

PALM BEACH GARDENS POLICE DEPARTMENT

SWAT TEAM

POLICY AND PROCEDURE 3.2.1

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PURPOSE: To establish the role and function of the SWAT Team and to establish guidelines for selection of team members.

SCOPE: This policy and procedure applies to all members.

REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY: Field Operations Division Assistant Chief and SWAT Commander

POLICY: The department establishes a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team to provide ready responses to situations beyond the capabilities of normally trained and equipped law enforcement personnel. The SWAT Team shall consist of specially trained personnel who receive ongoing training in specialized weapons and tactics. The SWAT Team will deploy to those situations requiring the use of special weapons and tactics, with the goal of reducing the risk that the situation poses to life and property.

PROCEDURES

1. ADMINISTRATION

- a. The administration, supervision and control of the SWAT Team shall be the responsibility of the Field Operations Division Assistant Chief as delegated to the SWAT Team Commander.
- b. The Team Commander shall have the authority to structure the team as he/she deems appropriate, to include the designation of a Team Leader.
- c. The Team Commander shall represent the SWAT Team at the command post of any incident requiring the response of the team and shall be a member of the incident command staff, serving as an advisor to the incident commander.
- d. The Team Leader shall direct the operations of the Team and its members during any incident requiring the response of the team, subject to direction from the Team Commander and the incident command staff.
- e. In the absence of the Team Commander, the Team Leader shall assume the responsibilities and duties of the Commander and shall designate an alternate team leader.

2. TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION

- a. Assignment to the SWAT Team shall be considered a collateral assignment. All members have other full-

- time assignments within the department and fall under the command of the SWAT Team only when the team is activated or for training.
- b. Membership on the team is open only to sworn department personnel.
 - c. Non-department personnel may become members of the team in support positions, i.e., medical support, provided those members are qualified for, trained as, and appointed as Reserve Officers and meet all other membership requirements. This is specifically intended to allow the use and training of Fire-Medics as SWAT Medics.
 - d. Personnel desiring to become members of the SWAT Team shall, when openings are announced, submit a memo of interest per the announcement.
 - e. The Team Commander, with the concurrence of the Chief of Police, may select new team members from among the applicants. Factors to be considered in the selection process include the results of an interview conducted by team members, and the applicant's experience, work performance and willingness to be subject to call-out at any time.
 - f. All applicants for team membership must pass a shooting test to be considered for selection.
 - g. All applicants for team membership will be subject to a physical assessment prior to being accepted. The applicant must be able to complete the job task related evaluation program as prescribed by the SWAT Commander or designee.
 - i. Applicants will be given the elements of the evaluation prior to the assessment.
 - ii.
 - h. Only those officers found to be physically qualified for the position will advance to team membership.
 - i. All selected officers will be subject to a psychological screening by a department-designated psychologist for evaluation of the officer's fitness for the SWAT Team. Only those officers found to be psychologically qualified for the position will advance to team membership
 - j. Newly selected SWAT Team members will join the team in a "trainee" status and will be on probation as a team member for one year. Within one year of joining the team, the "trainee" must complete a basic SWAT or tactical training course or other designated course of instruction (if not already completed) and must successfully participate in any additional training provided to team members. Attendance at the basic SWAT or tactical training course and any other required training will be in an on-duty status. Failure to complete the required training will result in the trainee's removal from the team.
 - k. SWAT Team members will be subject to regular fitness testing and must maintain the ability to meet the requirements of Section 2.f.
 - l. Any member of the team may be removed from the team at the discretion of the Team Commander and with the approval of the Chief of Police. A member may be removed for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, failure to complete required training, failure to participate in training, inability to perform the duties of a SWAT Team member, inability to meet fitness requirements and repeated failure to respond to call-outs.

3. EQUIPMENT

- a. Due to the specialized nature of SWAT Team activities, the department will provide needed team equipment. Such equipment shall include, but not be limited to:
 - i. Specialized weapons (sub-machine guns, rifles, gas munitions launchers, etc)
 - ii. Protective equipment (ballistic shields, entry vests, etc)
 - iii. Tools (battering rams, ladders, etc)
 - iv. Munitions (chemical devices, distraction devices, etc)
 - v. Specialized communication devices
- b. Each member of the team will also be issued individual specialized equipment, including, but not limited to:
 - i. BDU's
 - ii. Tactical holster

- iii. Equipment belt
- iv. Personal body armor
- v. Ballistic Helmet
- vi. Gas Mask
- c. Each member of the team is responsible for responding to an incident with all personally issued equipment.

