

Hostage and Barricade Incidents

502.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for situations where officers have legal cause to contact, detain, or arrest a person, and the person refuses to submit to the lawful requests of the officers by remaining in a structure or vehicle and/or by taking a hostage.

The scope of this policy is not intended to address all variables that officers encounter during their initial response or when a hostage or barricade situation has developed. This policy does not require or recommend specific strategies or tactics for resolution as each incident is a dynamic and rapidly evolving event.

502.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Barricade situation - An incident where a person maintains a position of cover or concealment and ignores or resists law enforcement personnel, and it is reasonable to believe the subject is armed with a dangerous or deadly weapon.

Hostage situation - An incident where it is reasonable to believe a person is:

- Unlawfully held by a hostage-taker as security so that specified terms or conditions will be met.
- Unlawfully held against the person's will under threat or actual use of force.

502.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Humboldt County Probation Department (HCPD) to address hostage and barricade situations by immediately contacting local law enforcement.

502.3 COMMUNICATION

When circumstances permit, initial responding officers should try to establish and maintain lines of communication with a barricaded person or hostage-taker. The focus of communication should be to stabilize the situation while awaiting local law enforcement.

502.4 CONSIDERATIONS

Officers should promptly and carefully evaluate all available information to determine whether an incident involves, or may later develop into, a hostage or barricade situation.

Officers should immediately contact local law enforcement when it is determined that a hostage or barricade situation exists.

The handling officer should brief the arriving local law enforcement officers of the incident, including information about suspects and victims, the extent of any injuries, additional resources or equipment that may be needed, and current perimeters and evacuation areas.

Humboldt County Probation Department

Probation Manual

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502.4.1 BARRICADE SITUATION

Unless circumstances require otherwise, officers handling a barricade situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of stabilizing the incident by establishing and maintaining lines of communication while awaiting local law enforcement, specialized personnel, and trained negotiators.

502.4.2 HOSTAGE SITUATION

Officers presented with a hostage situation should attempt to avoid a forceful confrontation in favor of controlling the incident in anticipation of the arrival of local law enforcement, specialized personnel, and trained hostage negotiators. However, it is understood that hostage situations are dynamic and can require that officers react quickly to developing or changing threats.

502.5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon being notified that a hostage or barricade situation exists, the supervisor should immediately respond to the scene, establish a proper chain of command, and assume the role of Incident Supervisor until properly relieved by local law enforcement.

502.6 REPORTING

Unless otherwise relieved by a supervisor, the handling officer at the scene is responsible for completion of an incident report.