



POLICY & PROCEDURE

PORTAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **ACTIVE ATTACK**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE:

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to provide guidance and direction to members of the Portage Police Department should an active attack situation be encountered.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. POLICY
- II. DISCUSSION
- III. DEFINITIONS
- IV. POLICY INTENT
- V. RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE ATTACK
- VI. RESCUE TEAM
- VII. EXPLOSIVE DEVICES
- VIII. SECURITY ISSUES
- IX. APPREHENSION OF ACTIVE ATTACKER(S)
- X. EQUIPMENT ASSIGNED TO SQUAD CARS
- XI. TRAINING

I. POLICY

- A. It shall be the policy of the Portage Police Department to take immediate actions to protect life by any legal means necessary in situations wherein persons are actively involved in current, on-going activities which could cause death or great bodily harm to others. First Responding Officers shall assess the situation and take immediate action necessary to stop any threat which may cause death or great bodily harm.

The first arriving officer must evaluate the scene and the situation to determine if they wait for another officer to arrive or based upon the situation and the need to prevent the loss of life make a solo entry.

- B. This policy does not replace Policy & Procedure 13.03: Hostage/Barricaded Person; rather it supplements that policy in the event an active attack situation arises.

II. DISCUSSION

- A. Law enforcement response to an active attack is dictated by the suspect, the terrain and many other uncontrollable variables and is a fast moving and fluid situation and therefore will have many variables which cannot be forecasted into any training scenario or policy. Officers may be forced into extremely difficult situations and need to make decisions extremely quickly. Officers must respond to an active attack situation with the mindset that they may need to use deadly force in order to protect life, but must also be prepared to use lesser or no force as the situation develops.

First responding officers must focus on stopping the threat and assisting victims. The department recognizes that officers will need to rely on their training and best judgment when responding to an active attack and also realizes that officers may be forced into normally unthinkable situations and act on the greater danger theory to protect others and themselves when stopping a threat/s.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **ACTIVE ATTACKER:** Person(s) who engage in a random or systematic activity demonstrating an intent to continuously harm others with the overriding objective appearing to be that of mass murder. For purposes of the policy, the term "active attack" will include anyone who uses a deadly weapon (firearm, club, knife, bow and arrow, explosives, vehicle, etc.).

An active attack incident is different than a hostage or barricaded subject situation. In an active attack 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 attack incident is a dynamic situation requiring immediate tactical intervention from on-scene police personnel.

- B. COMMAND : 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.

IV. POLICY INTENT

- A. Officers responding to an active attack incident shall focus on the three priorities of first stopping the threat, stopping the dying by providing immediate medical assistance, and rapid evacuation of the injured.
- B. In instances where a suspect is actively causing great bodily harm or death to innocent people, rapid intervention by law enforcement is imperative.
 - 1. The prioritization of officers' activities in an active shooter incident is:
 - a) To stop the threat as rapidly as possible
 - b) Prevent the loss of life
 - c) Assist in the rapid evacuation of everyone from the scene
 - 2. Further considerations after the threat has been stopped.
 - b) Provide and call for medical assistance while controlling and preserving the scene. This would include establishing protected causality collection points for Paramedics to respond to and begin triage. Patient evaluation should be left to trained medical personnel.
 - c) When available resources have arrived and a family resource site has been identified, escort and Identify survivors from the scene in a systematic way that protects the survivors from further harm and maintains the integrity of the crime scene.
 - d) To protect the crime scene until and during the arrival of investigators and evidence collection teams.

V. RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE ATTACKER

- A. Upon notification of an active attack situation at any location in Columbia County, the Portage Police Department will respond with available officers to the location of the active shooter situation immediately and without further dispatch, unless given other direction by shift supervisor or the agency of jurisdiction.
- B. In the event of any active attack incident, all available on-duty enforcement personnel shall respond to a scene within Columbia County without further direction or request for mutual aid.

