

# **COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

**Subject: DISASTER PLAN**

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## **I. Purpose**

To expedite the mobilization of department personnel in an effective and efficient manner during a disaster.

## **II. Statement of Policy**

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to effectively respond to all emergency situations occurring within the corporate limits and endeavor to bring these situations to a safe conclusion. Proper notification of fire, emergency medical, Emergency Management, Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other support services will be made as necessary. This policy shall be consistent with SOP E060 – Unusual Occurrences.

## **III. Definitions**

### **A. Natural Disaster includes:**

- Earthquakes.
- Severe flooding.
- Severe weather such as a tornado, ice storm, etc.
- Large scale fire.

### **B. Man – Made Disaster includes**

- Mass transportation accident.
- Hazardous material accident.
- Explosions.
- Biohazard threats and incidents.

#### **IV. Emergency Planning**

The Chief of Police has the primary responsibility for emergency management planning for the department. The Chief may assign a department member to coordinate emergency management planning and act as a liaison to other city and county emergency agencies to develop and maintain critical incident plans for the police department.

#### **V. Notification of Personnel**

When it is evident that an emergency situation has occurred or is imminent, the Chief of Police shall be notified, as well as all department personnel. All department personnel are subject to being called to emergency duty.

#### **VI. Command Authority**

The Division Commander shall have command authority over all police personnel until the arrival of a higher level supervisor or the Chief of Police. The highest command officer will make coordination of activities with personnel from Fire, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management and Center for Disease Control (CDC)

#### **VII. Disaster Plan**

In the event of a disaster, the following procedures shall be used as a guide for handling the situation in an appropriate manner.

##### **A. Communications**

The Covington-Newton County 911 Communications Center is designed as the primary communications center during any emergency operations. Secondary resources for communications will be the police department and the Newton County jail. Additional personnel may be assigned to the Communications Center upon the order of the Chief of Police or the Sheriff. The Communications Center shall maintain situation maps to for use during emergencies.

##### **B. Field Command Posts**

The Field Supervisor shall be responsible for establishing a field command post in a safe area near the emergency scene. He shall coordinate field activities with support agencies until the arrival of a higher level of supervisory officer or the Chief of Police. A central command post will be set up at police headquarters, if necessary, as directed by the Chief of Police.

##### **C. Law Enforcement/Military Support**

Mutual aid support from other law enforcement agencies will be requested as the need arises. Support agencies may include:

1. Newton County Sheriff's Department
2. Georgia State Patrol
3. Neighboring jurisdictions

Military support will be obtained according to SOP E025 [E025- National Guard.doc](#)

D. Public Facility Security

Fixed security posts will be established at the following locations when authorized by the Chief of Police:

1. Newton Medical Center (See Hospital Disaster Plan).
2. Covington City Hall

E. Traffic Control

The Patrol Supervisor, at the field command post, will make traffic control plans during an emergency. Traffic will be directed away from an emergency or disaster scene in an efficient manner. All persons will be denied access, except those on official business.

F. Equipment Requirements

Special equipment and/or emergency supplies may be requested from any of the following agencies:

1. Georgia Emergency Management Agency.
2. Georgia National Guard.
3. Georgia Department of Transportation.
4. Newton County Emergency Management Agency.
5. Covington Fire Department.
6. Newton County Emergency Medical Services.
7. Georgia Environmental Protection Agency.
8. Georgia Office of Homeland Security.

**VIII. Procedures for Gathering Bio-Hazard Substances/Evidence**

- A. Upon arrival at a scene, officer(s) should assess situation before entering residence, or building. (Is it an envelope, box, etc., has the package been opened? Is it leaking any substance?).
- B. Record names, addresses, phone numbers of person(s) who received package, and all others at scene.
- C. Make sure the officer in charge is aware of the call.
- D. Before entering a residence, the primary officer will put on a facemask and rubber gloves. (Tyvek suit also if officer feels it is needed).
- E. Second officer will also put on facemask and gloves, and remain outside room where package is located.

- F. Primary officer will enter room, retrieve package and place it in evidence bag and seal bag.
- G. Primary officer will then take bag to second officer who will then place evidence into a second bag and seal it.
- H. Second officer will then change gloves and place evidence into a third bag and seal it.
- I. Once out of residence, mask and gloves are to be removed, triple bagged and placed in the nearest dumpster.
- J. Evidence will then be transported to the property room on Williams Street and placed into a plastic evidence tray and sealed.
- K. In the event the threat is determined to be a confirmed Bio-hazard, officers on the scene will secure a perimeter and notify the Patrol Captain and proper Bio-hazard measures will be taken.

**IX. Rumor Control**

In efforts to combat rumors, news media will be notified according to SOP A225 [A225-Public Information.doc](#) and shall be provided with up-to-date information, as it becomes available.

**X. De-Escalation Procedures**

The following actions will be taken by police department personnel to de-escalate adverse conditions as they arise during a disaster:

- A. Coordinate activities of all law enforcement/ support agencies involved.
- B. Control crowds/ disperse assembly.
- C. Provide security of disaster area.
- D. Provide rescue craft.
- E. Assist stranded persons.
- F. Direct/control traffic.
- G. Assist in evacuation (if necessary).

**XI. Evacuation**

The Emergency Management Director or Fire Chief shall have the authority to declare the necessity of an evacuation. Police personnel shall assist in evacuating persons from designated/affected areas. School buses may be obtained if necessary to evacuate persons who have no other transportation. Post-occurrence duties will include the continuance of security in affected areas and the maintenance of traffic/security checkpoints.

**XII. Situation Report Form**

The Newton County Emergency Management Director will prepare a situation report and a copy of the report will be sent to the police department. The Patrol Supervisor describing the incident and all actions taken by police personnel will complete a supplemental incident report.

***This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.***

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

*Stacey L. Cotton*

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Chief of Police