



# TOWN OF SENECA FALLS POLICE DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL ORDER



<b>GENERAL ORDER #:</b> 604	<b>RESCINDS:</b> NEW
<b>SUBJECT:</b> Immediate Response to Active Shooter	<b>NYS ACCREDITATION:</b> 58.2, 58.4
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 03/29/2021	
<b>BY ORDER OF:</b> Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this order is to establish a response plan to active shooter situations to stop the aggressive deadly behavior and to establish procedures for the integration of police and fire/EMS for the immediate deployment of medical personnel to initiate life saving measures.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** Active shooter incidents on average are over in less than ten minutes with a new victim shot/assaulted every few seconds. Understanding this, officers responding to an active shooter incident must deploy as quickly as possible. This may require that officers run to the sound of shots being fired without utilizing all the traditional law enforcement safeguards (multiple officers on scene, perimeter units in place, gathering intelligence, etc.).
- III. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Town of Seneca Falls Police Department that initial responding officers will act as rapidly as possible to stop the aggressive deadly behavior of an active shooter. Furthermore, that responding officers will immediately form rescue task forces with fire/EMS personnel as soon as a sufficient number of officers have entered the scene to address the active shooter.
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:**
  - A. **ACTIVE SHOOTER** - A person who is currently using deadly physical force against a person or persons. Not limited to gun violence, it can include edged weapons, explosives, impact weapons, etc. Most active shooter incidents occur in a "target rich environment" which can be any location where large groups of people gather (school, workplace, place of worship, shopping center, sporting event, etc.).
  - B. **BARRICADED SUSPECT** - A person who is in a position of advantage, usually in a building or room affording him cover/concealment or is contained in an open area where the presence or approach of police could precipitate an adverse reaction by the suspect. The suspect is armed and refuses to surrender.
  - C. **RESCUE TASK FORCE (RTF)** - A team consisting of a minimum of two fire/EMS personnel with a minimum of two law enforcement officers dedicated to the security and protection of fire/EMS personnel (force protection). The primary goal of the RTF is to rapidly move to victims in the warm zone to deliver lifesaving medical interventions. The RTF shall provide immediate medical care to their current patient then move on to the next victim allowing evacuation teams to transport patients to casualty collection points.
  - D. **EVACUATION TEAM** - After a sufficient number of RTF's has been deployed and as additional resources (law enforcement, fire/EMS personnel) arrive on scene members of both disciplines will form evacuation teams consisting of the same ratio of fire/EMS & law enforcement personnel. The primary purpose of these teams is to evacuate the injured who have already been given initial treatment by the RTF. The RTF shall transition to an evacuation team once their medical treatment supplies are exhausted.

- E. HOT ZONE** - Areas of a known hazard, typically within the inner perimeter where the perpetrator(s) are shooting, roaming free, or are engaged by law enforcement. IEDs may be present. Only law enforcement personnel with ballistic protection equipment should operate in Hot Zones. Fire/EMS personnel should not operate in designated Hot Zones.
- F. WARM ZONE** - An area, typically within the inner perimeter, that has been entered by law enforcement, contains no identifiable threats, but has not been declared a Cold Zone. Fire/EMS and other first responder personnel may be deployed for life safety operations only and shall be escorted by police personnel, operating under their security. More than one Warm Zone may be designated by the police. Fire/EMS personnel shall not enter a Warm Zone unless authorized by a Fire Chief/Fire Commander.
- G. COLD ZONE** - Areas within the outer or inner perimeter where there is normal risk due to geographic distance from the threat, or the area has been cleared by the police. The Command Post, Operations Post, Staging Areas and medical triage, treatment and transportation areas shall be in Cold Zones.
- H. CASUALTY COLLECTION POINT** - A transition area, which could be within the outer or inner perimeter where patients are brought or directed to go for evacuation to the cold zone. This is a secured area (by law enforcement) typically at the edge of the warm zone.