- C. After active threat is confirmed to be real, any Portage Police Officer shall request an **“ACTIVE ATTACK RESPONSE”** calling for mutual aid response from all available regional law enforcement agencies.
1. An **“ACTIVE ATTACK RESPONSE”** is considered an automatic call for immediate mutual aid to the Columbia County Sheriff, WI State Patrol, Portage Fire Department, and EMS. Depending on the situation and location additional mutual aid calls will be made to regional agencies such as Sauk County Sheriff, Marquette County Sheriff, and/or other County Sheriff’s Special Response Team(s). Resources requested may include bomb sniffing dogs and the Dane County Bomb Squad.
 2. The shift supervisor shall contact the Chief or designee who will inform department personnel calling everyone to duty.
 3. The Columbia County Sheriff’s Department emergency response vehicle may be requested.
 4. Columbia County Emergency Management shall be notified and the mobile command post may be requested to the incident location.
- D. First responding “at scene” Officers shall take command and designate a tactical radio channel for on scene communication such as POPD CODED.
- E. Command shall designate other radio channels as needed for additional resources such as staging, Rescue Task Force, and Perimeter units.
- F. Dispatch shall page out Portage Fire and EMS to assist and respond to the designated staging area.
- G. First responding “at-scene” Officers.
1. The objective is to quickly arrive and assess the scene for a driving force. If there is a driving force and the threat is still actively causing death or great bodily harm to people the officer will make a contact as soon as possible to stop the threat.
 2. The first responding “at-scene” officers shall inform dispatch of the scene assessment immediately upon their arrival.

The first responding officer shall direct responding officer response activities. Communication is KEY to an active attack response to minimize confusion to responding officers and to deploy an effective response to neutralize the threat of further loss of life. These activities may include:

- a) First On-Scene Officer/s: The first responding officer will need to made an assessment of the situation and make a decision to respond alone to confront an active attacker(s) or if they should/could wait for additional officers to arrive.
 - (1) If the officer makes the decision to immediately respond into the scene by themselves as a solo officer entry and attempt to stop the active threat

they should:

- (a) Notify Dispatch and other responding units of their intent to enter the scene and where entry is being made. It is suggested that the officer respond with a long rifle.
 - (b) Provide situational updates to dispatch until command is established, noting their location in the scene and pertinent observations.
 - (c) Move as quickly and safely to the driving force.
- (2) If multiple officers arrive first at the same time, they will form a “contact team” advise dispatch of their intent to enter and where.
- (a) A team leader and a communications officer will be identified to direct the team and have one person communicating with dispatch until command is established.
 - (b) The contact team shall inform dispatch/command and responding officers of their intent and location of entry. They shall move as a team quickly to the driving force.
 - (c) The fifth or sixth officer on scene after a contact team has entered shall assume incident command.
3. Dispatch will relay pertinent information from “at-scene” unit(s) to other responding units.
4. Communication directed to the entry/contact team shall be limited to that which is critically pertinent to the team, (i.e. threat location, etc.).
5. The focus of the contact team is to make contact and stop the threat as soon as possible by arrest, containment, or the use of deadly force. The team will be going quickly by-passing locked doors and areas where there is no driving force. In the event of a driving force, the team will continue on past victims or harmless distractions. The second and subsequent contact teams will conduct more systematic and encompassing searches, create causality collection points provide medical assistance, and prepare to evacuate victims as soon as possible. In lieu of a driving force, the contact team will provide medical assistance and establish causality collection points. Officers not needed for medical assistance will quickly sweep the premise assessing and setting up hall security.
6. When practicable, the contact team shall update dispatch /command as to the location of the subject, team, and any other critical information. Dispatch/command shall not request this information from the contact team.

IV. INCIDENT COMMAND

Coordination and control of the incident response is critical. The first available “at-

scene” officer, after formation of contact team(s), shall serve as incident command and coordinate response efforts in accordance with the National Incident Command Management System (NIMS) training; also refer to Policy & Procedure 13.02: Emergency Mobilization Plan (NIMS).

- A. The officer shall identify themselves to dispatch as command and take over on scene radio traffic. The information shall be relayed to responding units.
- B. Command shall establish the incident command structure appointing section chiefs under a unified command structure. The first priority is establishing and controlling on scene communications, coordination of resources, and establishing an Operations Section to monitor and direct resources as needed to control the incident. Command shall appoint an Operations Chief to manage the Operations Section.
- C. The Operations Chief shall ensure that:
 - 1. A safe and secure staging area is established;
 - 2. A safe evacuation route is established and protected;
 - 3. That the inner and outer perimeters to the scene are secured;
 - 4. Injured persons are identified and evacuated to safe areas for treatment and evacuation;
 - 5. Identification made and evacuation of others involved in the event is made to a safe and secured location, that the urgent needs are met and that they are interviewed as appropriate prior to release.
- D. Other Incident Command positions shall be staffed as required by the situation and as the situation develops and mission changes.

