



PAWNEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SHERIFF DARRIN VARNELL

Policy # SWAT	Related Policies: Response to Resistance
<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: 46.2.1, 46.2.2, 46.2.3	
Date Implemented:	Review Date:

- I. **Purpose:** Law enforcement experience has demonstrated that there are law enforcement service demands which require specialized units that are equipped and trained to successfully handle these demands. SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics Team) and similar units such as ERT (Emergency Response Teams) and SRT (Specialized Response Teams) are such units. The mission of these highly trained and specially equipped units is to bring under control law enforcement incidents involving highly volatile situations including persons with weapons, barricaded and/or hostage incidents, suicidal calls, and high-risk warrant service operations. These types of units are the most heavily armed within any agency and demand deliberative decision-making and oversight. There is no requirement that any agency have such a unit. When The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office does choose to develop and deploy such a unit, it must accept the responsibilities and demands required.
- II. **Policy:** It is the policy of The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office that the demands of this community warrant the development and deployment of a specialized tactical unit (SWAT). The mission of this unit is to provide The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office with the increased capability to effectively control and resolve highly volatile incidents. The specialized equipment and training of these units provide for greater safety of the subjects being confronted, employees directly involved, and the community. The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office will use these specialized units only in situations warranting the need for the enhanced weaponry and training.
- III. **Procedure:** The following shall be implemented for the assignment to and use of the specialized tactical team:

- A. Selection process: Personnel selected to become members of the unit shall successfully complete a psychological screening process, medical examination and physical agility course. The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office will consider the candidate's performance evaluations and complaint history during this selection process. This same process shall be conducted annually for all personnel assigned to this specialized unit.
- B. **Fitness:** All members of swat teams must pass a physical agility course based off of operational fitness requirements. Members shall be required to pass this course at initial selection and on a yearly basis. Any member unable to pass the agility test will be placed on inactive status until such time they are able to pass the course or they leave the team.
- C. **Negotiators:** SWAT teams shall have trained hostage negotiators available for tactical situation requiring negotiations for example barricaded subjects and hostage situations. Teams should have their own departmental negotiators or written policies on which negotiators will be used for example FBI, State Agencies or other agency negotiators in their area.
- D. **Training requirement:**
 - a. **Hourly Training Requirements**
 - i. Initial Certification - (40-hour initial SWAT training Course) Final appointment to a SWAT team will require successfully completing a 40 hour basic SWAT course that includes firearms, exterior and interior training.
 - ii. Monthly Team Training- (16 hours of training per month) all swat teams must train 16 hours per month and maintain a yearly schedule documenting the firearms and tactical issues to be covered.
 - (a) Sniper Training- (80 hour- initial certification) All snipers are required to successfully pass 80 hours of certified sniper training before deploying as a sniper. Snipers are at a minimum required to qualify quarterly separate from the mandated team training schedule.
 - b. **Firearms Training Requirements**
 - i. All SWAT team members must qualify before they are considered operational with their weapons. Initial qualifications and familiarization with weapons will be conducted during the initial 40-hour swat course for primary and secondary weapons.
 - ii. All SWAT Team members must qualify at a minimum quarterly.
 - iii. All SWAT firearm courses must be completed and passed at a standard to meet the job task requirement.
 - iv. Any team member who fails to complete any quarterly or bi-annual qualification may not deploy during SWAT activations.
 - v. SWAT weapons training is divided into two approaches: skill courses and combat/ tactical courses. Skill courses provide each deputy the opportunity to practice skills and show proficiency by numerical score. Combat courses allow for practicing tactics and skills.
 - vi. All qualifications shall be conducted in full tactical call out gear.
 - vii. SWAT qualification courses should be specific to each weapons system utilized by each team and follow nationally accepted standards.
 - c. **Specialty Munitions Training Requirements** SWAT members shall not deploy any special munitions to include Diversionary Devices, Less Lethal and Chemical Munitions without receiving proper instruction and certification on those munitions. Qualified training shall be conducted bi-annually on any specialized munitions.

