

**SENECA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
GENERAL ORDER**

<b>General Order:</b> 601	<b>Rescinds:</b> 07/01/13,02/15/14,05/22/19
<b>Subject:</b> Emergency Incidents	<b>NYS Accreditation:</b> 58.2, 58.4
<b>Effective Date:</b> 06/26/2019 <b>By Order Of:</b> Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish procedures for responding to emergency situations including hostage, barricaded gunman, natural or accidental disasters and civil disorders.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

**A. Accidental Disaster**

Any major fire, explosion, transportation crash, hazardous material incident or other major occurrence in which the lives, safety or property of numerous persons is in jeopardy.

**B. Natural Disaster**

Those incidents in which the forces of nature threaten the lives, safety or property of numerous persons; e.g. floods, tornadoes, significant snowfall/blizzard.

**C. Civil Disorder**

An action by any group that poses a substantial threat to peace, life, or property or any tumultuous or violent activity that creates a grave risk of causing public alarm.

**D. Terrorist Action**

A politically motivated, hostile action taken by a person or group who has as its intent the commission of violent acts designed to instill fear, communicate a message and/or demand some governmental action.

**E. Inner perimeter**

The immediate area of containment around the incident site.

**F. Outer Perimeter**

The peripheral control area surrounding the inner-perimeter providing a safe zone for access to and from the inner- perimeter as well as defining the limit of access by unauthorized persons.

**G. Field Command Post - (58.2.B)**

The on-scene location for command staff who will be responsible for determining the exact status of the emergency, resources needed, and incident strategy.

**H. Staging Area**

A location selected generally within the outer perimeter to facilitate arriving resources and personnel responding for assignments.

**I. Liaison Office**

The Chief of Police will coordinate the Seneca Falls Police Department's response to a major disaster. He is responsible for organizing and coordinating requests for resources from the field command post, and developing plans for relief and staffing (for both the emergency incident and patrol services).

**J. Incident Detail Commander – (58.2.J), (58.4.F)**

The Incident Commander (IC) is defined as the highest-ranking supervisor, or designee, at the scene. This individual is responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies, tactics, and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations, designating key personnel assignments upon arrival of those resources and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site. The hierarchy of the Seneca Falls Police

Department (SFPD) command will be as follows:

1. Chief of Police
2. Patrol Lieutenant
3. Patrol Sergeant
6. Senior Officer, if more than one officer is involved and no Supervisor
7. Patrol Officer

**K. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) – (58.2)** is defined as a system that provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, Local, and tribal governments to work together more effectively and efficiently to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

**L. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): (58.2.H)** SFPD personnel may be issued PPE by the Lieutenant as follows: latex exam gloves; rain coats, hat covers, rubber gloves; N95 respirators or greater; clear plastic eye shields for splash protection; and any other specialized PPE as required dependent on the incident assignment. **(58.4.D)**

**M. Unusual Occurrence**

Exceptional events beyond routine police operations (e.g. strikes, parades, demonstrations, civil disorder, etc.).

**III. POLICY**

- A.** It shall be the policy of the Seneca Falls Police Department to coordinate emergency response initiatives and activities in coordination with local, county, state, federal, or other Emergency response plans which are applicable to the type of situation or event.
- B.** Members' response to and management of critical incidents shall be consistent with the tenets of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS).
- C.** Emergency events pose dynamic and fluid situations. This policy is designed to serve as a guide for emergency responders. It is not intended to limit or restrict the initiative, judgment, or training those who are called upon to respond to such events.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

##### **A. Responding Officer(s) Responsibilities:**

Once it has been established that an emergency situation is in fact taking place, the initial responding officer(s) shall:

1. Notify the dispatcher of the nature and specific location of the situation and request the response of supervisory personnel.
2. Request to secure the current radio frequency in use for uninterrupted communication. **(58.2.A)**
3. Contain the situation to the smallest possible area consistent with officer safety and attempt to prevent the escape of any involved suspects.
4. Direct responding units indicating the hazard zone to be avoided.
5. Position responding personnel so that:
  - a. A "cross-fire" situation does not exist.
  - b. Officers have an available escape route.
  - c. Contamination or the exposure of personnel to dangerous chemicals is rendered unlikely.
6. Establish an inner-perimeter around the situation denying all access to the area.
7. Request additional units to establish an outer perimeter and begin diverting vehicular and pedestrian traffic away from the scene. **(58.2.G)**
8. Secure all witnesses at a safe point outside of the inner-perimeter for interviews.
9. Use ONLY that force required by the situation and allowed by department policy.

