PISCATAQUIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

HOSTAGE / BARRICADED SUBJECT

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I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a written directive that outlines the Piscataquis County Sheriff's Office [PCSO] procedures for a hostage or barricaded subject incident.

II. POLICY

The policy of PCSO is to respond to barricaded subjects and hostage incidents with the primary goal of resolving them safely. Deputies shall make all reasonable efforts to protect the lives and safety of hostages, innocent civilians, and law enforcement personnel. While PCSO recognizes the value of all human life, priority is given to those who are most at risk of harm and least able to remove themselves from danger. By contrast, the incident subject or suspect who created and maintains control over the situation occupies the lowest position in the priority continuum.

III. DEFINITIONS

After-Action Report: A document to be completed following a debriefing or after-action review of an operation that includes the actions taken or failures to act and omissions by personnel, mission results, and any relevant information related to the operation, including lessons learned and any training, policy, or equipment recommendations. Documentation should be supported by the operational plan, related reports, and any other written or photographic material associated with the operation.

After-Action Review: A structured process for analyzing a particular operation or exercise that may include subject matter experts or superiors not assigned to the responding team and who are specifically tasked with identifying areas for improvement.

Barricaded Subject Incident: Any situation where a person who is not suspected of committing a crime but is the focus of a legitimate police intervention effort -- most often involving threats of suicide or mental illness -- who has taken a position in a physical location, most often a structure or vehicle, that does not allow immediate police access --whether fortified or not -- and who is refusing police orders to exit. A barricaded subject may be known to be armed, thought to be armed, have access to weapons in the location, or be in an unknown weapons status.

Barricaded Criminal Suspect Incident: Any situation where a criminal suspect who has taken a position in a physical location, most often a structure or vehicle, which does not allow immediate police access -- whether fortified or not -- and who is refusing police orders to exit. A barricaded suspect may be known to be armed, thought to be armed, have access to weapons in the location, or be in an unknown weapons status.

Command Post: A centralized base of operation established near the site of an incident at which primary command functions are executed.

Crisis Negotiation: A law enforcement technique used to communicate with persons who are threatening violence, including barricaded subjects, stalkers, persons attempting to escape after committing a crime, and hostage takers. Crisis negotiation is often initiated by the first officer(s) on the scene.

De-escalation: Using verbal or non-verbal actions and tactics, whenever feasible and possible, preceding a potential force encounter. This may include the use of distance, cover, tactical repositioning, and communication to stabilize the situation, reduce the immediacy of the threat, and allow more time and options for resolution. The goal of these tactics is to slow down the situation, allowing access to additional resources (e.g., personnel, supervisors, specialized officers, or teams) that may mitigate the intensity of the encounter, help gain voluntary compliance, or otherwise allow for control of the situation and the safety of the officer(s), subject(s), and others without the need to use additional force.

Hostage Incident: Any situation in which a person is being held against his or her will by an armed, potentially armed, or otherwise dangerous suspect.

Incident Commander (IC): The highest-ranking officer at the scene until relieved by another officer who is authorized to assume command of the situation.

Inner Perimeter: A proximity boundary maintained initially by first responding officers, later transferred to the special response team, and designed to contain the situation to the smallest possible area and prevent access to the target location by persons from the outside.

Outer Perimeter: A boundary outside the inner perimeter maintained by patrol officers and designed to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the area of the critical incident.

Tactical Team: A select group of law enforcement officers who are specially trained and equipped to handle high-risk incidents, e.g., snipers, barricaded persons, hostage takers, and high-risk warrant service.

Triggering Point: Specific, predetermined circumstances that will justify the initiation of direct action to prevent or terminate a particular course of suspect or subject behavior.

Unified Command: A multi-agency command incorporating officials and personnel from agencies with jurisdictional responsibilities at an incident scene. When an incident's magnitude exceeds the capabilities, resources, or jurisdiction of one agency, the incident

commander of another agency may evolve into and participate in an established unified command structure.

IV. PROCEDURES

All officers are responsible for being familiar with the warrantless arrests section of the Criminal Code, and all other applicable statutes, and pertinent chapters of the 10th Edition of the Maine Law Enforcement Officer's Manual as they pertain to the use of physical force.