E. Equipment

a. Individual Minimum Equipment: Each member of a SWAT team should be provided with the following minimum equipment:

- i. Ballistic helmet
- ii. Safety glasses and goggles
- iii. Hearing protection
- iv. Threat level IIIA ballistic entry vest with (2) threat level III or IV inserts, and attachable modules, or load bearing vest with attachable modules
- v. Nylon duty belt and accessories for tactical equipment
- vi. Special weapons as authorized (weapons should be equipped with lights and slings)
- vii. Duty ammunition
- viii. Radio and tactical headset
- ix. BDU uniforms
- x. Tactical boots
- xi. Rain Gear
- xii. Cold Weather Gear
- xiii. Gas Mask
- xiv. Gloves(protective)

b. Specialized Team Equipment: Each SWAT team should have the following minimum equipment:

- i. Less lethal option(s)/ammunition
- ii. Counter sniper rifles
- iii. Flash/Noise diversionary devices
- iv. Breaching tools/ammunition
- v. Ballistic shields
- vi. Tactical mirrors
- vii. Transportation vehicle

F. Deployment-Utilization of SWAT/Tactical: When deputies are confronted with situations requiring the assistance of a SWAT team, they shall notify a commanding deputy who shall, where possible, respond to the scene. When the commanding deputy responds to the scene and determines the necessity of use of a SWAT team for a barricaded subject or other tactical situation, he shall notify the commanding deputy of the SWAT team who will be responsible for calling out the necessary SWAT personnel. Commanding deputies should gather all available information regarding the suspect and the location in order to brief the SWAT on arrival.

G. Deployment-Utilization of SWAT for Warrant Service: After completing a risk assessment form (required before all warrant service) and finding that the score requires use of a SWAT team, a commanding deputy shall be advised. The commanding deputy shall review the assessment and upon satisfaction that a SWAT team is necessary, shall notify the commanding deputy of the SWAT team for assistance and activation of the SWAT team.

H. Control of Incident: When the SWAT arrive and take over the situation, all tactical and response decisions will become the responsibility of SWAT. The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office will assist SWAT with any needed/requested support.

- I. **Deployment limitations:** This type of specialized unit is designed to operate as a team. When deployed, the team shall be at full complement. Individual members, however, may be used in other law enforcement field incidents to enhance the operation by virtue of their specialized equipment. In any case where the use of an individual member is considered, the SWAT commander shall be notified for assessment and approval.
- J. **Risk Assessment Matrix:** Before the actual deployment of the specialized tactical unit, The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office shall evaluate the necessity for this deployment by using a risk assessment tool. This tool is a guide to evaluate the need to deploy the most heavily armed unit with The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office to ensure that it meets the risk potential of the incident.
- K. **High Risk Warrants:** A risk assessment matrix shall be completed prior to determination that a "high risk" exists.
- L. **Operational planning:** Before deployment of the specialized tactical unit, an operational planning session shall be conducted and must include:
 - a. A written operational plan identifying the mission given to the unit and the tasks assigned to each member.
 - b. A reading of the warrant or description of the events leading to the decision to deploy the specialized unit
 - c. Acknowledgment that current surveillance of the targeted location has been done.
 - d. Identification of the subjects believed to be present at the targeted location.
 - e. A description of the violence potential and any weaponry that may be present.
 - f. A schematic of the targeted location, if available, and any known tactical hazards.
 - g. The stationing of medical support, when necessary.
- M. **Operational debriefing:** The unit shall conduct and prepare a written critique of each operational deployment.
- N. **Inter-jurisdictional support:**
 - a. When The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office is requested to assist another jurisdiction by the deployment of the specialized tactical unit in a jurisdiction other than that policed by The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office, the operational aspects and decisions will be made by The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's unit commander in consultation with the on-duty supervisor. The manner of operational deployment will conform to The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's policy on the use of this specialized tactical unit.
 - b. When The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office requires the assistance of another jurisdiction's specialized tactical team for either assumption of the mission or deployment with The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's tactical team, the policy of The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office shall be considered. It is still the decision of The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's on duty commander to deploy any tactical unit within The Pawnee County Sheriff's Office's jurisdiction.
 - c. Request for Mutual Aid will be governed in compliance with Oklahoma Law.