



POLICY & PROCEDURE

ELKHART LAKE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **ACTIVE SHOOTER**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

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INDEX AS: Active Shooter
Critical Incident
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PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to provide guidance and direction to members of the Elkhart Lake Police Department should an active shooter 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 SHOOTER
- VI. RESCUE TEAM
- VII. EXPLOSIVE DEVICES
- VIII. SECURITY ISSUES
- IX. APPREHENSION OF ACTIVE SHOOTER(S)

X. EQUIPMENT ASSIGNED TO SQUAD CARS

XI. TRAINING

I. POLICY

- A. It shall be the policy of the Elkhart Lake 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 cause death or great bodily harm to others. First Responding Officers shall assess the situation and take such immediate action necessary to neutralize any threat which may cause death or great bodily harm.

The Village of Elkhart Lake and Sheboygan County often do not have immediate law enforcement resources available within a reasonable time period. Although it is preferred that an officer wait for at least one more officer to arrive on scene prior to entering an active shooter scene, the officer must make the decision based on their assessment if his/her response shall be to engage an active shooter/s alone.

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

II. DISCUSSION

- A. Law enforcement response to an active shooter is dictated by the active shooter, 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 make decisions in a split second. Officers must respond to an active shooter scenario with the mindset that they may be forced into a use of deadly force situation, but must also be prepared to use lesser or no force as the situation develops.

First responding officers must push aside all emotions, personal desires to assist victims and focus on neutralizing the threat to others. The Department recognizes that officers will need to rely on their training, instinct and best judgment when responding to an active shooter scenario 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 neutralizing a threat/s.

III. DEFINITIONS

ACTIVE SHOOTER: 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

shooter” will include anyone who uses a deadly weapon (firearm, club, knife, bow and arrow, explosives, etc.).

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

FIELD COMMAND POST: 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 shooter incident shall immediately use any legal means at their disposal to make contact with an active shooter(s) and neutralize the threat made by the active shooter to cause loss of life or great bodily harm. This may include arrest, containment, or use of deadly force.
- B. In those instances involving an active shooter and the potential for continued loss of life, rapid intervention by law enforcement is imperative.

This type of threat factor in Sheboygan County and the Village of Elkhart Lake will not allow for a timely response by specially equipped tactical units such as SWAT. Given the potential for loss of life, and the limited resources available, local police officers shall be called upon to employ tactics to enter a building, complex, or other facilities for the purpose of neutralizing the threat to innocent life by all lawful means to include the use of deadly.

- 1. The prioritization of officers’ activities in an active shooter incident is:
 - a) To neutralize the threat as rapidly as possible and prevent the loss of life. After neutralizing all threats and securing the threat, officers shall,
 - b) Provide and call for medical assistance while controlling and preserving the scene. Officers shall leave obviously deceased victims in place as they are found.
 - c) Identify and escort 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 the State Crime

Lab.

V. RESPONSE TO AN ACTIVE SHOOTER

- A. Upon notification of an active shooter situation at any location in Sheboygan County, the Elkhart Lake Police Department will respond to the location of the active shooter situation immediately and without further dispatch, unless called off by Sheboygan County Dispatch.
- B. In the event of any active shooter incident, all available on-duty enforcement personnel shall respond to a scene within Sheboygan County without further direction or request for mutual aid.
- C. The first available Elkhart Lake Police Officer shall request an “**ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE**” calling for mutual aid response from all available regional law enforcement agencies.
 - 1. An “**ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE**” is considered an automatic call for immediate mutual aid to the Sheboygan County Sheriff, WI State Patrol, Elkhart Lake Fire Department, and EMS. Depending on the situation and location additional mutual aid calls will be made to the Manitowoc County Sheriff, Calumet County Sheriff, and the Kiel and New Holstein Police Department. Resources requested shall include bomb sniffing dogs to respond immediately and the Milwaukee County Bomb Squad to be put on standby.
 - 2. The Communications Center shall immediately contact the Chief of Police and call all off duty full and part time Elkhart Lake Police Officers to duty.
 - 3. The Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department emergency response vehicle will be requested and dispatched to be used as the incident command post.
 - 4. Sheboygan County Emergency Management shall be notified and the mobile command post dispatched to the incident location.
- D. The Communications Center shall clear the network and dedicate one frequency (LAW 1) for use solely by the first responding “at scene” Officers as the tactical frequency. As soon as the tactical event is over, the Communications Center shall resume normal traffic on the frequency and all on scene communications shall transfer to a frequency as assigned by the Sheboygan County Dispatch Center.
- E. Other responding and supporting units and agencies will be advised by Sheboygan County Dispatch that the frequency is “for emergency use only” to keep traffic to a minimum. All non-event radio traffic will be pushed to another frequency with instructions to use the radio for emergency use, change of status or location only.

