POLICY & PROCEDURE

STURGEON BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **HOSTAGE/BARRICADED PERSON**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE:

NUMBER: 13.03
ISSUED: 10/27/2025
EFFECTIVE: 10/27/2025
☐ RESCINDS
☐ AMENDS
WILEAG 6TH EDITION
STANDARDS: 13.1.1.4

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to establish policies and procedures regarding hostage, sniper, and active shooter and barricaded person incidents for members of the Sturgeon Bay Police Department. The policies and procedures are based on the premise that safety is paramount and the application of force is to be considered as the last alternative within a range of possible resolutions.

It is impossible to set forth the exact procedures personnel should follow in every situation. It is, however, expected that they will exercise their best judgment in applying these guidelines to specific incidents. It is possible that a given situation may not require the implementation of all the provisions that follow.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

I. POLICY

II. DEFINITIONS

III. OBJECTIVES

IV. ACTIONS OF FIRST RESPONSE OFFICER(S)

V. RESPONSIBILITY OF ON-SCENE SUPERVISOR (INCIDENT COMMANDER)

VI. RESPONSIBILITY OF INVESTIGATION DIVISION SUPERVISOR

VII. NEGOTIATIONS

VIII. TACTICAL ENTRY/RESPONSE

IX. COMMUNICATION CENTER

X. REPORTING OF INCIDENT

I. POLICY

A. The use of a hostage(s) by any individual or group of individuals to secure an objective, criminal or otherwise, presents an involved mode of response by the Department. Even though the problem may seem complicated, officers must never forget that their responsibility is, to the best of their ability, to protect the lives of every person involved in these types of circumstances. Additionally, the Department's responsibility is to control these situations and to apprehend the responsible individual(s).

B. The policy of the Sturgeon Bay Police Department in dealing with hostage, sniper, or barricaded person incidents shall be:

1. To obtain and maintain complete operative control within the scope of the Department's jurisdiction or within the scope of cooperative agreement at the scene, be it stationary or mobile, of every aspect of any continuing incident.

2. To explore every source of available intelligence regarding the circumstances, location, and suspect(s) in the incident.

3. To attempt, by every means available, to attain any tactical advantage over the responsible individual(s).

4. Through the expertise of the members of this Department, attempt a negotiated surrender of the hostage(s) and the suspect(s).

5. Failure in obtaining a negotiated surrender of the hostage(s) or of the suspect(s) shall not necessarily (or normally) include the granting of any or any part of the suspect(s) demands or conditions, as such provisions can and must be determined only by those at the scene with command responsibility who must consider all variables.

6. Nothing in this policy shall preclude the use of necessary force, deadly or otherwise, by members of this Department in protecting themselves or others from death or serious injury.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. ACTIVE SHOOTER: An active shooter incident is different than a hostage or barricaded subject situation. In an active shooter incident, the suspect(s) activity is immediately causing death or serious bodily harm. The activity is not contained, and there is immediate risk of death or serious injury to potential victims. A hostage or barricaded subject is a static situation; whereas, an active shooter incident is a dynamic situation requiring immediate tactical intervention from on-scene police personnel.

B. BARRICADED PERSON: Incident in which one or more persons take refuge at a location and either use or threaten to use force to repel apprehension attempts. Generally, this situation differs from a hostage situation only in that a hostage has not been taken.

C. FIELD COMMAND POST: A temporary base of operation for the field supervisor strategically located relative to the scene of the incident, in a safe position. It will be used for establishing communications, deployment of personnel, and generally managing the situation. Changing conditions or discovery of available facilities may cause a change of location. A protracted situation may require establishment of a more permanent command post with more complete facilities and amenities.

D. HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION TEAM: Selected members of the Door County Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT) who have been trained to negotiate in hostage type situations.

E. HOSTAGE SITUATION: Incident in which one or more persons take and unlawfully hold other persons against their will by the use or threat of use of force. The perpetrator may subsequently make demands to secure freedom or other items, using the hostages as a bargaining tool.