##### **B. Supervising Officers Responsibilities:**

1. Respond to the scene and have dispatcher secure a radio frequency for the sole use of incident personnel, considering the need to communicate with other police agencies. **(58.2.A)**
2. Obtain as much information about the situation as possible from the initial responding officers and immediately advise the Lieutenant.
3. As applicable, summon the investigator and assign him/her the responsibility for any suspect/incident background information gathering.
4. Isolate and secure the area.
5. If possible to accomplish safely, initiate any necessary evacuation of bystanders or victims within the inner-perimeter.

6. Establish a command post with telephone availability in a safe and accessible location within the outer perimeter. Notify the dispatcher by phone of the address and telephone number of the location and the safest, open route for other responding personnel. **(58.2.A, B)**
7. Ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic has been adequately diverted. **(58.2.G)**
8. Establish a staging area to which responding units will report (preferably within the outer-perimeter as space and location permit). Personnel will be logged in utilizing an "Emergency Operations Personnel Log."
9. Request the needed response of special services (i.e., Fire Department, ambulance, Public Utilities, etc.). **(58.2.H)**
10. Ensure that all responding units are advised as to the Incident Commander, the location of the Command Post, and Staging Area and any special instructions regarding the incident, including areas to avoid when responding.

**C. As the situation develops:**

1. Upon the arrival of the Chief of Police, the previous supervisor will brief the Chief (Incident Commander) of the situation and its present status. **(58.2.J)**
2. Overall command of the operation will be from the command post and ALL field communication will be directed to the command post.
3. Supervising Officers will report directly to the command post. The Incident Commander will designate these supervisors to act as:
  - a. Operations officer, who will implement the strategy and tactics to control the incident as outlined by the Incident Commander. This supervisor will:
    - 1) Maintain a chronological log of responding personnel and assignments,
    - 2) Make assignments based on the direction of the command post or needs identified by the outer-perimeter supervisor,
    - 3) Distribute and/or make arrangements for equipment and transportation as required. **(58.2.H, M)**

- b. Public Information Officer - NO information will be given to the media except through the public information officer designated by the Chief of Police with the prior approval of the Incident Commander at the scene. An area will be designated by him as the Press Center. **(58.2.D)**
- c. Aide/Scribe - who will assist the Incident Commander and maintain a chronological log of events.
- d. Other duties as ordered by the Incident Commander per the Incident Command System.

**D. Response by Additional Units:**

- 1. The decision to request additional units or personnel shall only be made by the Incident Commander. All units responding will report to the staging area for directives. These may include:
  - a. Assigning officers to gather casualty information, interview witnesses, victims, etc. (Personnel in non-uniform attire will not be allowed in the inner perimeter.) **(58.2.C)**
  - b. The New York State Police due to potential need for aviation services. **(58.2.E), (58.4.E)**
  - c. The Seneca County Sheriff's Office and any adjoining jurisdictions. **(58.2.E),(58.4.E)**
- 2. The Incident Commander shall determine the number of personnel needed as well as any specialized unit that may assist. Such units may include: Investigators, Evidence Technicians, Canine, Hostage negotiators, Special Weapons and Tactics Squad (SWAT). **(58.2.E), (58.4.E)**

**E. The Emergency Communications Department shall: (58.2.A)**

- 1. Designate one radio frequency for use by all units participating in the situation, assigning at least one dispatcher to that frequency.
- 2. Notify command and personnel as directed, recording when contacted, how contacted, and their response.
- 3. Request that the Seneca Falls Fire Department respond to the staging area, depending upon incident circumstances.
- 4. Direct the response of at least one ambulance service to the staging area.

2. All relatives, friends and neighbors shall be directed to a location designated by the staging area Commanding Officer.

**F. General Guidelines:**

1. The overall command of any situation shall be the responsibility of the highest-ranking officer present unless otherwise delegated. **(58.2.J)**
2. As a higher-ranking officer assumes command of the situation, it shall be announced by the command post.

When two or more officers of equal rank are present, the officer having the most seniority with the department will be in command. **(58.2.J)**

**\*NOTE:** The higher-ranking commanding officer shall not take command until having gained sufficient knowledge of the incident. He/she may delegate incident command and maintain a supervisory role.

3. During critical incidents the Command Post will be located near the scene. For major incidents encompassing large geographic areas the Command Post may be located at the SFPD. **(58.2.B)**

ICS or portions thereof may be activated to manage critical incidents. Command Post personnel are responsible for organizing and coordinating requests for other agency support, assignments, equipment and transportation requirements, resources, and for developing plans for relief and staffing (for both the critical incident and patrol services).

4. If a situation escalates, whether it is an accidental or natural disaster, a community disorder or a terrorist action, it will be the duty of the Chief of Police to ascertain the need to activate the Emergency Personnel Mobilization Plan, request mutual aid or military assistance. Once the need for military assistance has been established, the Chief of Police will communicate this need to the Town Supervisor who will assume requesting for contacting the proper military authorities. **(58.2.E, F)**
5. If a situation escalates, whether it is an accidental or natural disaster, a community disorder, or a terrorist action, it will be the responsibility of the Chief of Police to request mutual aid or activate the Emergency Personnel Mobilization Plan to provide the necessary manpower to adequately secure all public facilities. **(58.2.E)**
6. Firearms (unless the life of the officer or other person actually present is in immediate and imminent danger) shall not be used without the consent of the Incident Commander.

