


<p>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</p>  <p>General Order Number: 4.23</p>	<p>Date of Issue</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Effective Date</p> <p>2/23/2016</p>	<p>Revision Date</p>
<p>Subject: HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS / BARRICADED PERSONS</p>	<p>Amends:</p>	<p>Rescinds:</p>	
<p>Index as: Barricaded Persons; Hostage Negotiations</p>	<p>State Certification Standards: 5.17, 5.18, 5.6</p>		
<p>Special Instructions:</p>			

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to prescribe the policies and procedures of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office regarding Hostage Negotiations/Barricaded Persons.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office that all attempts shall be made to peacefully resolve the incident through communication with the suspect; in a hostage situation, to make every reasonable effort to effect the safe release of the hostages; and in all circumstances, to use physical force only as a last resort when the lives and safety of others are in imminent danger.

DISCUSSION

Deputies confronting a hostage incident or barricaded person shall not initiate tactical actions other than those necessary to protect the lives and safety of themselves or others as prescribed by the department's Use of Force General Order. The principle focus should be to stabilize the situation, to reduce subject tensions, and to prevent the situation from escalating. All reasonable attempts will be made to avoid confrontation in favor of controlling and containing the situation until the arrival of trained tactical and hostage negotiation personnel.

DEFINITIONS

BARRICADED PERSON — An individual who resists being taken into custody by using, or threatening use of, firearms, other weapons, explosives, etc. Generally the barricaded person is behind cover. As used here, the barricaded person may or may not have taken a hostage or made a threat to his or her own life.

HOSTAGE — Any person held by another against his or her will by force or threat of force.

TACTICAL PERSONNEL — Usually refers to a group of five or more deputies/troopers/officers who are specially selected, trained, and equipped to handle high risk incidents, such as those involving snipers, barricaded persons, hostage takers, selected warrant services, and other situations or activities as deemed necessary by command leadership.

I. PRELIMINARY ON-SCENE PROCEDURES

A. The first deputy(s) on the scene should do the following:

1. Confine the perpetrators to the immediate area;
2. Maintain firearms discipline;
3. Notify the Watch Commander and request immediate back-up;
4. Contain and isolate the incident scene by cordoning the area;
5. Evacuate injured persons, if the situation permits and if evacuation can be done safely, without excessive danger to the officer(s) or to the injured persons;
6. Prevent outsiders from entering the incident area;
7. Detain all persons having pertinent information regarding the suspect or incident location for debriefing;
8. Whenever possible, evacuate occupants of affected residences and businesses and other bystanders and direct to a safe location outside of the incident area;
9. Coordinate the initial deployment of responding back-up personnel; and
10. Make limited communications with the suspect and do not promise anything until the arrival of negotiators.

B. Deputies first on the scene must be concerned for their own safety and for the safety of back-up personnel. Deputies should:

1. Select a position near the incident location that provides good observation, cover, and concealment;
2. Avoid becoming silhouetted by out-door lighting, especially during hours of darkness;
3. Broadcast exact position to other assisting units;

4. Coordinate the placement of back-up personnel to positions of safety on all sides of the incident; and
 5. Remain in a defensive position, practice noise and light discipline, continue to observe the situation, and report all pertinent information.
- C. The first deputy on the scene shall be in command until relieved by the Watch Commander or other ranking officer.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The Watch Commander or other supervisor will assume duties as the Incident Commander and will:
1. Establish a Command Post at a safe location outside the inner perimeter from where follow-up activities can be coordinated and start a Critical Incident Checklist;
 2. Direct all personnel of the Sheriff's Office, and any other departments, to report to the Command Post for assignment and briefing;
 3. Maintain firearms discipline by insuring all personnel are aware that the safety of hostages and citizens is of primary concern;
 4. Establish an inner and outer perimeter by deploying additional personnel to cover exits, possible escape routes, and for pedestrian and vehicle control. Only personnel authorized by the incident commander will be allowed within the outer perimeter.
 5. The inner perimeter is the immediate area of containment and where the threat of death or injury is imminent. It will be established as close to the incident scene as is reasonably possible, at a distance that affords good cover, concealment, and observation. This area will initially be manned by Uniform Patrol Deputies or other available deputies until relieved by tactical personnel.
 6. The outer perimeter is a controlled area established outside the danger zone. It is established as a primary means of controlling vehicular and pedestrian traffic and provides a buffer around the inner perimeter for an added margin of safety. It should be established at a radius of approximately 1000 feet around the incident area or at a distance that cannot be directly observed by the subject(s).
 7. Direct the evacuation (if possible) of all civilians within the outer perimeter from their homes, apartments, business places, schools, and churches;
 8. Initiate notifications of:
 - a. Departmental hostage negotiation and tactical team personnel;
 - b. EMS, rescue, and fire personnel as necessary; and
 - c. Higher ranking command personnel.
 9. The Watch Commander will be the Incident Commander until properly relieved by a higher-ranking officer.

