Cobb County Police Department

Policy 4.06

HOSTAGE AND BARRICADED SUBJECTS

Effective Date: October 1, 2019	**Issued By:** Chief C.T. Cox
Rescinds: Policy 4.06 (November 1, 2017)	**Page 1 of 3**
The words "he, his, him," which may appear in this policy, are used generically for clarity and ease of reading. These terms are not meant to imply gender and relate to all employees of the Department.	

It is the purpose of this policy to provide general guidelines for handling hostage/barricaded subject situations.

I. POLICY

In hostage/barricaded subject situations, it shall be the policy of the Cobb County Police Department to consider the lives of the hostages, civilians, and officers involved to be of the utmost importance; and, whenever possible, to enhance the prospects of peacefully resolving the incident through communication with the suspect; and, whenever possible, to develop and maintain the ability to use alternative approaches to resolve the incident should communications fail; and, in hostage situations, to make every reasonable effort to effect the safe release of the hostages.

II. DEFINITIONS

As used in this policy, the following words and terms shall have the meaning ascribed:

A. Barricaded Subject: Any individual who is reasonably believed to be a threat to commit serious bodily injury or death to hostages, officers, or others in the community and who is in a stronghold position.

B. Hostage: Any person held by another against his will by force or threat of force, expressed or implied.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Initial Response

Officers confronting hostage/barricaded subject incidents shall not initiate tactical actions other than those necessary to protect the lives and safety of themselves or others, consistent with Department policy. Officers shall then:

1. Notify a supervisory officer of the incident and circumstances.

2. Contain and isolate the incident scene, establishing an inner containment perimeter to provide a reasonable degree of safety while maintaining contact with the incident scene.

3. As time and resources permit establish an outer containment perimeter to control pedestrian and vehicular traffic into the area.

4. Whenever possible, evacuate occupants of affected residences and businesses to a point beyond the perimeter.

B. On-Scene Commander

The ranking officer at the scene shall be in command until specifically relieved by a superior. The On-Scene Commander shall:

1. Inform the watch commander about the nature and circumstances surrounding the incident.

2. Delegate the tactical mission to the SWAT Commander.

3. Ensure that a Crisis Negotiation Team call-out has been initiated along with all necessary equipment.

4. Ensure establishment of an inner and outer perimeter, command post, tactical operations center, negotiations center, and a staging area for officers and others arriving for assignment.

5. Assign a press center and an officer for press liaison.

6. Ensure that responsibility for traffic and crowd control is established, and that routes for emergency vehicles have been designated.

7. Make provisions for recording personnel assignments and developing a chronological record of events at the command center and tactical operations center.

8. Ensure that necessary equipment from the fire department is made available at the staging area together with any other units or equipment such as canine teams, aviation, or marine units.

9. Ensure that emergency medical services are available at the site.

C. SWAT Commander

The commander of the SWAT Team shall:

1. Assist the On-Scene Commander in assessing the situation and formulate and provide the On-Scene Commander with recommended tactical alternatives should communications with the subject fail to resolve the incident.

2. Determine equipment needs and assign personnel to control and contain the inner perimeter.

3. Designate marksmen and entry teams as necessary.

4. Ensure that personnel manning the inner perimeter maintain firearms discipline and are provided with periodic relief by appropriate tactical response team members.

5. Prepare appropriate logistical plans to include diagrams of the location in question.

6. Ensure the establishment of a tactical operations center if necessary.

7. Maintain contact with and keep the command post informed of all developments and operations.

D. Crisis Negotiation Team

The Commander of the Crisis Negotiation Team shall:

1. Provide any requested assistance to the On-Scene Commander.

2. Ensure that adequate personnel respond to the scene to properly perform the function of negotiations.

3. Obtain all pertinent information about the hostage taker, the hostages, hostage site, and any other barricaded subjects.

4. Designate a location to interview witnesses, released hostages, and others.

5. Debrief hostages following the incident.

6. Maintain contact with and keep the command post informed of all developments and operations.

E. Psychological Services

Psychological services shall serve as a resource to the Crisis Negotiation Team if requested by the On-Scene Commander.

IV. INCIDENT ESCALATION

Once the SWAT Team has arrived, and the perimeters have been established, the SWAT Commander, or his designee, will be responsible for designating entry points should the incident turn into an active threat situation.