



**TOWN OF SENECA FALLS POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

GENERAL ORDER



GENERAL ORDER #: 606	RESCINDS:
SUBJECT: Barricaded Suspects	NYS ACCREDITATION: 58.2, 58.4
EFFECTIVE DATE: 03/29/2021	
BY ORDER OF: Stuart W. Peenstra, Chief of Police	

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this order is to establish standard guidelines for resolving incidents involving hostage taking and barricaded subjects.
- II. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Town of Seneca Falls Police Department to safeguard the lives of officers, hostages, bystanders and suspects and to apprehend offenders with a minimum use of force.
- III. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. **HOSTAGE** - A person who is physically held against his will by another person.
 - B. **HOSTAGE TAKER** - A person who is usually armed who takes hostages as a tool to help facilitate his escape.
 - C. **BARRICADED SUSPECT** - An armed person who takes refuge within a structure with the intent to forcibly prevent officers from performing a lawful arrest or investigation.
 - D. **STOCKHOLM SYNDROME** - A psychological response by a hostage due to the long-term imprisonment by the hostage taker which causes the hostage to become sympathetic to the needs of the hostage taker and to become emotionally or physically protective of the hostage taker.
- IV. **PROCEDURE:**
 - A. **DUTIES OF OFFICER(S) ON THE SCENE**
 1. Upon receipt of a report of a hostage taking or barricaded suspect situation, responding officers shall:
 - a. Notify the Seneca County (911 Center) of the nature and most specific location of the incident and request the response of the shift supervisor and the Chief of Police or Lieutenant. Request additional personnel, agencies or resources as dictated by the situation.
 - b. Request the use and isolation of a TAC II for the sole use of incident personnel, considering the need to communicate with other units and police agencies.
 - c. Contain the situation to the smallest possible area consistent with officer/citizen safety and attempt to prevent the escape of any involved suspects.

- d. Gather information relating to the numbers and types of casualties and request appropriate emergency medical assistance. Victims and bystanders should not be evacuated through the suspect's field of fire.
 - e. Adhere to General Order #604 "Immediate Response to Active Shooter" should the suspect began to actively harm individuals.
 - f. Direct responding units or agencies indicating any hazard zones to be avoided.
 - g. Position responding personnel so that:
 - i. A "cross-fire" situation does not occur.
 - ii. Officers make the best possible use of cover and concealment.
 - iii. Officers have an available escape route.
 - h. Establish an inner-perimeter around the situation denying access to the area and to prevent the escape of the hostage taker/barricaded subject.
 - i. Establish a command post if applicable.
 - j. Establish staging area(s) for responding units (EMS, fire, police) if applicable.
 - k. Request additional units to establish an outer perimeter and begin diverting vehicular and pedestrian traffic away from the scene.
 - l. Secure all witnesses at a safe point outside of the inner-perimeter for interviews.
 - m. Use only that force required by the situation, authorized by law and allowed by department policy.
 - n. Begin a chronological log of events, observations, deadlines, suspect's actions and communications using the Crime Scene Log. The suspect's exact words should be recorded whenever possible for later use by hostage negotiators.
2. It is preferable that communications with the suspect be conducted by a trained hostage negotiator. However, circumstances may result in communications from the suspect being directed to the first officers on the scene. When communicating with the suspect officers should:
- a. Remain calm regardless of the suspect's statements or actions.
 - b. Identify themselves as police officers and by name.
 - c. Inform the suspect that the officer has the situation outside under control and expects the suspect to keep the situation inside under control.
 - d. Allow the suspect to speak without interruption. This will help calm him and provide intelligence regarding the incident.
 - e. Avoid eliciting demands from the suspect. Seemingly innocent questions may give him the opportunity to make demands.
 - f. Avoid giving the suspect orders that may escalate the situation.