VI. TRIAGE TEAMS

Unassigned officers will report to the staging area for assignments as needed. A priority for the staging manager will be the creation of a triage team(s) comprised of two armed officers and two preferably paramedics or EMTs.

A. Officers assigned to triage team(s) are not to leave their assigned medics. The officer’s mission is to provide security to the medics in the warm environment of the scene.

B. Triage teams will enter and move quickly to the established causality collection points. Medics will evaluate the injured while officers provide security. Medics will communicate with command about patient status so transport to a trauma facility can be coordinated.

C. The Triage team may need to move between multiple causality collection areas

or multiple triage teams may need to be formed depending on the number of injured and the location of the injured.

VI. RESCUE TASK FORCE

Unassigned officers will report to the staging area for assignments. A priority for the staging manager will be creating and establishing rescue task force teams comprised of two officers and two firefighters. The team will be directed by command where to go and which patients to evacuate to an Ambulance Exchange Point (AEP).

- A. Officers assigned to a rescue task force shall not leave their assigned firefighters. The officer's mission is to provide security for the firefighters in the warm zone of the scene.
- B. The rescue task force will be assigned by command to go to a specific causality collection point and remove specific patient(s) to the AEP. The rescue task force should in most circumstances wait to transport a patient(s) until command advises the ambulance has arrived and is waiting for the patients(s).
- C. Once the rescue task force has completed the transport of the patient to the AEP, the team shall communicate with command about their next assignment. The team shall not continue to transport patients without assignments. Each patient will have been categorized by level of care needed and which facility they need transport to and by which means ground or air they need transport. Command may have the rescue task force report back to staging.

NOTE : The staging manager is the only authority that can disband or separate members of a triage team or rescue task force.

VII. EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

- A. If teams encounter a suspected explosive device, they must use their own judgment regarding either posting an officer near, reporting, marking and by passing it.

VIII. SECURITY ISSUES

After the initial responding officers have formed the contact, triage, and rescue teams and the initial perimeter is secured, Unified Command will ensure that the next responding officers verify that any associated facilities are safe and unaffected. The intent is to contain the event and to ensure that there is no movement by any active attacker(s) into other potential target areas.

- A. In a school setting this would mean to verify that any other schools in the district, bus transportation and parking areas remain uncompromised. In a business setting this would mean securing other facilities, buildings and parking lots in the area.
- B. Officers should be assigned to the security of evacuation routes as available and to the evacuation centers to maintain security, control and accountability of

victims, witnesses. Officers assigned to the evacuation routes and evacuation centers need to be alert to the possibility that one or more suspects may have infiltrated into the crowd.

- C. Everyone evacuated from the event needs to be identified and searched for weapons.
- D. Columbia County Human Services, mental health providers, and EMS shall be called to respond to the evacuation center to evaluate those evacuated and provide medical assistance as needed.
- E. In the case of a school event, school personnel will coordinate the family resource center operations. Law Enforcement will be responsible for security of the resource center.

IX. APPREHENSION OF ACTIVE ATTACKER(S)

- A. In the event the suspect is subdued by on-sight civilians or surrenders to officers, the suspect will be taken into custody and command will be notified. An officer(s) will be assigned custody until relieved or directed by command. In the event the suspect is found by officers to be deceased, the body and area will be secured as a crime scene and officers will communicate with command for direction.

NOTE: Any potential suspects should be kept from the victims and others directly or indirectly involved as the situation enables. Suspect(s) shall be immediately transported to a secure facility away from the scene.

X. EQUIPMENT ASSIGNED TO SQUAD CARS

- A. The department shall provide and keep an inventory of equipment in each marked squad car. Officers shall have available to them in a tactical response:
 - 1. 1 each - AR-15 rifle.
 - 2. 1 each – 12 gauge shotgun designated at all times as a less lethal weapon with bean bag rounds.
 - 3. 1 each - ballistic shield.
 - 4. 1 each – “Go bag” with medical supplies, extra ammo, and other items.
- B. At the beginning of each officer’s tour of duty and prior to leaving the station in their squad car, every officer shall check their squad car to ensure that all above noted items are in their squad car, along with all other required equipment.

XI. TRAINING

- A. Sworn officers of the Portage Police Department shall train on a regular basis for active attack situations.

Keith J. Klafke
Chief of Police

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

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