

# Bowie City Police Department - General Orders



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## I. PURPOSE

The Bowie Police Department recognizes that Officers may encounter situations, such as a barricade or hostage incident, that require specialized training and equipment. . The Bowie Police Department has partnered with the Prince George’s County Police Department to respond to these incidents

## II. POLICY

The procedures described in this General Order apply when Officers are called upon as first responders to situations in which a person is barricaded in a room, building, or vehicle, or an apparent docile situation to which an Officer has already responded, that unexpectedly erupts into a confrontation with police.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Barricade:** When a person who has committed a criminal act or is committing a criminal act and takes refuge in a home, building, vehicle, or other structure, or is causing or threatening to cause harm to himself or others.

**Hostage:** When a suspect is holding a person against his/her will and either threatening to do harm to himself or the hostage and refuses to release the person being held.

**First Responder:** First Officer(s) to arrive on the scene.

**Conflict Management Team:** Members of the Prince George’s County Police Department who have received specialized training in special weapons and tactics (SWAT), communication equipment, and hostage negotiations.

**Cover:** Any physical barrier that provides some level of ballistic protection, i.e. telephone pole, engine block, solid block wall.

**Concealment:** Any object or lighting effect that shields or hides an Officer from the suspect’s field of vision, but provides little or no ballistic protection from firearms, i.e. wooden fence, a bush, or a darkened room.

**Staging Area:** A location near the incident scene that provides sufficient space for responding Officers of the Conflict Management Team to bring equipment and assemble prior to a Command Post being designated.

**Command Post:** The location that the Commander of the Conflict Management Team designates as the area from which he/she will direct operations. The Staging Area may be designated as the Command Post once the Commander of the Conflict Management Team or his/her designee arrives.

**Inner Perimeter:** That area (hot zone) that is in close proximity to the target location and can be controlled or easily accessed by a suspect(s).

**Outer Perimeter:** The area outside of the inner perimeter where vehicular and pedestrian traffic can easily be diverted.

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **1. Officer's Responsibilities**

An Officer dispatched to an incident where a hostage has already been taken or a person has already barricaded himself/herself, shall respond to the scene using an approach that will limit the opportunity for the suspect(s) to observe the Officer's arrival and approach.

The Officer must take immediate steps, prior to the arrival of the on duty supervisor, to ensure the protection of innocent persons in the immediate area and attempt to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation. The Officer shall attempt to identify any witnesses and gather information on the exact location of the suspect(s) in the home or structure i.e. master bedroom, basement, or office and try to establish communications with the suspect(s) via phone, person to person from a position of cover, or by the public address system in a police vehicle. If communications are established, ask the suspect(s) to come out and surrender. Officers shall maintain strict weapons discipline.

The first arriving Officer(s) should also attempt to obtain information about the following:

- Weapons available to suspect(s)
- Suspects' name, age, address
- Suspects' physical/mental health
- Suspect's drug or alcohol use
- Suspect's criminal record
- Floor plan of home or building
- Names of relatives
- Identities of persons being held
- Reasons for the behavior, i.e. divorce, lost job, etc.

The Officer should maintain cover and concealment until relieved by members of the Conflict Management Team.

##### **2. Supervisor's Responsibilities**

Once on the scene, the Supervisor must take command of the scene and establish an inner perimeter, and determine if the incident is a barricade or hostage situation. Once the incident is verified, the Supervisor shall

(1) Contact Communications and request the assistance of the Prince George's County Conflict Management Team; (2) divert both vehicular and pedestrian traffic around the target location; (3) continue to attempt to establish communications with the suspect. If communication has been established, continue the dialog; (4) make notification to Command Staff.

The Supervisor must also designate a staging area and secure it and provide the dispatcher with directions for responding unit; providing the most direct and safest route. The Supervisor must ensure that Officers on the inner perimeter maintain cover and concealment, and arrange for any injured persons to be removed to a safe location and provided medical attention.

### **3. Conflict Management Team**

Upon arrival and upon taking command of the scene, the Conflict Management Team may relieve Patrol Officers and maintain the inner perimeter during the negotiation process. Once on scene, the Conflict Management Team will be responsible for the development and implementation of all tactical plans, the evacuation of civilians as necessary. At the conclusion of the situation, the Team may relinquish control of the inner perimeter and location of the occurrence to the Bowie Police Department.

Once a situation has been resolved and the suspect(s) has either been apprehended or surrendered, the Bowie Police Department will take custody of the suspect(s) and file charges or transport the suspect to a medical facility for an Emergency Petition. Any conflict as to custody of a suspect(s) will be resolved between the on scene Bowie supervisor and the on scene commander for Prince George's County Police.