

WINTER HAVEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER 46.2

Bomb Threat Investigations

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: CALEA – 11.4.5; CFA – 17.07

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 17, 1996

RESCINDS: G.O. 46.2, July 29, 2013 and all applicable Amended/Temporary Orders prior to January 5, 2018

LAST REVISED DATE: January 5, 2018

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POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Winter Haven Police Department to respond to bomb threats or bomb emergencies and to follow the specific job responsibilities as outlined in this General Order. (CFA 17.07)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures and define specific responsibilities, for Department members, engaged in situations involving any type of bomb threat or bomb emergency.

SCOPE

This General Order shall apply to all members.

DISCUSSION

Special attention must be given to reports of bomb threats and explosives, since the possible loss of life, injury and property damage may occur. The member's actions are critical in these situations. Regardless of their duties, members must respond cautiously to minimize disastrous situations.

PROCEDURE

I. Receiving a Complaint of a Bomb Threat

- A.** The Polk County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) is responsible for the intake of complaints and dispatching of members for the Winter Haven Police Department. PCSO shall follow their established General Orders and procedures for dispatching bomb threat incidents.
 - 1.** The PCSO Communications supervisor shall notify patrol supervisors, set up a designated tactical radio frequency, and a list of other public safety agencies that are available, when applicable. (CFA 17.07b)
- B.** When a bomb threat is directly received by the Department, members receiving the contact shall attempt to gather all information possible to include, but not limited to: (CFA 17.07a)
 - 1.** The name, address, and phone number of the intended target;
 - 2.** Detonation time and location of the explosive device;
 - 3.** The name, address, and the title or position of the caller;
 - 4.** Who the member shall make contact with and where; and
 - 5.** What, if any, action has been taken or if any action is anticipated by the person in charge of the premises before member contact.
- C.** During periods of radio silence, all communications shall be in person or by telephone. (CFA 17.07e,i)
 - 1.** All cellular devices shall be disabled.

II. Responding Member's Responsibility

- A.** A member shall respond in an expeditious manner to the incident scene, with any other members assigned by a supervisor.
- B.** In every circumstance, the on-duty supervisor shall be notified. (CFA 17.07b)
- C.** First member on the scene shall:
 - 1.** Assume duties of Incident Commander;
 - 2.** Upon arrival, patrol or other units responding shall turn off all radio and digital equipment, including CB radios, cellular phones, and air card modems within

three hundred feet of the scene. Communication shall be in person or by land-line telephone; (CFA 17.07e,i)

3. Establish a command post;
4. Determine how the threat was communicated;
5. Who received the threat;
6. Time element, if known;
7. Context of the threat;
8. Suspected goal of the threat;
9. Potential hazard to life and property;
10. Size of the target area and nature of business, if applicable;
11. Estimated time of incident involvement for search, evacuation, and investigation;
12. Number of persons involved for a possible evacuation, evacuation routes, and safe assembly areas;
13. Make a determination if any other law enforcement or public safety members or equipment are needed;
14. Notification and coordination with the fire department, Emergency Medical Services, and other law enforcement agencies, as appropriate; (CFA 17.07h)
15. Determine if there is caller ID or last number calling on their telephone;
16. Protect the crime scene; and
17. Notify the supervisor.

III. Supervisor Responsibilities

- A. Upon arrival, the supervisor shall:
 1. Assume duties of Incident Commander;
 2. Receive briefing from the first member on the scene;
 3. Direct any other responding members to their assignments;
 4. Ensure that all previous tasks designated as responsibilities of the first member on the scene have been completed; and
 5. Notify designated staff members as required.

- B.** When a supervisor of higher rank (e.g. lieutenant, captain) arrives on scene that supervisor shall take over as the Incident Commander. Each time that command of the incident is assumed by a higher ranking supervisor, the following shall take place:
 - 1. Receive briefing from the supervisor; and
 - 2. Ensure that all previous tasks designated as supervisor responsibilities have been completed.

IV. Evacuation (CFA 17.07g)

- A.** A member can order the evacuation of any area or building, only after it has been determined that there is a positive or imminent threat to life or property. Therefore, until a device or suspected device is located, Winter Haven Police Department members shall advise all owners, managers or persons in charge of a premises of the potential hazards involved. The decision to evacuate the premises shall then be left up to those persons. (CFA 17.07g)
- B.** After a suspected or confirmed explosive device has been located, public safety personnel shall mandate an evacuation of persons from the premises, due to the imminent potential hazard to human life.
- C.** All evacuations shall be conducted in an orderly manner, taking due precaution to prevent panic, ensuring all persons are directed to designated safe areas.
- D.** The area shall be secured with law enforcement members at control points. (CFA 17.07c)