- B. Criminal Investigations Division Personnel who respond will report to the Incident Commander and will:
 - 1. Initiate intelligence activities to include:
 - 2. Gathering information about the physical location of suspect and access to telephone;
 - 3. Information about the suspect, to include background data, criminal history, medical/mental history, types of weapons suspect may have access to, complete physical description, employment, identification of friends, relatives, and associates;
 - 4. Information about the identity, description, and background of any hostage and their physical and mental condition;
 - 5. Obtain and operate surveillance and video recording equipment;
 - 6. If needed, serve as liaison between hostage negotiators, Incident Commander, and Tactical Team Commander for the coordination of activities and intelligence information; and
 - 7. Assume investigative responsibilities of the incident once the situation is resolved.
- C. The tactical Team Commander (GSP SWAT: 770-535-6941 or Hall Co SWAT: 678-780-9063; Sheriff Couch) will report to the on-scene Incident Commander and will:
 - 1. Command tactical team members;
 - 2. Develop hostage rescue plans within capabilities of assigned personnel;
 - 3. Deploy counter sniper personnel;
 - 4. Maintain communications with Incident Commander and hostage negotiators and keep informed of all developments and operations; and
 - 5. Assume inner perimeter duties as required.
- D. Hostage Negotiators (GBI: 404-244-2600) will report to the on-scene Incident Commander and will:
 - 1. Establish and maintain communications with the suspect;
 - 2. Coordinate use of portable hostage phone when necessary;
 - 3. Relay any demands or requests from the suspect to the Incident Commander for appropriate action;
 - 4. Coordinate with Criminal Investigations Division personnel for intelligence gathering activities;
 - 5. Advise the Incident Commander on the status of the negotiations and when tactical operations may be required; and
 - 6. Maintain chronological record of all events, conversations, and demands made by the subject(s).
- E. The Public Information Officer will report to the on-scene Incident Commander and will:

1. Serve as the central point of contact for the release of information to the public and members of the media; and
 2. Coordinate all media related activities, to include on-site newsgathering, scheduling of interviews and press conferences, and the positioning of equipment.
- F. Rabun County Central Communications Center shall provide support as requested by the on-scene Incident Commander. This support includes:
1. Strictly managing radio communications by restricting air-time to only emergency situations; broadcasting a "10-33 (emergency) and "10-3 (stop transmitting); and notifying other units going in-service of the emergency and transmitting restrictions;
 2. Notifying tactical team and hostage negotiation personnel (GBI:404-244-2600), when requested;
 3. Contacting the Sheriff, Senior Commanders, and other departmental support as directed;
 4. Maintaining communications with other affected Rabun County and outside agencies and requesting support as directed; and
 5. Responding EMS, rescue, and fire support as requested.
- G. The Rabun County Sheriff's Office will be responsible for the following according to departmental policy:
1. On-Duty Supervisors
 - a. The on-duty supervisor(s) will respond to the location and will make an initial assessment of the situation;
 - b. In the event that additional manpower is required in the county or in the Rabun County Detention Center, the supervisor will direct a "10-33 Tactical Alert" and will coordinate the deployment of on duty personnel to the scene;
 - c. Should the number of on-duty personnel be insufficient to handle the incident, the supervisor shall notify the appropriate Division Commander responsible for the situation and request that additional personnel be mobilized to handle the incident; and
 - d. The supervisor of the area experiencing the incident is responsible for directing all responding personnel until properly relieved or the incident has been resolved.
 2. Division Commander:
 - a. Division Commanders may only issue a partial mobilization Order as described in departmental General Orders;
 - b. The Division commander responsible for managing the incident will decide what type of partial Mobilization Order to issue and initiate actions to notify designated subordinate supervisors; and

