



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 109

Effective Date 03/11/2026

Policy Name Armed and Barricaded Suspects

Approved Date 03/10/2026

Approved by Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police

Previous Date 02/29/2024

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

To update procedures.

POLICY:

During incidents involving armed and barricaded suspects, hostage situations, and other occurrences of a critical nature, the primary goal of the Tulsa Police Department is to apprehend the suspect without injury or loss of life. Organization, teamwork, and discipline are required of each officer to protect the lives of victims, police officers, and suspects.

The first officer to arrive on scene will become the Incident Commander (IC). This officer will maintain command until command is transferred to a supervisor or another officer based on expertise, knowledge, or certification. The first officers to arrive on the scene have the most crucial responsibility. They must assess the situation quickly and accurately and report their findings to other involved personnel. They must communicate critical information that will enable other officers to contain the suspect, control the situation, establish travel routes, and conclude the incident as safely as possible.

When officers reasonably believe they are faced with a situation involving the imminent loss of life, such as an active shooter, officers are authorized to take appropriate and reasonable actions utilizing approved techniques (e.g., Contact Team). The first arriving officer or officers can “pass command” to take appropriate and reasonable action to resolve the situation.

SUMMARY: Procedures for the deployment and the response of SOT personnel.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel

DEFINITIONS:

ARMED AND BARRICADED SUSPECT – an armed person who has committed a felony or is an imminent threat to himself or others and who refuses to submit to arrest by using a structure (e.g., house, vehicle, building) to prevent apprehension.

CRISIS NEGOTIATORS – SOT personnel who are specially trained in tactical negotiations.

INNER PERIMETER – the immediate area of containment, typically consisting of arrest team(s) and containment positions.

KILL ZONE – the area in which the suspect(s) could cause serious injury or death, based upon the suspect’s location and the weapons at their disposal.

OUTER PERIMETER – a secondary control area, sufficient to keep the kill zone free of civilians.

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT (CU) – responsible for communicating with the media or other appropriate agencies requiring information directly from the incident scene.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TEAM (SOT) – a team of specially trained officers that includes tactical officers, snipers, tactical medics, and crisis negotiators.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TEAM COMMANDER – if the Special Operations Team is activated, has command and control of the incident and the inner perimeter, which includes direction, supervision, coordination, and control of all tactical and other assigned personnel while they are engaged in their missions.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACTICAL TEAM LEADERS – designated supervisors on the SOT who are responsible for supervising teams and directing their tactical deployment.

TACTICAL PARAMETERS- A threat assessment that includes suspect description, crimes committed, weapons used and force guidelines. The Tulsa Police Department has codified four levels of tactical parameters; Armed Hostage Barricade, High Armed and Barricaded, Medium Armed and Barricaded, and Low Armed and Barricaded.

PROCEDURES:

1. A supervisor will respond to all armed and barricaded situations.
2. When responding to an armed and barricaded suspect:
 - a. Determine the kill zone.
 - b. Aid any wounded and evacuate anyone within the kill zone. (Note: when practicable, officers shall wait for special resources to arrive before attempting to evacuate seriously wounded individuals.)
 - c. Contain the location with an arrest team and necessary containment positions.
 - d. If a hostage situation is suspected, establishing the arrest/emergency intervention team takes priority over other containment positions.
 - e. Direct witnesses to a place of safety and detain them for debriefing.
3. Advise Public Safety Communications (PSC) of the following information:
 - a. Scene assessment.
 - b. Location, description, and number of suspects.
 - c. Type of weapon(s) the suspect possesses.
 - d. Specify the area of the kill zone and identify the avenues of approach.
 - e. Hostage information.
 - f. Injured person(s) present.
 - g. Locations where additional officers should be assigned.
4. Upon arrival, a field supervisor will assume command and:
 - a. If deemed a hostage situation, begin notification procedures for SOT immediately.
 - b. Will become the arrest team leader or assign someone as the arrest team leader.
 - c. Initiate on-scene communications on a tactical frequency.
 - d. Establish a Command Post under the Incident Command System (ICS) and convey the location and the telephone number to PSC.
 - e. Identify the crime type and any exigency or need for a warrant to enter or compel the suspect to exit.
 - f. Establish tactical parameters and constantly evaluate if they need to change.
 - g. Obtain any available information that describes the location where the suspect is barricaded, including the floor plan.
 - h. Establish initial contact with the suspect.
 - i. If commands are given for the suspect to exit and they refuse, follow notification procedures outlined in policy 308 – Staff Notifications, in preparation for an SOT consultation.

5. Upon arrival, the shift commander, staff duty captain or staff duty major will be the IC. The IC will:
 - a. Request that PSC notify the SOT Commander/Team Leader.
 - b. Maintain overall responsibility for the incident.
 - c. Verify that all initial procedures and notifications have been completed.
 - d. Upon completion of the operation verify that the area of the Command Post is secure.
6. Upon arrival, the SOT Commander will assume sole tactical responsibility and control for the incident and for the deployment of team members, under the Operations Section/Tactical Branch of the ICS. SOT members will relieve uniformed officers and assume control of the inner perimeter. Upon being relieved by an SOT member, officers will report to the Command Post for debriefing. In the absence of the SOT Commander, an SOT Team Leader will assume these responsibilities.
7. SOT Team Leaders are responsible for developing a tactical plan to resolve the incident as well as executing the tactical resolution.
8. The IC will maintain command and control of the overall scene. Officers at the scene will provide support and maintain the perimeter at the direction of the IC. The SOT Commander shall advise the IC of all tactical plans. The IC may offer advice to the SOT Commander however, the SOT Commander shall have final control of conducting all tactical operations.
9. The Communications Unit (CU) will be responsible for:
 - a. The safety of media personnel.
 - b. Setting up a media information area.
 - c. Disseminating information to the media as it is made available by the SOT Commander or the IC in charge of the scene.

REGULATIONS:

1. Chemical agents require proper training for effective use and shall be used only upon the authorization of the SOT Team Commander, Team Leader. (Exception: Personal Defense Units/Pepperball/OC Spray.) Fugitive Warrant Supervisors have authorization to deploy OC based chemical agents.

REFERENCES:

127, *Tulsa Police Reserve Emergency Call-Out*
134, *Bomb Threats/Detonations*
140, *Incident Command System*
Critical Incident Response Manual