A. Actions of First Response Deputy(s)
1. Upon receipt and evaluation of the initial call, the incident supervisor or senior officer, if appropriate, will request the tactical and negotiation teams.
2. The first responding deputy shall assume the role of incident commander (IC) and be responsible for:
    a. Conducting an initial situation and response analysis,
    b. Determining what resources will likely be required based on the available information,
    c. Providing this information to communications and the outside responding agencies.
3. Deputies shall also be aware that police presence can be a catalyst for suspect or subject response and that they must be prepared to take appropriate action should the situation demand it, regardless of the status of additional responding personnel.
4. The IC shall continuously evaluate the situation and determine whether the opportunity and need exist for immediate intervention. The decision should be based on a variety of factors, including the following:
    a. Whether the failure to act could reasonably be expected to result in the loss of life or the loss of additional life;
    b. Whether sufficient numbers of adequately trained and equipped police personnel are available to neutralize the threat effectively;
    c. Whether the target location can be entered, or the suspect engaged without inappropriately increasing the risks to the innocent person or persons being held;
    d. Whether immediate intervention could limit or preclude the suspect's access to additional victims.
5. When the circumstances suggest an immediate intervention is necessary and appropriate, a properly trained and equipped contact team shall be formed under the supervision of the most qualified officer on scene. The mission of the contact team may vary depending on circumstances, but generally it focuses on locating, neutralizing, or apprehending the suspect, cutting off the suspect's access to hostages, or containing the suspect in an area that limits movement and escape opportunities.
6. The IC shall direct resources to specific positions or the designated staging area.
7. The IC shall establish a command post in an area that is out of sight of the incident and that can handle a large number of vehicles if necessary.
8. The first responding deputy shall continue functioning as the IC until relieved by a superior officer or an officer with specialized training or expertise in fulfilling this role.
9. Communications shall be continuously updated on officer positions and status, and informed if the responsibilities are transferred to another officer.
10. The IC shall confirm that the staging area maximizes the safety of the responding units and ensure that one officer is assigned at all times to brief arriving personnel.

11. The IC shall consider the previously listed safety priorities and establish an inner perimeter to contain the problem. During this process, all nonpolice personnel shall be evacuated from the inner perimeter to an appropriate location for intelligence debriefing.
12. The IC shall assess the suspect's or subject's options and related triggering points and set a contingency plan in motion to counter such options, based on the totality of the circumstances presented.

B. Stabilization
1. Upon stabilization, the IC shall conduct a secondary assessment and consider what has occurred and the legal standing of PCSO to intercede. It is essential to determine:
    a. Whether a crime has been committed;
    b. Whether the person inside is a suspect in the crime;
    c. Whether there is probable cause for his arrest, and
    d. Whether the need to apprehend the suspect at that moment outweighs the challenges associated with compelling the suspect or subject to submit to police authority.
2. In the absence of a crime or under circumstances where the IC cannot articulate the legitimate risk of death or serious injury, PCSO's best course of action may be to stand down.

C. Resolving the situation
1. Upon determining that PCSO shall attempt to resolve the barricade situation, the IC shall ensure that the appropriate specialized resources and specialized equipment have been requested (a special response team, crisis negotiators, the fire department/EMS, night vision, auxiliary lighting, etc.) and ask that Communications keep him or her apprised of the specialized unit response status. A plan will be created to ensure communications interoperability amongst responders.
2. The IC shall ensure that a variety of tasks are addressed while awaiting the arrival of special response teams and negotiators, including but not limited to the following:
    a. Establish an outer perimeter and initiate the evacuation and handling process for those inside. Special consideration must be given to those who refuse evacuation.
    b. Establish a command post location outside the suspect's potential line of fire and sight and ensure that responding officers are directed to this location for assignment before they move to the operations area.
    c. Initiate an investigation to determine precisely what has occurred and locate, isolate, and debrief any witnesses. This should include obtaining information about the suspect where relevant and available, including the following:
        1. Name;
        2. Physical description;
        3. Clothing description;
        4. Military background;
        5. Criminal history;
        6. Weapons;
        7. Mental state and condition, and names of treating clinicians;
        8. Circumstances leading up to the immediate problem
    d. Complete the Hostage/Barricade Subject(s) Checklist, as outlined in Appendix A of this policy.
    e. Obtain the telephone number and physical location of the target subject's telephone. Consider whether it is logical, necessary, and appropriate based on the facts presented

to use the telephone in advance of a special response and negotiation to establish communications and attempt to convince the suspect or subject to surrender.
f. Select a location for a media staging area and designate a person to interact with the media.
g. Select a location for those responding on behalf of the barricaded suspect or subject and designate an officer to interact with them. Make outer-perimeter personnel aware of the responders' presence and consider that they may attempt to enter the barricade area.
h. Contact the person with the most knowledge concerning the floor plan of the barricade/hostage location, including specifics related to keys, doors, locks, fortification, windows, alarms, weapons, and any other information that might help the resolution efforts.
i. Establish and maintain a log that documents the activities that have occurred and the location and identification of the assigned personnel.
j. Brief the special response team and negotiations teams upon their arrival.
k. Assist the special response team as it relieves the officers responsible for inner perimeter containment personnel.
l. Ensure that all officers relieved report to the command post for reassignment.