- c. Unless otherwise directed, Division Commanders will continue, to the extent possible, all regular law enforcement services during the incident. The management of personnel resources should include the prioritization of services and the relief of on-duty personnel if the incident lasts for an extended period of time.

3. Sheriff Or Designee(s)
 - a. The Sheriff or his designee(s) may issue a Stand-by Order, Partial Mobilization Order, or a Full Mobilization Order; and
 - b. Once the type of order is determined, action will be initiated to notify designated subordinate commanders and supervisors.

III. CHAIN OF COMMAND

- A. In order to successfully manage a hostage or barricaded incident, centralized control of all response forces under the command of a single individual is essential.
- B. The first deputy on the scene shall be in command until relieved by the supervisor or other ranking officer.
- C. The Watch Commander will respond to all hostage incidents or barricaded person's calls and, for incidents occurring outside the Rabun County Detention Center, assume duties as the Incident Commander until properly relieved.
- D. Should this individual be unable to assume command, another supervisor closest to the situation will take charge of the incident.
- E. Any in-service Division commander or higher-ranking departmental member has the authority to assume command of the situation as required.
- F. If the incident occurs inside the Rabun County Detention Center, the Uniform Patrol Division Watch Commander will provide necessary support to the Jail.
- G. The Rabun County Detention Center Watch Commander will respond to and assume duties as the Incident Commander of all emergency situations occurring in the Rabun County Detention Center until properly relieved.
- H. The Incident Commander will command all response forces deployed to the incident; will provide direction and control by issuing orders and instructions to personnel as they arrive at the incident location; and will make coordination, as necessary, with Senior Commanders for additional personnel and equipment resources. This command authority pertains to:
 1. Uniform Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations Division, and other departmental personnel;
 2. Hostage negotiators;
 3. Tactical teams;
 4. Other public safety support personnel; and
 5. Personnel from outside law enforcement agencies.

IV. ON-SCENE COMMAND POST

- A. The Command Post should be initially positioned at a relatively safe area, between the inner and outer perimeters that is known to all response personnel, so that information may be exchanged and appropriate instructions given.
- B. The Command Post may have to be relocated, based upon the tactical situation and when more suitable facilities become available.
- C. The Incident Commander shall remain at the Command Post so that she/he can provide appropriate direction and supervision of response personnel until relieved by senior ranking personnel.
- D. Duties of Command Post personnel are:
 - 1. Monitor on-going activities;
 - 2. Direct deployment of response personnel;
 - 3. Coordinate with Communications Center for additional assistance;
 - 4. Maintain accountability of response personnel;
 - 5. If necessary and directed contact the local telephone company and request the suspect's telephone be restricted to in-coming call only; and
 - 6. Insure an Incident Report is initiated and appropriate follow-up investigation activities are performed upon termination of the incident.

V. ORGANIZATION

- A. In order to exercise effective control of all response forces, the Incident Commander must assign functional areas of responsibility to specific individuals, who in turn will supervise other individuals as assigned.
- B. With regard to personnel from outside agencies, the Incident Commander will exercise command through the ranking on-scene representative from the agency.
- C. As the situation develops over time, the Incident Commander should organize deployed forces into the following areas:
 - 1. Perimeter security forces;
 - 2. Hostage negotiators;
 - 3. Intelligence gathering;
 - 4. Media relations;
 - 5. Tactical teams;

6. Medical support; and
7. Others as needed.

VI. SPECIAL COMMAND SITUATIONS

- A. If the situation moves outside of the jurisdiction of Rabun County, the ranking officer in command will retain such command until some other law enforcement agency clearly indicates that jurisdictional responsibility is theirs. It is understood that this transfer may not occur immediately, but once it does occur, it should be done so in a smooth and orderly manner.
- B. Command personnel should remain with the other jurisdiction's command staff in order to advise and assist if needed.
- C. In the case of concurrent jurisdiction with local, state or federal agencies where initial control of the operation is by Rabun County, control will be retained by Rabun County until the senior or ranking official of the concurrent agency at the scene declares responsibility.

