I. POLICY

In all incidents wherein an officer or civilian is subject to sniper attack, confronted by an armed and barricaded person, or faced with a hostage situation, it shall be the policy of this law enforcement agency to consider the lives of the hostages, civilians and officers involved to be of the utmost importance; whenever possible, to enhance the prospects of peacefully resolving the incident through communication with the suspect; whenever possible, to develop and maintain the ability to use alternative approaches to resolve the incident should communications fail; and in hostage situations, to make every reasonable effort to effect the safe release of the hostages.

II. PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to provide general guidelines for handling sniper, hostage or barricaded subject situations.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Operation 100

All situations that become the primary responsibility of the Special Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) because of their nature (i.e. sniper attack, armed & barricaded person, hostage situation).

IV. PROCEDURES – General (46.2.1 A)

A. The initial action of an officer who becomes aware of a situation involving a sniper, armed and barricaded person or hostage shall be to provide for his/her own safety.

B. The officer will notify the dispatcher of the situation and will request that other officers be dispatched to help maintain observation and prevent escape.

C. Officers dispatched to the incident shall not attempt to advance on the perpetrator’s position unless the situation dictates (i.e. active shooter). The primary responsibility of the initial responding officer is to secure the area.

D. A supervisor should respond to the scene. The responding supervisor shall evaluate the incident and determine if S.W.A.T. should be called to the scene. If he/she so decides, the supervisor shall: (46.2.1 B)

1. Notify the dispatcher that an Operation 100 is in effect.

2. Notify the SWAT Operations Commander
3. Designate the assembly area.
4. Request that the S.W.A.T. Team be dispatched to the assembly area.

E. In selecting the assembly area for the S.W.A.T. Team, consideration must be given to selecting an area out-of-sight of the perpetrator, close enough and large enough to be practical, and large enough to park a minimum of ten vehicles.

F. The S.W.A.T. Operations Commander, upon arrival at the scene, will assume overall command of the Operation 100. (46.2.1 C)

V. PROCEDURES

A. Encountering possible Operation 100 situations

When officers encounter a possible Operation 100 situation they should:

1. Provide for their own safety, using cover, concealment, and survival tactics.
2. Locate the suspect(s) position in order to contain them.
3. Contact the dispatcher and advise of the situation; request necessary back up to seal the area; and obtain a supervisor.
4. Give the dispatcher the best safe-route for responding units. All officers should be told the boundaries of the kill zone. This will be known as the “inner perimeter”.

B. Action of responding supervisor

The responding supervisor should:

1. Immediately evaluate the situation, ensuring the area is contained.
2. Check officers’ positions to avoid cross-fire danger.
3. If possible, evacuate citizens from the inner perimeter if they are in immediate danger.
4. Call for the S.W.A.T. Team when, as an example, the following situations exist:
   a. Hostage
   b. Sniper
   c. Barricaded/Armed Suspect
   d. Terrorist
   e. Other special situations

5. Keep the communications center appraised of the status of the situation until the arrival of the S.W.A.T. Operations Commander or the S.W.A.T. Tactical Commander.

6. Select a command post area close enough to the scene to be practical and out of sight and line of fire of the suspect(s). It should be large enough to park about ten vehicles. When
possible, position the command post upwind from the target area in the event chemical munitions are used.

7. Give the dispatcher the location of the command post and the safest route to it.

8. Request the Uniformed Operations Commander, SWAT Operations Commander, along with the S.W.A.T. Tactical Supervisor to the command post and meet them to brief them on the situation. (46.2.1 C)

   a. Information needed for this briefing, when available, will be:
      
      i. Type of suspect(s) (i.e. barricaded criminal, sniper, mental, terrorist, etc).
      
      ii. Identity, if known, and as complete a description as possible.
      
      iii. Type of weapon(s); how many if known.
      
      iv. Exact location of suspect(s).
      
      v. Description of the building, including a diagram of the interior if possible.
      
      vi. If there are hostages being held or are there friends or family members with the subject(s). If so, how many, and as complete a description of the individuals as possible.
      
      vii. If there are officers or civilian personnel injured in the kill zone.
      
      viii. If police, fire, or citizens are pinned down by gunfire.
      
      ix. The location of officers who are presently in position.
      
      x. The safest routes to retrieve those officers.

This information will assist the S.W.A.T. Tactical Commander in determining the number of personnel required and the need for specialized equipment.

9. Relinquish command of the scene to the S.W.A.T. Operations Commander or Tactical Commander who may then give new responsibilities to the initial supervisor on the scene and his/her officers. (46.2.1 C)

C. First officers at the scene

   1. Contain all subjects who may be involved.
   
   2. Obtain all available information as to the location, descriptions, weapons, number and condition of hostages, and avenue of escape.
   
   3. Officers arriving first on the scene and who have secured the perimeter will hold their positions until a supervisor or an S.W.A.T. member relieves them.
   
   4. Relieved officers will then immediately report to the command post for debriefing and further assignment.

D. Operation 100 completion
1. Upon completion of an Operation 100 the crime scene becomes the responsibility of the highest-ranking street supervisor. He/She will direct his/her personnel to take control of the arrested suspect(s) and bring the person(s) to jail for booking or to the hospital for treatment and/or evaluation. The supervisor, before releasing the scene, may find it necessary to turn the scene over to investigators for processing. (46.2.1 C)

2. All S.W.A.T. personnel will return to the command post and report to their team leaders.

E. For S.W.A.T. segment responsibilities; refer to SOG 10-04, Special Weapons and Tactics.

VI. COMPLIANCE

Violations of this policy, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action as described in the City of Joplin’s Personnel Rules or the Joplin Police Department’s Rules and Regulations and General Orders. Members of the Joplin Police Department, while assigned to or assisting other agencies shall comply with this policy.

VII. APPLICATION

This document constitutes department policy, is for internal use only, and does not enlarge an employee’s civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims insofar as the employee’s legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form a basis of a complaint by this department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.