

OCTOBER ROLL CALL TRAINING

Jail High-Risk Critical Task/Hostages

It is the policy of this agency to establish procedures for hostage situations. This procedure will clearly delineate the notification process, emergency response, and procedures that will help prevent the possibility of injury or death in the event of a hostage situation. It is the policy of this agency to bring hostage situations to a safe conclusion by protecting hostage(s), staff, and inmates using established emergency procedures. A hostage is defined as any staff member, private citizen (visitor), or inmate that is taken by force against his/her will. When feasible, involved personnel should emphasize the use of "time, talk, and tactics" as doing so can significantly improve the chances of a successful outcome when responding to hostage situations. In the unlikely event of a hostage scenario, the following notification process will be adhered to. A supervisor will make immediate notification to the Sheriff or jail administrator, supervisors, and the agency public information officer. All hostages are considered under duress and have no authority to bargain during the crisis regardless of rank. The following policy will be followed:

- Staff members will not surrender keys or any other security devices or codes.
- All movement in the facility ceases, and all unaffected parts of the facility will be locked down.
- An emergency head count will take place of both staff members and inmates immediately after the unaffected part(s) of the facility are locked down.
- The Sheriff, jail administrator, or his/her designee must decide on a course of action for the safe and peaceful resolution of the crisis.
- The agency's emergency response teams including hostage negotiators will be notified and prepared to engage their specialties on demand. In the event the agency does not have an emergency response team and negotiators available, mutual aid shall be sought.
- Hostage negotiations should be initiated by trained negotiators.
- At the resolution of the situation, render medical attention to all hostages/hostage takers as well as have mental health workers evaluate all directly involved.
- A thorough debriefing of all involved employees will be conducted.
- At the conclusion of the crisis a thorough and complete investigation shall be conducted. All findings shall be turned over to the Sheriff or jail administrator for his/her review.

Question: Why is it critical to slow the situation down and utilize a skilled hostage negotiator?

Answer: Hostage negotiators are highly skilled and trained to utilize tactics that have been proven to increase the chances of a peaceful outcome. Trained negotiators, containment, a coordinated response, and time are critical factors to consider when responding to a hostage situation. It is known that the further the time is elongated, the more likely a peaceful conclusion will occur. To the extent possible, negotiators should include a partnership with the local mental health professionals such that they too may respond to the scene and assist officers in a successful resolution.