## **V. PROCEDURE:**

### **A. ACTIVE SHOOTER DEPLOYMENT**

1. When an active shooter(s) is engaged in causing death or great bodily harm and the location is believed to contain multiple victims the priority of the responding officers must be to stop the deadly aggressive behavior of the active shooter as quickly as possible. To facilitate this, officers will:
  - a. Immediately respond to the dispatched location of an active shooter. Dispatchers may use the term Active Shooter or shots fired (SHOT) or a shots fired with injuries (SHOI). Additional dispatch information may confirm the existence of an active shooter (multiple calls, multiple victims, multiple shots fired, target rich environment, etc.). Dispatchers may have units switch to a TAC channel.
  - b. If radio traffic permits advise Dispatch of where the first responding officer(s) are entering the building. Additional responding units should attempt to enter at the same location to avoid a crossfire situation. If they have time to do so the first arriving units should advise of the staging areas for law enforcement and EMS, Dispatch will prompt responding units to designate staging areas.
  - c. Rapidly move to the location where the active shooter is killing or assaulting victims and stop the deadly aggressive behavior. Officers may enter the scene by themselves rather than waiting for additional officers to arrive. Any delay in the response can lead to additional deaths or injuries. During this response officers will bypass victims, uninjured subjects, explosives, etc. while responding directly to the location of the active shooter.
  - d. As additional officers arrive, they will continue to enter the scene and rapidly go to the location of the active shooter to stop the deadly aggressive behavior. This will continue until the deadly aggressive behavior has been stopped.
  - e. Entering the scene with more than one officer and acting as a team provides the most safety to the responding officers. However, priority must be given to stopping the deadly aggressive behavior and officers may be entering the scene by themselves as soon as they arrive.

## **B. RESCUE TASK FORCE DEPLOYMENT (RTF)**

1. As soon as the aggressive deadly behavior of the Active Shooter is stopped, any available officers on scene may begin to form an RTF. The objective is to combine a team consisting of a minimum of two fire/EMS personnel with a minimum of two law enforcement officers dedicated to the security and protection of fire/EMS personnel (force protection). The primary goal of the RTF is to rapidly move to victims in the warm zone to deliver lifesaving medical interventions. RTF's shall provide immediate medical care to their current patient then move on to the next victim allowing evacuation teams to transport patients to casualty collection points.
2. The objective of law enforcement during RTF operations is the protection of fire/EMS personnel.
3. The objective of fire/EMS personnel is the treatment of victims.
4. Based on the concept of addressing the most life-threatening wounds first, fire/EMS personnel will rapidly identify critical victims and address life threatening injuries. The primary focus will be on the identification, treatment and removal of the most serious or critical patients. In active shooter incidents, the most common injuries are bleeding and airway obstruction. In support of this operation, the fire/EMS personnel will consult with law enforcement on casualty collection points, triage and treatment areas, patient removal corridors and exterior ambulance transport lanes. Speed in getting these patients to hospitals is critical for patient survival. The suggested time spent on each victim during RTF operations is approximately 45 seconds.
5. As the Rescue Task Force enters the warm zone, it shall address the first victims identified and will move forward towards the hot zone rendering aid to each victim as they proceed deeper into the scene. Secondary RTF's shall either divert to other areas within the scene or move beyond the first RTF to reach additional victims.
6. Members of the rescue task force should focus their efforts on victim stabilization and the stopping of blood loss. Rescue task forces should spend the minimum time necessary with each victim to accomplish this goal, so each task force can render aid to as many injured persons as possible. Once the RTF has exhausted its medical supplies it should revert to an evacuation team transporting injured to the casualty collection point where it can restock supplies and re-deploy.
7. If during Rescue Task Force operations, the RTF encounters the active shooter or if the Warm Zone shifts to a Hot Zone, law enforcement members will make every effort to protect fire/EMS personnel from danger by:
  - a. Immediately engaging the active shooter.
  - b. Sequestering fire/EMS personnel behind cover while engaging the threat.
  - c. Moving the RTF under force protection back to the warm zone as the target is engaged by other law enforcement personnel.
  - d. If the RTF contains four or more law enforcement personnel, two officers may break away from the RTF to engage the suspect as the RTF retreats with the remaining officers.

## **C. INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)**

1. The initial Incident Commander will be the first officer who arrives on scene, regardless of rank and determines that enough units have entered to stop the deadly aggressive behavior. This officer will remain the Incident Commander until a ranking officer arrives and assumes command. The actions of the initial Incident Commander will be guided by General Order 601, "Emergency Incidents."