VII. NOTIFICATION OF HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION & TACTICAL PERSONNEL

- A. Rabun County Central Communications Center will notify GBI hostage negotiators (404-244-2600) and tactical personnel (GSP SWAT: 770-535-6941/ Hall Co SWAT 678-780-9063, Sheriff Couch) when directed. The Communications Officer will apprise them of the situation, to include the following information:
 1. The location where members are to report;
 2. The radio channel which is to be used;
 3. A brief explanation of the situation at hand (riot, hostage situation, etc.); and
 4. Other special instructions as relayed by the Incident Commander.

Only the Sheriff or his designee(s) are authorized to request assistance from the appropriate agency under the provisions of Mutual Aid.

VIII. HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS

- A. The negotiator's primary responsibility is to affect the safe and unharmed release of hostages and to cause the surrender of the suspect through the negotiations process.
- B. The negotiator should attempt to establish a line of communications with the suspect by doing the following:
 1. By obtaining information through relatives, friends, or neighbors; however, such persons will not be permitted to enter an area secured by the captor, sniper, or barricaded person;

2. Attempt to limit the suspect's means of communication with other persons to avoid jeopardizing the operation or providing a forum for the offender;
 3. If unable to communicate via telephone, resort to a bull horn, a public address system, or portable hostage telephone;
 4. Make certain the perpetrator knows with whom he/she is communicating and negotiating;
 5. Keep the perpetrator talking as long as possible, since the longer the conversation, the greater the opportunity for a successful negotiation; and
 6. Interview witnesses and released hostages for additional intelligence information.
- C. Negotiators will keep both the Incident Commander and Tactical Commander fully informed as to the overall status of negotiations, to include:
1. Provide an evaluation of the mental state of the hostage taker (as to the possibility of harm to the hostages);
 2. Provide any intelligence information that may assist the Tactical Commander in formulating alternative courses of action;
 3. Advise the Incident Commander and Tactical Commander when non tactical actions should be initiated, such as cutting off electricity, gas, water supplies;
 4. Relay demands made by the subject to the Incident Commander for appropriate action; and
 5. Immediately inform the Tactical Commander if harm has come to a hostage or if a hostage has been killed so that action may be taken to save the lives of any remaining hostages.
- D. Negotiable And Non-Negotiable Items
1. Should the hostage taker make demands, the following items will be considered negotiable, when approved by the Incident Commander:
 - a. Release of hostages;
 - b. Cigarettes;
 - c. Food, water, and other non alcoholic beverages;
 - d. Time;
 - e. Utilities;
 - f. Prescribed medication on a physician's order;
 - g. Clothing; or
 - h. Other appropriate items that may help resolve the incident peacefully.

2. The following are considered non-negotiable:
 - a. Law enforcement officer exchange for hostage;
 - b. Weapons or ammunition;
 - c. Illegal drugs or alcohol;
 - d. The exchange of other persons for hostages;
 - e. Relocation of the subject to another location (without the express approval of the Sheriff or his designee(s));
 - f. Direct access to media personnel;
 - g. The release of another individual in custody in exchange for the release of a hostage; or
 - h. Protective body armor.