4. PROCEDURE FOR CALL-OUT/DEPLOYMENT

- a. The Sergeant or on-duty supervisor shall request the call-out of the SWAT Team in the following situations:
 - i. Incidents involving barricaded subject(s) believed to possess weapons and/or presenting a danger to themselves or others.
 - ii. Incidents involving the taking or suspected taking of hostages, including domestic disputes when the hostages are family members of the hostage taker.
- b. The Sergeant or on-duty supervisor may request the call-out of the SWAT Team in other crisis situations or situations where the skills of the Team would be beneficial.
- c. The SWAT Team may also be used to execute high-risk search warrant entries, respond to civil disorders, and for other incidents as required.
- d. When the Sergeant or on-duty supervisor requests the call-out of the SWAT Team, Communications shall notify the Team Commander and/or the Team Leader and implement the call-out.
- e. Whenever the SWAT Team is called out, the Hostage Negotiation team shall also be activated. In the event of a warrant service entry, only one negotiator shall be required to be on scene.
- f. Whenever the SWAT Team is called out, the Sergeant or on-duty supervisor shall ensure that the Command Staff is notified. Such notification may be made by dispatch via the Dialogic system.
- g. The SWAT Team shall provide prearranged call-out protocols to the Communications Unit for inclusion in the Tactical Dispatch Manual. These protocols may be used in the case of any call-out or when unable to contact the Team Commander or Team Leader.
- h. Team members will be provided with a reporting location, and members will respond directly to that location unless otherwise directed. The reporting location will generally be the incident command post. Absent other instructions, team members should report to the incident command post.
- i. A team member or members will be designated to respond to the police department, obtain the team's equipment, and transport the equipment to the scene.
- j. Upon arrival of the team at the incident, a SWAT command post will be selected and assignments made. All members will be briefed as to any available information.
- k. Team members on duty at the time of a call-out shall, whenever possible, proceed directly to the command post to begin gathering information and selecting a SWAT command post, unless the circumstances dictate the need to obtain the teams equipment first.
- l. The SWAT command post should be located between the inner and outer perimeters of the incident, near (but not part of) the command post, out of sight of the barricaded subject(s) or hostage taker(s), and should ideally have power and communications capability.

5. OPERATIONS

- a. The selection of strategies, approaches, tactics and related items shall be at the discretion of the SWAT Team based on the circumstances and the team's training and experience, and on guidance from the Incident Command Post.
- b. The primary objective of the team is to resolve the situation safely and without violence when possible.
- c. Prior to the arrival of the SWAT Team, initial responding personnel should attempt to accomplish the following:
 - i. Secure inner and outer perimeters.
 - ii. Establish an incident command post. When choosing a command post location, it should be in a secure

- area out of direct sight of the suspect and should ideally have power and communication capability.
- iii. Establish communications network.
- iv. Evacuate victims and bystanders.
- v. Establish traffic control points.
- vi. Provide for needed assistance and logistical needs.
- vii. Request Fire-Rescue standby.
- viii. Request air support (PBSO) if needed.
- d. The members of the SWAT Team may be expected to perform a variety of functions at an incident, including but not limited to:
 - i. Perimeter security
 - ii. Building entry and suspect apprehension
 - iii. Hostage rescue
 - iv. Sniper apprehension
 - v. Protective security operations
 - vi. Apprehension of armed and dangerous persons
 - vii. Execution of search warrants in hazardous situations
- e. Immediately following any incident involving the use of SWAT, the SWAT Team will conduct a debriefing to critique the operation and to identify, and make any suggestions, for future improvement if needed.
- f. After the use of the SWAT Team, the Team Commander shall ensure that a supplemental report to the original case report is completed

6. TRAINING

- a. In addition to any training required to become a full member of the team, members will be provided with additional and advanced training when possible.
- b. In-service training will be conducted periodically as directed by the SWAT Team Commander.
- c. Training to maintain physical fitness shall be the personal responsibility of each team member.
- d. At least annually, the Hostage Negotiation Team and the SWAT Team will conduct a joint training exercise to develop the ability to work together effectively.
- e. Records of SWAT Team training will be maintained by a designated team member and will include at a minimum: a course outline or lesson plan, a roster of attendees and documentation of any examinations/practical tests/certifications.

7. USE OF NECESSARY FORCE

- a. Nothing in this policy is intended to preclude the use of necessary force, including deadly force, when such force is necessary for the protection of hostages, the public, or officers, and when such force is used in accordance with department policy and applicable statutes and legal guidelines.

8. GLOSSARY

Inner Perimeter: The immediate area in which the suspect is contained. As SWAT personnel arrive, they will take command of the inner perimeter and relieve those officers already there. All civilians should be evacuated from this area unless conditions make it safer for them to remain in place.

Outer Perimeter: May extend for a block or more in all directions from the suspect's location. This perimeter will keep bystanders and the media out of the area of operations and prevent the suspect from observing any actions that take place there. Civilians should be evacuated from this area as well unless conditions make it safer for them to remain in place.

SWAT Team Member: A sworn officer specially trained in the use of special weapons and tactics.

INDEX AS:

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- CRISIS RESPONSE

RESPONSIBILITY INDEX:

- FIELD OPERATIONS DIVISION ASSISTANT CHIEF
- SWAT TEAM
- SERGEANTS
- COMMUNICATIONS

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APPROVED:



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