2. Staging and Command Post areas for both disciplines must be established as soon as possible. Dispatch personnel will continue to request the location of the command post and staging areas until enough personnel have entered the scene and the first Incident Commander/Command Post is established.
3. Incident Commander(s) should consider initiating Rescue Task Force teams comprised of police, fire/EMS as soon as possible. The priority of the Incident Commander will be to direct responding law enforcement and EMS units. Police shall provide warm zone protection while fire/EMS provide medical triage, treatment and patient removal and evacuation.
4. Police and Fire Commanders shall co-locate within sight, voice and arm's distance of each other at an Incident Command Post in the Cold Zone. Interagency operations will require collaboration and coordination. This interagency plan is based on the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The establishment of a single or unified command will depend on the scope of the incident.

#### **D. IDENTIFICATION**

1. A Police officer may confront other first responders including plain-clothes officers to verify their identity. This is called a challenge situation. In this situation, the plain-clothes personnel shall strictly adhere to the following procedure:
  - a. Comply with the commands of law enforcement personnel.
  - b. Remain motionless (no sudden movements).
  - c. Do not turn your body unless instructed to do so by the challenging officer.
  - d. Verbally identify yourself as a member of the police department by rank and name.
  - e. Await the command of law enforcement to resume current operations.

#### **E. EQUIPMENT SELECTION**

- a. Officers entering the location of a reported active shooter will wear body armor with their assigned Plate carriers.
- b. Officers should utilize a patrol rifle and carry the Go Bag containing three additional rifle magazines when entering the location of an active shooter.
- c. Electronic entry keys for school buildings have been issued to all SFPD Officers. Each patrol car key ring has a key that will open all doors in the Seneca Falls Central School District.
- d. Each entry door with-in the Seneca Falls School District has a number posted on the door. Each parking lot with-in the district has a letter assigned to it. Maps to all Seneca Falls Schools can be found on the "N" drive in the folder labeled Town Maps.
- e. Uniformed patrol members will have their portable radios with them when responding. Plain clothes personnel should make every effort to bring a portable radio when entering the location.
- f. Plain clothes personnel should have "POLICE" clearly displayed on their front and back. This could consist of large display panels affixed to external armor/jackets or a banner worn over the shoulder. A badge worn on the belt or around the neck should not be considered adequate identification when responding to an active shooter event.

## **F. BARRICADED SUSPECT**

- a. If the active shooter transitions to a barricaded suspect and no hostages are present officers on scene will establish a perimeter around the barricade location and utilize General Order #601, "Emergency Incidents" to guide their actions.
- b. If the active shooter transitions to a barricaded suspect with hostages, officers on scene will have to assess the situation and breach the barricade if they believe an attack on the hostages is imminent. If officers on scene do not believe an attack on the hostages is imminent, they will maintain a perimeter and await negotiation and tactical units with their actions guided by General Order #601, "Emergency Incidents." A plan must be devised to immediately breach the barricade if the suspect begins attacking hostages during this time. Officers must be in place and waiting to implement this plan until the scene is turned over to tactical units.

## **G. EXPLOSIVES**

1. Officers entering the scene should be alert to the possibility of explosive devices, improvised or otherwise. In the event an explosive device is encountered officers should bypass the device and continue to the location of the active shooter.
2. Once the deadly aggressive behavior of the active shooter is stopped any explosive devices that have been discovered will be dealt with in the manner listed in General Order #650, "Bomb Threats and Explosions."

## **H. TRANSITION PHASE**

- a. Once the deadly aggressive behavior of the active shooter has been stopped and the injured and uninjured have been removed from the scene a slow and deliberate room by room search must be completed.
- b. This room by room search will be conducted by tactical teams whenever possible.
- c. Prior to and during this room by room search a perimeter will need to be maintained to intercept any persons who may be hiding.

## **I. REHEARSAL AND REVIEW**

- a. The Chief of Police may, at his discretion, hold rehearsals of the procedures for the immediate response to an active shooter situation.
- b. The Lieutenant shall conduct an annual review of the procedures for responding to an Active Shooter incident and shall make recommendations regarding any revisions to the written directive and/or identified training needs to the Chief of Police if appropriate.

## **J. ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING**

- a. All new members of the department shall attend the current entry level active shooter training offered at the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services training facility in Oriskany, New York.
- b. Active shooter refresher training and advanced training shall be provided to agency members at a term and duration necessary to maintain program competency.