IX. TACTICAL PERSONNEL

- A. The responsibility of tactical personnel is to confine the perpetrators to the immediate area and to be prepared to initiate tactical operations when directed by the on-scene Incident Commander to affect the safe rescue of the hostages and apprehension of the suspect(s).
- B. The Tactical Commander shall perform the following tasks:
 1. Assess the situation and present the Incident Commander with recommended tactical alternatives should communications with the subject fail to peacefully resolve the incident or in the event that the lives or safety of others are in immediate jeopardy;
 2. When directed, assign personnel to control and contain the inner perimeter;
 3. Deploy marksman;
 4. Ensure all personnel maintain firearms discipline;
 5. Prepare appropriate logistical and assault plans; and
 6. Maintain contact with the Incident Commander and keep the command post informed of all developments and operations.
- C. No tactical operations, assaults, or any other overt actions shall be initiated without the prior approval or knowledge of the Incident Commander.
- D. Tactical team support may be obtained from the following agencies:
 1. Hall County SWAT: 678-780-9063: Sheriff Couch

1. Georgia State Patrol SWAT (770-535-6941)
 2. Georgia Bureau of Investigations. (404-244-2600)
- E. Only the Sheriff or his designee(s) are authorized to request assistance under the provisions of Mutual Aid.
 - F. The deployment of tactical personnel shall be as directed by the commander of the unit. The deployment of team members shall be based upon the circumstances of the situation. Normally, the tactical team will be given responsibility for manning the inner perimeter, for positioning of snipers, for the delivery of the portable hostage phone, if necessary, and for conducting an assault when directed by the Incident Commander.
 - G. Upon their notification, tactical team personnel shall be directed to report to an assembly area near the incident location and the on-scene Command Post where all personnel can be briefed on the situation and initial assignments made.
 - H. It is critical that tactical personnel take no independent deployment actions before departmental personnel can be notified and directions given for the transfer of responsibilities.
 - I. Necessary radio communications and direct liaison will be established between the Incident Commander Tactical Commander, and hostage negotiators to facilitate the exchange of information and to coordinate operations.

X. AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF FORCE AND CHEMICAL AGENTS

- A. The use of force will be governed by General Order 4.49 "Use of Force". All use of force issues will follow this General Order.
- B. Chemical Agents may only be used when authorized by the Sheriff or his designee(s).
- C. In the event of a sniper initiated action, deadly force can only be taken when the officer is justified to do so and only when the officer(s) reasonably believe that another person is in immediate danger of serious physical injury or death. When such circumstances exist, the sniper will fire at the largest available mass provided by the subject that will effectively stop the potentially life-threatening act.
- D. Unless less there is an observable and immediate threat to the life or physical safety of another, no deadly force actions will be taken without the prior authorization of the Sheriff or his designee(s).

XI. AUTHORIZATION FOR NEWS MEDIA ACCESS AND NEWS MEDIA POLICY

- A. It must be remembered that a media representative's primary responsibility is to report the news by obtaining information and photographs of individuals or events. This activity often may lead the representative to a hostage or barricaded situation. Rabun County Sheriff's Office personnel will **not** obstruct authorized media representatives in the lawful performance of their duties.

- B. Members of the media are not exempt from the normal investigative requirements associated with keeping the general public outside the perimeter of crime scenes being processed or from being kept away from potentially dangerous situations associated with a hostage or barricaded incident.
- C. Rabun County Sheriff's Office personnel may not interfere with media activities as long as their performance remains within the confines of the law. Media notes, audio, and/or video taped recordings will **not** be confiscated, under any circumstances.
- D. The individual with primary responsibility to approve the release of information concerning the activities of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office is the Sheriff. The Sheriff will exercise this responsibility through the Public Information Officer (PIO).
- E. The PIO is the Sheriff's representative to the news media and is directly responsible for assisting personnel in covering news stories, being on-call to respond to the news media, and assisting in crisis situations within the department.
- F. The ranking officer at the scene of an incident is responsible for providing reasonable assistance to media personnel until the arrival of the Sheriff, PIO, or other members of the Command Staff. This officer will:
 - 1. Ensure media representatives are treated with courtesy;
 - 2. Advise media representatives of the estimated time of arrival of the PIO, Sheriff, and/or other members of the Command Staff;
 - 3. Ensure media personnel are kept outside the outer perimeter of the incident scene and are kept away from potentially dangerous situations;
 - 4. Take appropriate action against media personnel who illegally interfere with law enforcement operations. Such action will normally consist of first advising the representative of any violation, requesting that they cease the inappropriate activity, and directing them to move to a location where the general public can legally be. If such measures fail, then reasonable force may be used and other appropriate action taken based upon the circumstances.