V. Conducting a Search (CFA 17.07d)

- A.** The Incident Commander on scene shall develop a detailed plan and coordinated with an occupant, manager, or person in charge, utilizing business/residence occupants.
- B.** Members shall ensure that they have a flashlight on their person when conducting searches.
- C.** The Incident Commander shall request an explosive ordinance detection canine from the Polk County Sheriff's Office or State Fire Marshall.
- D.** Search techniques shall vary with each incident. Consideration should be given to the following in developing that technique: (CFA 17.07d)
 - 1. Context of the threat;
 - 2. Reliability of the threat;
 - 3. Size and construction of the premises;
 - 4. Number of competent persons available to conduct a search;
 - 5. Time element; and

6. Past history or current events involving the targeted area.
- E. Upon termination of a search, no premises or area can be officially declared 100% safe by a member or public safety members. Therefore, a decision for the affected premises or area to return to normal operation or be reoccupied shall be left up to an occupant manager or person in charge of the affected premises or area. Winter Haven Police Department members shall only advise those persons of the probable reduction of a potential hazard that existed with a threat.

VI. Follow up Investigation

- A. Follow up investigations of bomb threats or incidents shall be handled by the Investigative Services Bureau.

VII. Suspected Explosive or Actual Explosive Device Located

- A. In all incidents where a suspected explosive device has been located, a supervisor shall be notified and shall respond.
- B. The first member on the scene shall:
 1. Assume duties of Incident Commander;
 2. Contact the reportee or designated contact person;
 3. Establish a safe command post and a liaison with an occupant, manager, or persons in charge of the premises;
 4. If a threat was communicated, determine;
 - a. How it was communicated;
 - b. Who received it;
 - c. Context of the threat; and
 - d. Suspected goal of suspects.
 5. Isolate any and all persons who have firsthand knowledge of the explosive device for contact with an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) technician;
 6. Identify and secure the area with the highest potential of hazard;
 7. Identify and establish safe areas;
 8. Make an initial estimate of support personnel required;
 9. Determine the size of the target area and the nature of usual business or routine;

10. Avoid any physical contact with, or any movement of, an explosive device. It is easier to move people away from an explosive device than to move an explosive device away from people;
 11. Protect the crime scene;
 12. Evaluate the incident risk potential in three categories;
 - a. No immediate hazard to persons or property.
 - b. No immediate hazard to persons, but a potential hazard exists to a structure or other property.
 - c. A potential hazard exists to human life and property, evacuation is mandated.
 13. Notify a supervisor; and (CFA 17.07b)
 14. Upon arrival, patrol or other units responding shall turn off all radio and digital equipment, including CB radios, cellular phones, and air card modems within three hundred feet of the scene. Communication shall be in person or by land-line telephone. (CFA 17.07i)
- C.** The on-duty supervisor shall:
1. Respond to the scene;
 2. Assume duties of Incident Commander;
 3. Receive briefing from the first member on the scene.
 4. Complete an evaluation of any support personnel that are required;
 5. Take charge of the command area, and develop assignments for support personnel;
 6. In concert with designated contact person, initiate evacuation;
 7. Establish a tactical radio channel, and any other lines of communication deemed necessary;
 8. Notify the Uniform Services Bureau Commander or on call staff; (CFA 17.07b)
 9. Notify and brief the EOD technician; and
 10. Ensure that all previous tasks designated as first member on the scene responsibilities have been fulfilled.

VIII. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician/Team: (CFA 17.07f)

- A.** The Winter Haven Police Department does not currently have a bomb disposal operation; however, there is access to other agencies' units which can be utilized on an as-needed basis:
 - 1. State Fire Marshal;
 - 2. Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office; and
 - 3. Patrick Air Force Base, if a military explosive device is involved.
- B.** All emergency requests for another agency's EOD technician(s) to assist the Department shall be directed through the Incident Commander.
 - 1. Any request for assistance shall be made only after an on-site inspection of the explosive device has been made and the total incident needs evaluated.
 - 2. All requests shall be detailed as to advise the other agency of our exact needs and their responsibilities to the incident.
- C.** Upon arrival, an EOD technician shall assume responsibility of the incident.
- D.** The assisting agency EOD technician shall be given total on-site authority and control over an explosive device tactical deployment. The EOD technician shall act in liaison with the Incident Commander and in compliance with Department General Orders and established investigative techniques.
- E.** All post-incident follow-up investigations shall be assigned to an Investigative Services detective and in coordination with an assigned EOD technician. (CFA 17.07h)

IX. Post Blast (CFA 17.07j)

- A.** The Chief of Police and bureau commanders shall be notified, via chain of command, in the event of a non-controlled functioning or detonation of an explosive device. (CALEA 11.4.5) (CFA 17.07b)
- B.** The area of involvement shall be totally secured under the direction of the Incident Commander. (CFA 17.07c)
- C.** The on-site post-blast investigation and recovery of evidence shall be under the direction of an EOD technician, utilizing all necessary support personnel. (CFA 17.07j)
- D.** Evidentiary samples of explosive materials shall be secured and stored in accordance with General Order 84.1.
- E.** The Incident Commander shall assign the appropriate investigative member to initiate an investigation, in coordination with an EOD technician. (CFA 17.07j)

X. Definitions-none

APPROVED 

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