F. NON-HOSTAGE SITUATION: Incident in which a person being held was specifically selected because of some real or perceived relationship. The suspect usually lacks substantive demands and is in a state of elevated emotions and/or irrationality. In this situation the suspect does not need law enforcement to facilitate demands. The person being held is not used as leverage, but rather is the object against whom the suspect is directing his/her aggression. The person being held is at substantial risk of death or great bodily harm.

G. SNIPER SITUATION: Incident in which a person or persons, with firearms, take some vantage point or position for the purpose of intentionally endangering the lives of others for a variety of reasons.

III. OBJECTIVES

A. The primary objective of the department in hostage, sniper, active shooter, and barricaded person incidents is the preservation of lives.

B. The secondary objectives shall be:

1. Apprehension of suspects

2. Recovery of property

IV. ACTIONS OF FIRST RESPONSE OFFICER(S)

A. The first officer(s) on the scene of a police incident who determines that a hostage, sniper, active shooter, barricaded situation is developing, or has developed, shall be responsible for taking the following action:

1. Inform the dispatcher of the situation; and request the field supervisor to respond to the scene.

2. Secure the scene and contain the subject(s) by covering all possible escape routes, using the assistance of other officers. This Department recognizes the greater danger to the community of allowing an armed person to exit a perimeter, with consideration of the totality of the circumstances.

3. Effect the removal of innocent and/or injured persons from the danger area with due respect for the safety of all concerned.

4. Brief the supervisor upon arrival at the scene, including the status of the situation, and the deployment of additional officers on the scene.

B. Upon initial contact, officers should not attempt to apprehend the suspect(s), unless circumstances dictate, and the apprehension can be made with relative safety to all present.

C. Officers on the scene should identify and hold for interview any persons with whom they have contact and who have firsthand knowledge concerning the situation, person(s) involved, or location of the incident.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ON-SCENE SHIFT SUPERVISOR

A. A shift supervisor will respond to the scene and shall be the incident commander unless directly relieved by higher authority.

B. The incident commander shall, upon being briefed, evaluate the situation and, if practical, direct available personnel in the investigation and apprehension of the suspect(s), keeping the safety of all persons involved as the highest priority.

C. In the event the incident is emerging as a protracted incident, the incident commander shall:

1. Activate the [COUNTY] County SWAT Team, if the circumstances meet the established call-out criteria.

2. Establish an inner containment perimeter to provide a reasonable degree of safety while maintaining contact with the incident scene. Establish an outer containment perimeter inside which only police personnel shall be permitted to operate.

3. Establish a field command post from which the operation can be directed at a safe distance from the scene.

4. Evaluate the situation and request necessary additional officers, or support services, as soon as practical.

5. Advise the dispatcher of the command post location; and order that all officers report to that location.

6. Designate an officer, if possible, to maintain a log of field operations relative to the incident, or assign the task to the dispatch center.

7. Establish command and control of all officers on, and reporting to, the scene. Officers being deployed to the scene shall be advised of who the incident commander is and further action shall be taken only on the incident commander's order.

8. Assign a media access center outside, but in close proximity to the outer perimeter. Media requests for information should be directed to the Chief of Police or designee.

9. Determine if there is a telephone listing at the location. If so, attempt telephone communication and engage the suspect in conversation, obtaining as much information as possible, and attempt to bring the incident to a conclusion.

   a) In the event telephone communications cannot be established, the public address system on a patrol vehicle may be used to communicate with the suspect(s). Safety of personnel will be a consideration in the positioning of the patrol vehicle.

10. Exclude all but emergency traffic from the danger area.

11. Deploy only visibly identifiable officers in the vicinity of the site occupied by the suspect(s).

12. Assign one or two officers, or request that detectives be assigned, to identify and obtain intelligence information on the suspect(s) involved.

13. Notify the Chief of Police and the Chief's immediate subordinate.

14. Direct mobilization of off-duty personnel and special equipment, ordering personnel reporting to the scene of the incident to report to the incident commander.

D. Once the initial confrontation is over and the situation is contained, the incident commander is the ONLY person who can authorize the discharge of weapons, the use of specialty impact munitions, chemical agents, or distraction devices except in situations of emergency self-defense or emergency defense of a third party.