XII. PURSUIT AND/OR SURVEILLANCE VEHICLES AND CONTROL OF TRAVEL ROUTES

- A. Under normal circumstances armed barricaded suspects will not be allowed to leave the incident scene unless they have first surrendered and been placed in custody.
- B. All reasonable efforts will be taken to confine the hostage takers to the immediate area and to negotiate a settlement to the situation at hand. Normally, no movement of perpetrators with their hostages will be allowed.
- C. Prior to allowing any movement from one place to another of perpetrators and/or hostages, permission must be obtained from the Sheriff or his designee(s).
- D. When movement of perpetrators and/or hostages has been authorized, the Incident Commander will notify the Rabun County Central Communications Center and provide the following:
 - 1. That there is to be movement of hostages;

2. The proposed route and destination, if known;
3. Request the Communications Center notify other departmental personnel along the primary and parallel routes not to interfere with the progress of the convoy; and
4. Request notifications must be made with other agencies if the route of travel extends into other jurisdictions.
5. Every attempt must be made to maintain continuous observation of the suspect(s) and hostages. Arrangements should be made for the following:
 - a. Helicopter surveillance;
 - b. Placement of radio transmitter in the designated escape vehicle; or
 - c. Positioning of covert surveillance and pursuit vehicles along, and parallel to, the travel route and, if known, at the destination.

XIII. POST-INCIDENT ACTIVITIES

- A. Upon the release of a hostage(s), the following actions shall be accomplished:
 1. Each individual will be segregated, searched, provided medical care if needed, and removed from the scene for interview and debriefing;
 2. If the identity of any of the participants is in doubt, individuals released or who escape will be handcuffed and properly secured until their status can be confirmed; and
 3. Once the hostage is properly identified, the next-of-kin will be contacted.
- B. Upon the conclusion of the incident, Criminal Investigations Division personnel will assume responsibility for the scene and conduct a follow-up investigation.
- C. The area of the incident will be treated as a crime scene and properly secured for further investigative processing.
- D. The Incident Commander is responsible for preparing a written after action report for submission through the Senior Commander having command jurisdiction over the incident to the Sheriff.
- E. The After Action Report shall address the following areas:
 1. Identify the type operation; time/date(s) of occurrence; location; and mission and activities performed;
 2. Describe the major lessons learned from the operation, to include: notification procedures; training deficiencies; equipment requirements; use of outside resources/support, if any; communications; involvement of other Rabun County agencies, if any; etc;

3. Provide a complete list of the names and duties of all agency employees involved in the operation and identify all non-departmental organizations involved and the nature of their responsibilities.
4. Provide an itemized list of all expenses associated with the operation, to include employee overtime, special purchases, repair of equipment, damages to private property caused by agency personnel, etc;
5. If appropriate, identify employees or other non-agency individuals whose involvement in the operation deserves special recognition;
6. Identify specific actions that should be taken to improve the agency's performance should similar situations occur in the future and specific actions that should be initiated to correct the problems identified during the operation; and
7. A copy of all written documentation, radio transmission recordings, activity logs, and other records will be attached to the report.

XIV. TRAINING OF NEGOTIATORS AND SUPPORT STAFF

- A. If reasonably available, only trained negotiators shall be used to communicate with a hostage taker or barricaded suspect.
- B. To be considered trained; a negotiator will successfully complete a recognized hostage negotiation-training course.
- C. Departmental employees interested in attending negotiator training must first satisfy the following criteria:
 1. Undergo a psychological screening examination by the departmental contract psychologist;
 2. Possess above average communications skills and problem solving abilities;
 3. Have at least five years experience as a certified peace officer or an equivalent combination of training, experience, or special skills; and
 4. Be recommended by their Division Commander.
- D. All negotiators and support staff personnel shall receive training on the procedures outlined in this directive and will undergo refresher training based upon the "lessons learned" from actual hostage/barricaded situations.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**
Sheriff, Rabun County