F. The Communications Center shall page out Elkhart Lake Fire to close off all streets and accesses to the scene, establishing an outer perimeter and safe staging area. Central Sheboygan County Ambulance and EMS shall be paged and ordered to stage at a pre-established location (see attachments) and await further instruction.

G. First responding “at-scene” Officers.

1. The objective is to make a contact as soon as possible to neutralize the threat caused by an active shooter.
2. The first responding “at-scene” officers shall inform the Sheboygan County Sheriff’s Communications Center of the situation immediately upon their arrival and make an assessment of the scene.

The first responding officer shall direct responding officer response activities. Communication is KEY to an active shooter 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 shooter/s or if he/she should and can wait for additional officers to arrive.

(1) If the officer makes the decision to immediately respond into the building and attempt to neutralize the active shooter they shall:

(a) Notify the Dispatcher and responding units of the intent to enter the building and where entry is being made. It is suggested that the officer respond with a long rifle, but the end choice is the officer.

(b) Without jeopardizing the officer’s safety, provide situational updates to Dispatch and other officers as often as possible, noting location in the building and pertinent observations.

(c) Move as quickly and safely to the sounds of gunfire or other indicators of the shooters location.

(2) If the officer has additional officers (up to four) will form a “contact team” and go in immediate pursuit of the active shooter,

(a) The most senior officer shall assume or assign responsibility of team leader. The team leader shall assign a long rifle at point and if available a long rifle to the rear.

(b) The contact unit shall inform the Communications Center and responding officers of their intent and location of entry. Entry should be made cautiously but expediently looking for anything that would indicate a

booby trapped, etc.

- (c) The first officer on scene after a contact team is sent in shall assume incident command until such time as a command officer from any Sheboygan County law enforcement agency arrives on scene.

NOTE: Suppressive fire: Suppressive fire towards an active shooter may be necessary, especially if they have gained an advantage by height or barricade. Suppressive fire is permissible when it appears that no innocent victims are in the line of fire.

- 3. Communications Center will relay pertinent information from “at-scene” unit 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. shooter location, etc.).
- 5. The focus of the contact team is to make contact and neutralize the active shooter as soon as possible by arrest, containment, or use of deadly force. The team will be subject to 360 degree vulnerability and will not do a thorough clearing of the area(s). They will continue on past victims or harmless distractions. The second and subsequent contact teams will clear areas and bring medical aid to and evacuate victims as soon as possible.
- 6. When practicable, the contact team shall update the Communications Center and/or OIC as to the location of the subject, team, and any other critical information. Communications Center or OIC shall not request this information from the rescue team.

IV. INCIDENT COMMAND

Coordination and control of the incident response is critical. The first available “at-scene” officer, after formation of contact team, 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 his/herself to the Communications Center as the Officer in Charge (OIC). The information shall be relayed to responding units.
- B. The OIC shall start to establish the incident command structure appointing section chiefs under a unified command structure. The first priority is establishing and controlling on scene communications and establishing an Operations Section to monitor and direct resources as needed to control the incident. The OIC 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. RESCUE TEAM

A rescue team shall be formed by the next available responding officers and a team leader designated. The team will locate and remove injured victims and direct non-injured victims from the area.

A. Rescue team members must be alert and prepared in the event that the dynamics of the incident should place them in contact with the shooter. They will be subject to 360 degree vulnerability.

1. Due to the vulnerability to attack, the rescue team should consider removal of victims to a safe location as a priority over medical treatment in place.

VII. EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

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 and rescue teams and the initial perimeter is secured, the OIC 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 shooter(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. Sheboygan County Human Services and Health Department 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 should be sent to the evacuation center for accountability of students and to verify students are properly re-united with family members.

IX. APPREHENSION OF ACTIVE SHOOTER(S)

If the contact team contains the suspect(s) and s/he is no longer an active shooter, and the suspect(s) are placed in proper restraints, the contact team shall immediately notify the OIC or Communications Center. A second team shall be assigned to enter and take charge of the suspect(s) and evacuate the suspect(s) out of the area.

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 squad car. Officers shall have available to them in a tactical response:
 - 1. 1 each - AR-15 rifle.
 - 2. 1 each – 12 gauge shotgun.
 - 3. 1 each – personal body armor with plate.
 - 4. 1 each – ammo bag with rounds for each caliber department weapon.
- 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 Elkhart Lake Police Department shall train a minimum of twice annually for active shooter events.

Training shall take place with the assistance of the local technical school and partner law enforcement and other agencies that would respond to an active shooter event.

Michael Meeusen
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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