D. Tactical Operations
1. Tactical Operations will be managed by the officer in charge of the Tactical Team.
2. Incident Command will provide logistical support to tactical operations, including area maps, building diagrams, search warrants, and arrest warrants if required.
3. The Tactical Team will be responsible for the development of the tactical operations plan.
4. The Tactical Operations Leader will keep the Incident Commander informed of all developments and operations as they occur.
5. The Incident Commander will be responsible for notifying the Sheriff.
6. Communications between tactical and hostage negotiation personnel will be a priority, ensuring constant updates are given on the progress or failure of negotiations.
a. The negotiation process is one of establishing trust between the hostage taker and negotiator.
b. Negotiators shall be positioned at a location separate from the Command Post. The location should provide privacy and security for the negotiators and include equipment to maintain communications with both the scene commander and the hostage taker. “Throw phones,” radios, cellular phones, and bullhorns maybe used to communicate with the suspect. Negotiators should also be conscious of communications security.
c. The negotiator can recommend to the Incident Commander to terminate negotiations at any time they determine they are no longer fruitful.

E. De-Escalation
Once the hostage/barricaded situation has been resolved, the following procedures should be followed:
1. Once the arrest team has secured and searched the suspect, he or she will be given any necessary medical treatment and should be removed from the scene immediately. If the suspect’s injuries are severe enough to warrant hospitalization, the receiving hospital will be notified along with the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction. An appropriate number of

police personnel will be assigned to provide security at the hospital. Suspects should always be accompanied by at least two officers for security.

2. Hostages should be removed immediately upon the capture of the suspect.
    a. Radio communication should be made that the hostages are coming out. Medical treatment should be provided, if needed.
    b. Hostages should not be allowed to discuss the incident with anyone until they have been debriefed by department personnel.
    c. The Incident Commander should assign an officer/investigator to each hostage for debriefing. Hostages will also be notified of the services available to them as victims of crime.

F. After Action Review

At the Sheriff's discretion, deputies will be debriefed after an incident. Information will be collected to critique departmental operations and ensure that policies and procedures were followed. The Incident Commander will submit a detailed After-Action Report to the Sheriff through the chain of command, containing all pertinent facts regarding the incident. The After-Action Report will identify any training, staffing, or equipment needs and make recommendations to address them.

Sheriff Robert Young

Appendix - A

Hostage/Barricaded Suspect(s) Checklist

Information:

Crime Committed?

Owner of building/ residence?

Suspect Information:

Name and DOB?

Physical Description?

Clothing Description?

Mental Health History?

Criminal History?

Drug or Alcohol Use?

Military History?

Weapons/Type/Ammo?

Shots Fired? How many? Direction?

Attitude towards Police?

Special Training?

Telephone? (Cordless/Cell or other?)
Telephone Number?

Police Scanner?

Other people in building?
(If so, who and relationship with suspect?)

Residence Information:

Sketch of **Exterior** (Include doors, windows; which way door opens; screen doors; etc.)
Outdoor Lights and where-
Dogs (If so, how many and where?)-
Outbuildings; Attached structures; Vehicles?
Most Used Entrance to residence? Where?

******Where are First Responder Perimeter Units placed?******

C Side

B Side **D Side**

A Side
(Exterior of residence)

Interior of Residence:

Master Bedroom; Living Room; Bathrooms; Kitchen; other rooms-

C Side

B Side

D Side

A Side
(Interior of Residence)

Other Issues to Consider-

Any visuals of suspect? (If so, where and what was seen?)

Verbal contact with suspect? (If so, attitude and statements made?)

Road Blocked?

Evacuation of Neighbors Completed? (If not, document who, what, where and time.)

Victim still on scene? (If not, contact number where he/she can be reached.)

Search Warrant started? By who? E.T.A. to completion?

Arrest Warrant started? By who? E.T.A. to completion?

Fire/E.M.S. on standby?

Command Post Location? O.I.C.?

Interviews of victim; family; friends or other of suspect?

Updates from perimeter units?