7. Identified representatives of the media shall only be allowed inside the outer perimeter to gain access to the media staging area and shall be escorted to same. **(58.2.D)**

Media representatives who refuse to remain at the staging area should be kept outside the outer perimeter. The public information officer will identify himself/herself to the press as the member at the scene who will refer their questions to the Incident Commander for his response. No information regarding the incident will be released without the consent of the Incident Commander at the scene, and then only through the Public Information Officer.

4. All non-uniform officers at the scene shall have their badge and department ID card on their outermost garment. Officers in non-uniform attire will not be allowed into the inner-perimeter.
5. After the situation has ended, the Incident Commander will arrange for necessary de-escalation procedures, post-occurrence (aftermath) duties, after- action reports/ debriefing meetings. **(58.2.I, K, L)**
6. See Attachment A for a synopsis of recommended actions.

## **G. SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

Due to hazards involved in responding to an emergency scene, personnel should be cautious when approaching the site. The following guidelines should govern such response.

### **A. Airplane Crash**

1. Be aware that the responsibility for the investigation of a plane crash lies with the Federal Aviation Administration. Officers should attempt to concentrate their actions in controlling the immediate hazard and preserving evidence (both physical and verbal statements) at the scene.
2. Many military aircraft carry explosive charges that eject canopies and seats. Serious injuries may result if mechanical pins or charges are touched or improperly operated.
3. Caution should be exercised before coming in contact with metal parts of the airplane as they may retain heat in a sufficient amount to cause injury.
4. Leakage of fuel may be highly volatile.

### **B. Chemical Spill/Radioactive Materials**

1. Officers should approach the scene with caution, attempting to stay upwind and out of low-lying areas.
2. Request a Fire Department response from the dispatcher.

3. If possible to accomplish safely, officers shall identify the material through the placard on the side of the container and the bill of lading (shipping papers) which should be found near the driver's area. Officers should then consult the Department of Transportation's Emergency Response Guidebook (a copy of which has been assigned to each patrol vehicle laptop) for initial actions to be taken. Notify the dispatcher of the placard markings for them to contact CHEMTREC. If safety concerns prohibit this action, await the arrival of the Fire Department.
4. Do not attempt rescue/evacuation of persons in the area until chemical has been identified and its hazards confirmed.

**C. Hostage/Barricaded Gunman**

1. The primary goal in any hostage or barricaded gunman situation is to ensure the safety of human life. The secondary goal is the arrest of the perpetrator(s).
2. Supervisors will make notification to the Lieutenant and the Chief of Police, if circumstances warrant.
3. Do not become involved in in-depth negotiations if it can be avoided. First contact should consist of situation assessment (ex: you are surrounded, put down your weapons, etc.) Whenever possible, await the arrival of hostage negotiation personnel. The Lieutenant or Chief of Police will request a hostage negotiator from the New York State Police or Seneca County Sheriff.

**4. General Guidelines**

- a. Time is on your side. Slow everything down. DO NOT RUSH. Rarely will there be a necessity for making an immediate assault on the premises or hostage taker.
  - b. If negotiations have started, weapons or the surrender of other persons in trade for hostages are not negotiable. If you are confronted with an immediate ultimatum, advise the subject that all arrangements must be made through the commanding officer.
  - c. If involved in an armed, face-to-face confrontation with the suspect, and if use of force is not possible, officers will withdraw and lower weapons only when out of immediate danger consistent with personal safety.
5. Prolonged hostage negotiations shall be conducted by those members of the Hostage Negotiation Squad of the New York State Police or Seneca County Sheriff's Department. Negotiators shall have a secure area from which to work. The Incident Commander of the operation or SWAT commanding officer shall be the only authorized contact with the negotiator unless others are specifically requested by a negotiator.

6. The negotiators and the commanding officer of the SWAT Team shall maintain direct contact with the Incident Commander at the command post for the purpose of guidance and staff command decisions. The Chief of Police or Supervisor will request a SWAT response from the New York State Police or Seneca County Sheriff's Department.

**D. Civil Demonstration/Disorder**

1. It is the responsibility of the Seneca Falls Police Department to preserve the peace while protecting the rights of demonstrators to assemble peacefully and exercise free speech. Members will make reasonable efforts to employ non-arrest methods of crowd control, but as required, shall make arrest for violations of the law.
2. Officers shall display an attitude of neutrality and shall not engage in demonstration related discussion with participants.
3. If dispersing the crowd becomes necessary, supervisors shall utilize tactics in the following order:
  - a. Verbal persuasion or request to disperse.
  - b. Issuance of verbal warnings.
  - c. Arrest/use of chemical agents.
4. After such dispersal, de-escalation of the scene will be accomplished by the authority of the commanding officer at the scene. **(58.2.1)**
5. If possible photographs and/or video pictures will be taken.

