



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

Policy # <b>Hostage – Barricaded Persons</b>	Related Policies: Active Shooter, Response to Resistance, Persons of Diminished Capacity
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
Applicable Oklahoma Statutes:	
CALEA Standard:	
Date Implemented:	Review Date:

**I. Policy:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for situations where Deputies have legal justification to contact, detain, commit or arrest a person, and the person refuses to submit to the lawful order of the Deputies by remaining in a structure or vehicle and/or by taking a hostage.

**II. Definitions:**

- A. Barricade Subject:** A person who 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.
- B. Hostage:** Any person held by another against their will by force or threat of force, expressed, or implied.
- C. Active Shooter:** A person who is actively attempting to fire upon or otherwise seriously injure or kill one or more hostage(s), citizen(s), or deputies(s).

**III. Objectives:**

- A.** Consider the lives and safety of Deputies, hostages, the barricaded suspect, other involved civilians, and by-standers
- B.** Peacefully resolve the incident through communication with the subject if possible;
- C.** Make every reasonable effort to affect the safe release of the hostages.

#### IV. Initial Response:

- A. Patrol Deputies responding to hostage or barricaded subject incidents generally may not initiate tactical actions other than those necessary to protect the lives and safety of themselves or others. The exception is in instances where an active shooter is encountered. In such cases the necessity for immediate action to protect innocent life is paramount. As with any life threatening situation, the level of force employed must be consistent with The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's use of force policy.
- B. Where feasible the initial responding Deputies should attempt to communicate with a barricaded person or hostage-taker. On scene Deputies should gather information regarding number of persons involved, victims and suspects, any physical injuries that have been sustained and medical services that are required and attempt the calm and de-escalate the situation while awaiting support Deputies and supervisors.
- C. Deputies should attempt to identify any additional subjects, inquire about victims and injuries, seek the release of hostages, gather intelligence information, identify time-sensitive demands or conditions and obtain the suspect's surrender.

#### V. Barricaded Subject - No Hostage:

- A. Deputies of The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office who respond to a barricaded subject situation should attempt to control the event by containment and communication until the arrival of a specialized unit such as a SWAT team or Crisis Intervention Teams with trained negotiators arrive. It is recognized that these events can rapidly evolve and change and become violent at any time requiring deputies to take immediate actions to bring the event under control. This field tactical response can be segmented into four (4) distinct tactical responses: **Containment, Coordination, Communication and Time.**
  - a. **Containment:** Before any reasonable control and defusing techniques can be used, the subject must be contained. Deputies should avoid compressing the subject.
    - i. The Deputies shall devise a plan that separates the subject from other civilians. This containment should respect the comfort zone of the subject in order to reduce any unnecessary agitation. Deputies should convince the subject that they do not have to move. Deputies should continuously evaluate this comfort zone and not compress it, unless absolutely necessary.
    - ii. It is important for Deputies to ensure that on-lookers and family members are not in a position to become involved either verbally or physically in the control methods.
    - iii. Effective containment reduces the elements of agitation, such as large groupings of persons/Deputies emergency vehicle equipment, loud police radio transmissions, and multiple persons directing communications to the subject. Containment is meant to reduce outside influences and sources of agitation.
    - iv. Deputies should move slowly.
    - v. Deputies should utilize all available tactics to de-escalate the situation where possible, however if an deputies is faced with a dynamic and violent situation which poses a threat to the deputies or other persons present, then Deputies should utilize their

law enforcement control tactics outlined under the “Response to Resistance” policy to gain control.

**b. Coordination:** This is essential for control of the encounter and is the foundation for the development of an effective plan and use of personnel and resources:

- i. One deputies at the scene shall be designated or assume the position of being the lead deputies. This may not be the most senior person on the scene.
- ii. A perimeter shall be determined to ensure that outside persons and/or family members don't become involved.
- iii. Deputies shall limit observable indications of force. If firearms are drawn, they should be maintained in the low ready position and not displayed by Deputies who are attempting to establish communications with the subject.
- iv. The lead deputies shall designate an deputies to gather intelligence regarding the subject being encountered. This type of information can come from persons at the scene, neighbors and/or family. This information can become important in determining the further tactical approaches to the subject and the most appropriate form of referral.
- v. The lead deputies is responsible for determining what resources should be requested including additional police personnel, specialized weapons, professional resources and staged medical personnel.
- vi. When warranted, the lead person will designate the location for a command post and staging area. This should be out of sight of the location of the subject encounter.

**c. Communication:** Contact with the person of diminished capacity should be planned and controlled:

- i. Prior to engaging the subject in communication, the initial responder should await the arrival of a cover deputies. When dealing with subjects armed with edged weapons Deputies should, where possible, maintain a zone of safety which allows for reaction should the subject decide to attack.
- ii. One deputies shall be designated as the command voice and other Deputies shall refrain from becoming involved.
- iii. Verbal communication should be non-threatening. Deputies should attempt to calming words and attempt to de-escalate the situation. Whenever possible, use open-ended questions designed to facilitate the subject's participation. If the subject does not respond, use other communication techniques. It may be necessary to change the person designated as the command voice and determine whether that might be beneficial.
- iv. Sharp, authoritative commands should be avoided.
- v. Be truthful at all times.
- vi. Deputies must constantly analyze what affect, if any, their efforts are having on the subject. This is essential to identify areas that appear to agitate the subject that should then be avoided.
- vii. Normally, family members should not be used in an attempt to establish communications. This frequently exacerbates the situation.

**d. Time:** Time is the concept of elongating the encounter, rather than hastening it:

- i. History has shown that the longer the encounter is allowed to occur, the better the chance for a successful and safe resolution.
- ii. Increasing the time of the encounter and using defusing techniques allows the subject to reflect upon his/her predicament.
- iii. Creating time also allows for the field units to be supported by the deployment of additional police personnel, specialized equipment and medical support personnel.
- iv. Time encourages the ability to communicate and create a relationship between the subject and the command voice.

## **VI. Hostage Situations:**

Deputies of The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office who respond to a hostage situation should attempt to control the event by containment and communication until the arrival of a specialized unit such as a SWAT team with trained hostage negotiators arrive. It is recognized that these events can rapidly evolve and change and become violent at any time requiring deputies to take immediate actions to bring the event under control.

As discussed in this policy the concept of **Containment, Coordination, Communication** and **Time** must be considered. Deputies and supervisors should consider the following tactics while attempting to resolve the event.

- A.** The deputies-in-charge at the scene shall be in command of all police operations and make all decisions regarding police action to be taken. The deputies-in-charge at the scene shall:
  - a.** Establish a command post and inner and outer perimeters;
  - b.** Obtain as much information as possible about the hostage-taker and hostages;
  - c.** Call for assistance from other agencies as necessary.
  - d.** The deputies in charge shall summon medical personnel and advise them to stand by at a pre-determined location.
  - e.** Before taking direct police action, make an effort, if possible, to persuade the hostage-taker to surrender;
  - f.** Determine the necessity for any special equipment, including body armor, special weapons or specially trained police units;
  - g.** Coordinate the actions of hostage negotiations personnel;
  - h.** Every effort shall be made to keep the hostage confrontation from becoming mobile because it would become much more difficult to contain and control.
  - i.** Assign an deputies to address media inquires
  - j.** The deputies-in-charge at the scene shall utilize the services of a trained hostage negotiator when one arrives