- g. Minimize the seriousness of the attempted crime and do not acknowledge the deaths of others. Inform the suspect that the condition of victims is not known.
 - h. Make no unsolicited offers.
 - i. Avoid calling attention to the victims. In hostage situations officers shall not refer to victims as hostages when speaking to the suspect.
 - j. Be as honest as possible and make no attempt to trick the suspect.
 - k. Ask the suspect to clarify any statements that are not clearly understood.
 - l. Never dismiss any request by the suspect as trivial.
 - m. Never set a deadline or agree to a deadline set by the suspect.
 - n. Not make alternate suggestions to the suspect.
 - o. Not introduce any non-law enforcement personnel into the communications process.
- 3. Officers shall not expose themselves to the suspect in order to communicate with him.
 - 4. Under no circumstances shall officers exchange themselves or any other person in order to obtain the release of hostages.
 - 5. Officers shall not surrender their weapons, or provide or offer to provide the suspect with weapons or equipment.
 - 6. In the event a hostage taker attempts to employ a hostage as a human shield and leave the containment area, officers should make all reasonable attempts to keep the suspect contained. Officers should consider the following factors when deciding what measures to take to keep the suspect contained:
 - a. Danger to the public if the suspect escapes containment.
 - b. Danger to the hostage if the suspect is permitted increased mobility.
 - c. Officer's ability to contain the suspect.
 - d. Suspect's history of violence.
 - e. Type of weapon possessed by the suspect.
 - f. Degree to which the officer's use of force is justified.
 - 7. In the event a suspect decides to surrender before a perimeter has been established, officers shall develop a plan for a controlled surrender. The suspect and all officers should clearly understand the plan before the surrender occurs. The suspect should be given clear instructions throughout the surrender process. All persons exiting the scene shall be considered to be potential suspects due to the possibility that all criminal accomplices have not been identified or because a Stockholm syndrome has developed and the hostages may be sympathetic to the hostage taker.

B. DUTIES OF SUPERVISING OFFICERS AT THE SCENE

1. The Shift supervisor or in his absence the OIC should stabilize the situation and avoid rushing the pace of activity. Obtain as much information about the situation as possible from the initial responding officers, make notification to the following personnel and request their response to the incident:
 - a. The Chief of Police or Lieutenant will assume responsibility as the incident commander.
 - b. Investigator(s) to gather background information regarding the suspect/incident.
2. Organize and brief subordinates relative to the incident and their duties.
3. Isolate and secure the area and:
 - a. If possible, to accomplish safely, initiate any necessary evacuation of bystanders or victims within the inner perimeter. If evacuation is unnecessary or impractical, protect the public in place.
 - b. Establish a command post in a safe and accessible location within the outer perimeter. Notify the 911 Center by phone of the address and telephone number of the command post location and the safest, open route for other responding personnel. When establishing a command post the following factors shall be considered:
 - i. Proximity to the incident scene.
 - ii. Accessibility to responding personnel.
 - iii. Availability of radio and telephone communications.
 - iv. Availability of parking, electricity, water and toilet facilities.
 - v. Ability to segregate and secure the command post from unauthorized personnel and the public.
 - c. The command post should not be established in the line-of-fire of the incident scene.
 - d. Ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic has been adequately diverted.
4. Establish a staging area (preferably within the outer perimeter as space and location permit) to which responding units will report. Arriving personnel shall be logged in utilizing the Crime Scene Log.
5. Ensure that all responding units are advised as to the identity of the Incident Commander, the location of the command post, staging area and any special instructions regarding the incident, including areas to avoid when responding.
6. Request emergency medical services and fire departments to stand by at the staging area if the incident dictates such support.
7. Act as the incident commander until relieved by a higher-ranking authority.