**E. ARREST PROCEDURES**

During an emergency operation when large numbers of arrests are anticipated, Seneca Falls Police Department personnel affecting the arrest of individuals and/or groups shall adhere to the following policy, unless otherwise directed:

- A.** The arresting officer(s) will, as soon as possible, report to the Prisoner Processing Center indicated by the Field Command Post Commanding Officer with the arrested individual where, with the assistance of the other officers, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. A thorough search, subsequent to the street search, will be made of the prisoner by the arresting officer prior to the arrival of those officers responsible for prisoner transport. Officers shall secure any evidence and/or prisoner property and a property custody report will be completed as necessary. A second thorough search will be made by the transporting officers, consistent with current policy.
  2. A photograph of the arresting officer and the individual in custody will be immediately taken (video, still camera, or "instant" camera).
  3. The arresting officer shall immediately complete the required portions of an Arrest Report including sufficient data in the remarks area to allow an accusatory instrument to be prepared.  
**NOTE:** Whenever possible, prisoners will be secured with plastic-cuffs which will be marked with the arresting officer's Badge number.
- B. The remainder of the arrest blotter shall be completed at the Seneca Falls Police Department or another place of confinement as instructed.
  - C. Personnel assigned to prisoner processing will prepare accusatory instruments based on the Arrest Report information for later completion by arresting personnel.
  - D. The Criminal Investigations Section will coordinate the interviews of those arrested.
  - E. Any medical attention required to the prisoner will be arranged by the transporting officer per current directives.

\* \* \*

Attachments

Appendixes

Seneca County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

NYS Canal Corporation Emergency Action Plan

### INSTRUCTIONS

This form is intended to provide a record of assignments made during a major incident. It can be utilized at the staging area, field command post, or by field command personnel.

**Department:** Make entry only if Officer is from other than the Seneca Falls Police Department. If Seneca Falls Police Officer, leave blank.

**Name:** Include rank, if other than a police officer

**Arrival Time:** Time of arrival

**Assignment:** Include type of assignment such as checkpoint, staging area, guard duty, special equipment (gas masks, water truck, and anti-sniper equipment), car number, portable radio number, territory assigned as applicable.

**Out-Time:** Time relieved from assignment

## **GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY INCIDENT**

### **First Officer(s) on Scene:**

1. Confirm the situation, notify dispatcher, request supervisor.
2. Take protected position, cover, not just concealment.
3. Request additional units, as needed - inform dispatcher of areas to be avoided. (Kill / Hot Zone)
4. Contain the subject(s), if any.
5. Refrain from firing at subject unless the situation presents an immediate danger to human life.
6. Evacuate the inner perimeter area, if practicable.
7. Brief supervisor upon his arrival.

### **Initial Supervisors:**

1. Assume command and establish control of the situation.
2. Secure one radio frequency.
3. Establish a field command post and advise dispatcher of its location and phone number.
4. Establish Inner Perimeter.
5. Establish Outer Perimeter.
6. Divert pedestrian and vehicular traffic from the area.
7. Keep a log of all personnel and their assignments (staging area).
8. Maintain a log of events (staging area).
9. Request dispatcher to notify appropriate personnel / additional resources.
10. Establish a staging area inside the outer perimeter and inform dispatcher of its

location.

11. Cancel response of unneeded police personnel.
12. Begin to gather info on suspect, his location, etc.

**Incident Commander:**

1. Contact previous supervisor for briefing.
2. Assume command when fully briefed.
3. Coordinate operations of specialized units.
4. Appoint other command officers to coordinating positions.
5. Request additional support personnel as required, e.g. Bomb Squad, SWAT, and Crisis Negotiation.

**INFORMATION GATHERING IF SUSPECT(S) INVOLVED**

**Suspect:**

Identify - name, description, occupation, education, habits (drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, medication)

Criminal history/photo

Physical description

His/her exact location

Weapons

Mental/physical condition

Possible reason/motivation for his actions, "cause," criminal

Any military experience or other skills which may prove dangerous (ex: explosive training)

Medical/psychiatric history (doctor's name)

Relatives and associates

**Location:**

Structure floor plan, exits (blue print)

Location of telephone

Location of utility shutoffs - water, electricity, heat/air

**Hostage(s):**

Identity (profile of hostage(s) from relatives, associates, co- workers), criminal history

Physical description/clothing

Mental/physical condition

Relationship to suspect, if any

Mobility