .223 55 grain ballistic hollow point ammunition
2. DRT .223 non-frangible ammunition
3. Remington Law Enforcement reduced recoil .00 buckshot and slugs
4. Federal Gold Medal Match .308 168 grain ammunition
5. 12 gauge shotgun bean bag rounds
6. 12 gauge Reduced Recoil shotgun shells

VIII. Duties of Patrol Supervisor

- A. When a situation is declared an ESU operation, the on-scene supervisor shall begin an immediate isolation of the area as follows:
 1. Select location for on-scene command post.
 2. Locate and contain the suspect(s).
 3. Establish an outer perimeter around the danger zone.
 4. Evacuate all persons from the danger zone.
 5. Evacuate any injured persons, if possible.
 6. Set up traffic control points to keep traffic, vehicular and pedestrian, out of the danger zone.
 7. Begin to gather all available intelligence about the suspect(s), such as description, background, weapons, etc.
 8. Notify higher authorities of the situation and status (Chief of Police, Sheriff).
 9. Summon support personnel (ambulance, fire department, rescue, electric company, gas company, water company, surveillance equipment), as needed.
 10. Assign personnel to begin locating people that may aid in neutralizing the situation (family members, ministers, friends, etc.) If the situation involves a hostage, the hostage negotiator must be notified.

- B. The ranking on-scene supervisor shall maintain full authority over the situation until the arrival of the ESU Team Commander and is authorized to summon additional police personnel, as needed.

IX. Authority and Responsibility

- A. The ESU Team Commander shall have complete authority in all ESU operations. He may direct any patrol or investigative personnel to do any task or duties that he deems necessary to make the situation come to favorable and complete end.
- B. The ranking patrol supervisor shall be responsible for maintaining an outside perimeter and for public information until the arrival of the Public Information Officer. Media access will not be allowed past the outer perimeter or beyond the Command Post.

X. Criteria For Selection of Negotiators

- A. Persons selected as negotiators should have a minimum of four years law enforcement experience.
- B. Special skills include good verbal and problem solving skills.
- C. Specialized training in hostage negotiations will be provided to all persons selected as negotiators.

XI. Crisis Negotiations

- A. A trained negotiator shall be notified during any situation involving hostages and/or barricaded persons. The negotiator shall coordinate a plan of action with the ESU Team Commander and the Watch Commander before beginning negotiations.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the negotiator to:
 - 1. Begin negotiation with the suspect(s).
 - a. Set up communication links.
 - b. Offer alternatives to suspect(s).
 - 2. Offer negotiable items.
 - a. Food.
 - b. Clothing.
 - c. Heat/Air Conditioning.
 - d. Money.
 - e. Medicine/first aid, etc.
 - 3. Non - negotiable items.
 - a. Firearms/Weapons.

- b. Vehicles for travel.
- c. Exchange of persons.
- d. Narcotics or alcohol.

XII. ESU Team Responsibilities

- A. After notification, all members of the team shall respond as quickly and as safely as possible to the Covington Police Department or other designated location for preparation and deployment. Those members on duty shall be relieved and shall also respond. After initial briefing and preparation, all members will respond to the scene.
- B. Upon arrival at the scene, the ESU Commander shall report to the ranking patrol supervisor and shall:
 - 1. Immediately begin to assess the situation and build a situation report by gathering all known intelligence.
 - 2. Notify the patrol supervisor when he is prepared to assume control of the situation.
- C. Upon taking control of the operation, the team shall do the following:
 - 1. Establish an inner perimeter, if possible, according to prescribed training procedures.
 - 2. Make sure the entire danger element is secured and the danger zone is cleared.
 - 3. Establish communications with the suspect(s) either by voice, bullhorn, PA system or telephone. Turn communications over to a negotiator, if possible.
 - 4. Once negotiations have failed or begun to deteriorate, the ESU Commander shall make a recommendation to the Chief of Police as to what action should be taken in order to neutralize the situation. The Chief shall have the authority to follow the recommendation or apply other alternatives.
 - 5. As a general rule, no hostage taker or barricaded person(s) shall be allowed to leave a secured area in a vehicle. If the situation is contained in a vehicle, all efforts will be made not to allow the vehicle to leave to leave its current location. If the vehicle does move and a pursuit does occur, police personnel shall follow the procedures outlined in SOP190, Pursuit of Motor Vehicles. In this event, surveillance shall be used to maintain constant contact with the perpetrator(s) and control of the route of travel will be maintained for the security of the public, if possible.
- D. The ESU truck will be utilized by ESU Team members only, who are responsible for the maintenance, upkeep and condition of the vehicle.
- E. All equipment used by the ESU Team is inventoried and inspected after every callout or training session or at least on a quarterly basis to ensure that it remains in an operational state of readiness in case it is needed for a critical incident.

F. Equipment and supplies maintained in the ESU truck shall include, but not limited to:

1. Spy Stick (1)
2. Mirror (1)
3. Ram (2)
4. Halligan Tool (2)
5. Training Signs
6. Breeching Tool Bags (2)
7. Spare Helmets (2)
8. Ballistic Face Shield
9. Binoculars (1)
10. Night Vision Goggles (1)
11. Gray Blankets (7)
12. Long Zip Ties (1 bag)
13. Stapler (1)
14. Duct Tape (1 Roll)
15. Computer Monitor (1)
16. Gray Tool Kit (1)
17. Red Tool Kit (1)
18. Off Bug Repellent (1 can)
19. Latex Gloves (1 box)
20. Massey Fan (1)
21. First Aid Kit (blue)
22. MRE's (1 box)

This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

Stacey L. Cotton

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Chief of Police