C. DUTIES OF THE INCIDENT COMMANDER

1. Upon assuming command of the incident, the incident commander shall:

- a. Have the ultimate decision making authority and responsibility for the operation.
 - b. Be responsible for the safety of victims and the general public.
 - c. Have responsibility for the safety of personnel and resources employed in the operation.
 - d. Establish the mission priorities.
 - e. Organize, brief and assign subordinates.
 - f. Delegate authority to subordinates commensurate with their responsibilities.
 - g. Determine strategy and tactics for coping with the incident.
 - h. Designate various locations as staging areas, triage areas, landing zones, etc.
 - i. Be responsible for the security of all operational areas.
 - j. Be responsible for maintaining a chronological log of actions and events.
 - k. Be responsible for all documentation pertaining to the incident.
 - l. Have responsibility for the decision to amend, suspend or terminate operations.
 - m. Have responsibility for demobilizing personnel and equipment utilized in the operation.
 - n. Be responsible for communication and coordination with other agencies.
 - o. Conduct post incident debriefings and critique the operation.
 - p. Report all failures of policy, procedures and equipment to the Chief of Police.
 - q. Make recommendations for the improvement of operational effectiveness to the Chief of Police.
2. The incident commander shall operate the command post in accordance with the procedures established by General Order # 601 "Emergency Incidents" and #604 "Immediate Response to Active Shooter."
 3. The Incident Commander may utilize such resources as may be necessary to accomplish the mission. These resources may include, but need not be limited to:
 - a. Tactical team(s).
 - b. Hostage negotiator(s).
 - c. Canine team(s).
 - d. Investigator(s) to interview witnesses and victims and to obtain any required warrants for search and arrest.
 - e. Public utility personnel to assist in the isolation of the scene (e.g. telephone, electric, water, etc.).
 - f. Evidence technicians to record the incident, including overall photos of the scene, locations of officers, and any significant developments at the site.

- g. Law enforcement personnel from other agencies.
- h. Fire department and emergency medical service personnel and equipment.

D. SUSPECTS IN VEHICLES

1. Whenever officers are confronted with a hostage taker or armed suspect in a moving vehicle they should:
 - a. Keep the suspect vehicle under continuous observation.
 - b. Follow at a safe distance, and a reasonable speed.
 - c. Take no action which would escalate the situation into violence or a pursuit.
 - d. Advise the 911 Center of the vehicle's description, speed, location, direction of travel, etc.
 - e. Request that a radio channel be cleared or cross-patched if necessary.
 - f. Request the assistance of an unmarked vehicle to assume primary responsibility for the surveillance.
 - g. Request the assistance of a helicopter in tracking the vehicle.
 - h. Have the 911 Center notify the shift supervisor and the Chief of Police or Lieutenant.
2. If the suspect leaves the jurisdiction officers shall continue monitoring his actions until responsibility for the incident can be transferred to an agency with appropriate jurisdiction.
3. The 911 Center has responsibility for:
 - a. Receiving and recording information regarding the incident.
 - b. Coordinating radio communications and clearing radio channels and cross patching when necessary.
 - c. Dispatching and coordinating assisting units.
 - d. Notifying the shift supervisor, or in his absence, the Officer In Charge (OIC) and the Chief of Police or Lieutenant.
 - e. Notifying other agencies of the incident, when necessary.
4. Upon receiving notification that an officer is following a mobile hostage taker or gunman, the shift supervisor, shall assume responsibility for monitoring and controlling the units involved in the operation. The shift supervisor shall continuously evaluate the circumstances of the pursuit in order to determine the tactics for continuing or terminating the incident. The shift supervisor shall:
 - a. Designate the primary and assist unit for the operation.
 - b. Approve and coordinate tactics.
 - c. Direct additional units to assist, as necessary.
 - d. Authorizing roadblocks, as a last resort.

5. The shift supervisor should to the extent possible direct units to assume positions along the suspect's anticipated route of travel in order to:
 - a. Monitor the suspect's progress.
 - b. Control vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
6. When officers are confronted with a hostage taker or armed suspect in a stationary vehicle they should:
 - a. Establish a perimeter around the suspect vehicle in a manner that is likely to prevent the suspect from driving away.
 - b. Keep the suspect vehicle under continuous observation.
 - c. Take no action which would escalate the situation into violence.
 - d. Advise the 911 Center of the vehicle's location and request assistance of additional units as necessary.
 - e. Request that a radio channel be isolated.
 - f. Have the 911 Center notify the shift supervisor and Chief/Lieutenant.
 - g. Employ containment measures as if the suspect were in a building, as described in this order.
7. When the suspect vehicle is stationary the shift supervisor should proceed as described in this order.

E. HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS

1. The Town of Seneca Falls Police Department currently does not have hostage negotiators and shall utilize negotiators from outside agencies when necessary.
2. The Chief of Police shall authorize the use of hostage negotiators. The hostage negotiators shall be responsible for:
 - a. Reviewing intelligence from various sources (e.g. debriefed witnesses, victims, police officers, etc.).
 - b. Obtaining target information (e.g. maps, floor plans, utilities, etc.).
 - c. Conducting intelligence briefings for command staff and team members.
 - d. Conducting hostage and crisis negotiations.

F. HOSTAGE/SUSPECT NEGOTIATIONS

1. Whenever possible, negotiations with barricaded suspects shall be conducted by a trained hostage negotiator. Negotiations should be conducted from a secure area through the use of a secure line or telephone lock out. Face to face negotiations should be avoided. The Incident Commander or his designee shall be the only personnel authorized to have contact with the negotiator unless others are specifically requested by the negotiator. Only one person shall act as a negotiator or have contact with the suspect at any time. Until the arrival of trained negotiators, personnel on scene shall be responsible for communicating with the barricaded subject. The actions of this officer shall be guided by the following:

2. Negotiators shall immediately relay, all information of intelligence value to the incident commander.
3. Negotiators should attempt to:
 - a. Identify the suspect(s) involved and learn their intent.
 - b. Obtain intelligence information pertaining to the suspect or hostages (e.g. location, number, condition).
 - c. Arrange the release of hostages.
 - d. Induce the suspect to surrender.
4. Negotiations shall be conducted according to the following guidelines:
 - a. Negotiators shall not have the authority to make unilateral decisions regarding the demands of suspects.
 - b. Negotiators may use food, beverages, blankets and similar rewards to induce the release of hostages.
 - c. Negotiators shall not under any circumstances, offer weapons or the exchange of other persons for the release of hostages.
 - d. The introduction of outside parties to the negotiations such as attorneys, priests or relatives should be avoided.
 - e. Whenever a suspect is known to be on medication, negotiators should have access to a medical doctor who can provide advice regarding the potential effects on the suspect.
5. Negotiators may, when necessary, be advised as to any tactical actions to be taken, and shall assist by placing the suspect in a position of disadvantage during tactical operations.
6. Whenever a negotiator is confronted by a non-English speaking suspect the negotiator may utilize the translation service available to the agency or the 911 Center.
7. Negotiators shall be responsible for coordinating the release of hostages and the surrender of the suspect with the incident commander. All positions on the perimeter must be informed that a victim or suspect is coming out. Negotiators should advise suspects and victims that they should put down his weapons and come out with his hands up. Officers or members of the assisting tactical team shall:
 - a. Approach from behind cover.
 - b. Thoroughly search the hostage.
 - c. Handcuff the person and quickly remove him from the scene.
8. Officers may encounter hostages that have been under extreme physical and emotional stress. Their ordeal can produce unpredictable behavior. Officers must be alert for released hostages who:

- a. Give false information about the suspect or his weapon(s).
 - b. Want to rejoin the hostage taker inside the barricade.
 - c. Are more afraid of the police than the suspect.
 - d. Need medical or psychological attention.
9. After hostages are released, they must be:
- a. Interviewed and debriefed by the Investigator assigned to the case.
 - b. Examined by a physician.
 - c. Put in touch with a therapist if they wish.
 - d. Discouraged from talking with the press.

G. NEWS MEDIA/PUBLIC INFORMATION

1. Release of information to the news media shall be conducted in accordance to General Order #360 "Media Guidelines - Public Information."
2. News media personnel shall be maintained at the designated press area selected by the Incident Commander. The press area shall be located in an area that does not permit the media to observe and report the movements of law enforcement personnel.
3. The Incident Commander, or his designated public information officer shall have sole responsibility for communicating with the media. Members shall make no comments to the media without prior authorization from the incident commander.

H. REHEARSALS AND REVIEW

1. The Chief of Police may at his discretion hold rehearsals of the procedures for responding to hostage or barricaded suspect incidents.
2. The Lieutenant shall when necessary review the procedures for responding to hostage or barricaded suspect incidents and shall make recommendations for modifications or changes to the Chief of Police if appropriate.