E. The incident commander shall decide when to allow an incident to become mobile, including provisions for chase/surveillance vehicles and control of travel routes.

F. Upon completion of deployment of necessary personnel and support services, the incident commander shall direct operations for the apprehension of the suspect(s) involved in the incident.

G. The shift supervisor shall coordinate support functions for the incident.

H. The shift supervisor shall initiate and coordinate any call-up of additional police personnel and necessary support services as requested by the incident commander.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY OF INVESTIGATION

A. In the event of a protracted incident, and if requested to respond for duty, the Chief or designee shall:

1. Call in for duty those members of the Department to investigate as deemed necessary; this may be done by internal members or by mutual aid request.

2. Coordinate efforts of the investigation.

3. Assign/assist the Hostage Negotiation Team activities.

VII. NEGOTIATIONS

Comments: The negotiator will be assigned by department administration. The negotiator should be trained in hostage negotiation. The policy below is recommended as a guide and may be modified, changed, etc. based on the policy and procedures of the negotiator, i.e. Door County SWAT, etc.

A. The Chief or designee will assign the negotiator. The negotiator assumes the role of middleman, always requiring approval from higher authority.

B. Negotiations should always include an exchange. If a negotiable item is given to the suspect(s), some other item (concession) should be received in return.

C. The negotiator should not make demands on suspect(s), but may make suggestions on items that are to be negotiated. Suggestions should be made to the suspect(s) at a time and point in negotiations to keep the suspect(s) thinking or making decisions.

D. The following items <u>MAY</u> be negotiable depending on the circumstances of the incident:

1. Food

2. Beverages - nonalcoholic

3. Transportation

4. Escape

E. The following items <u>ARE NOT</u> negotiable:

1. Weapons

2. Hostage exchange - Never exchange a police officer for another hostage.

3. Narcotics

F. Always avoid using a partial negotiator. Never bring in the suspect(s) mother, father, spouse, best friend, or member of the clergy. Use these people to advantage in gaining information on the suspect.

G. Sturgeon Bay Police Department officers will turn the situation over to the assigned trained negotiators once they are in place.

VIII. TACTICAL ENTRY/RESPONSE

A. The incident commander shall coordinate any tactical entry/response that may be required to conclude the incident and apprehend the suspect(s).

B. If activated, the SWAT will be utilized for a tactical entry/response. If not activated, or not yet on scene, and circumstances dictate an immediate tactical entry/response, the incident commander shall select the entry/response team from available personnel.

C. In the event a tactical entry/response is made to apprehend the suspect(s) and/or bring the incident to a conclusion, the incident commander shall ensure the following are performed:

1. Evacuation of residents from the building and surrounding area if necessary.

2. Request fire department and/or EMS to stage at a safe location.

3. Brief and equip entry/response team officers.

4. Notify all personnel at the scene of the intended action.

D. Entry with chemical agents (tear gas, etc.) may be conducted. Chemical agents shall be deployed by the SWAT.

E. Deadly force may be used as a last resort only when there is an intentional use of a firearm or other instrument, the use of which would result in a high probability of death or great bodily harm.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Comments: The Communications Center will follow their own policy. The items listed below are recommended in the event there is a hostage/sniper, active shooter, barricaded person incident.

A. The dispatcher shall, immediately upon being informed of a hostage/sniper, active shooter, barricaded person incident, notify the shift supervisors on duty.

B. The dispatch communications center shall maintain communications with the incident commander.

C. If needed, the dispatcher shall notify other appropriate agencies in the event their services are needed.

X. REPORTING OF INCIDENT

A. An incident report shall be completed regarding incident.

B. The incident commander shall direct those officers directly involved in the incident to complete supplement reports, including a report from the officer assigned to maintain the field log.

C. The investigation supervisor shall direct those officers under his/her supervision to complete supplement reports, including obtaining the hostage negotiation team reports and recordings.

D. Upon completion of the incident report, it shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police.

E. A debriefing and evaluation should be conducted at the conclusion of the incident.

Clinton Henry
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

Initial 10/27/2025