### **Hostage Situation Procedures**

**RESOURCES**

* Panic Button
* Facility Floor Plans
* **INSERT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**POSSIBLE APPLICABLE PROCEDURES**

* Evacuation (**See Evacuation Procedures – Page 27**)
* Lockdown/Barricade (**See Evacuation Procedures – Page 35**)
* Secure the Facility (**See Secure the Facility Procedures – Page 36**)
* Reunification (**See Reunification Procedures – Page 30**)
* Emergency Communications (**See Emergency Communications Procedures** **– Page 22**)

**KEY TERMS**

* **Cover:** anything that provides protection from an incoming projectile, either by stopping it or deflecting it
* **Concealment:** anything that hides your location and prevents detection from the perpetrator(s)

**GENERAL PROCEDURES**

* Immediately remove yourself from any danger by leaving the area if possible. If safe to do so, assist others. **See Evacuation Procedures**.
* If the hostage situation occurs outside of the facility, **Secure the Facility Procedures** will be activated
* If you are unable to evacuate, but have not been taken hostage, activate **Lockdown/Barricade** procedures
* Call 911. Be prepared to provide the following information to the dispatcher:
  + The location of the hostage situation to include facility address and last known location of the perpetrator(s) and hostage(s)
  + Number of possible perpetrators
  + Physical description of perpetrators and names, if available
  + Number of possible hostages
  + Identity and/or description of hostages, if available
  + Any weapons the perpetrator(s) may have
  + Your name
  + Your location
  + If hostages were taken off-site, a description of the vehicle they left in
  + If known, state if any of the hostages and/or perpetrators are injured, and if any of the hostages have any medical conditions that may require treatment. This information may be beneficial for negotiations (i.e., inquiring about the perpetrator(s) condition allows the negotiators to shift some value from the hostages to the perpetrator(s) and build a rapport with the perpetrator(s)). Additionally, this information is useful in quid-pro-quo negotiations for delivery of food/medicine and release of hostages.
* Once 911 has been called, the **INSERT TITLE** will be notified. The **INSERT TITLE** will notify the Board President, Incident Management Team (IMT), **INSERT ADDITIONAL TITLES (i.e., facilities manager)**.
* Upon arrival of law enforcement, the **INSERT TITLE** will provide a copy of the facility floor plan to law enforcement. If not immediately available, the **Logistics Section** will work to obtain a copy.

**GENERAL PROCEDURES (CONTINUED)**

* During an ongoing hostage situation, law enforcements officials will be **solely responsible** for all communications with the media
  + The Organization will designate a single person to serve as the **Public Information Officer (PIO)**. The **PIO** will be the single point of contact for the organization and through which all things flow.
  + Staff and community members will be instructed **NOT** to communicate with the media
  + At the request of law enforcement officials, the **PIO** may be required to speak at a press conference or briefing. All communication should be done in coordination with law enforcement.
* The **Liaison Officer** will coordinate with assisting agencies
* In coordination with and **only** at the request of law enforcement, the **INSERT TITLE** will notify the family of known hostages and provide instructions

**PROCEDURES IF TAKEN HOSTAGE**

**THE MOST CRITICAL TIMES FOR HOSTAGE SAFETY ARE THE FIRST 15-45 MINUTES WHEN EMOTIONS ARE EXTREMELY HIGH AND DURING A TACTICAL RESOLUTION!**

* Remember that the perpetrator(s) is in control. Adopt a survival mindset as this could be a protracted situation.
  + Try to remain calm and stay focused. Without jeopardizing your safety, attempt to calm others. The body’s stress response can hinder decision-making and cause tunnel vision and auditory exclusion. Remaining calm and focused will help you control your body’s stress response.
  + Take slow, deep breaths
  + Continue to eat to maintain physical and mental strength. Additionally, the perpetrator(s) could be offended if you refuse food
  + Maintain some sort of routine and control of your environment
  + Stay positive, focused, and remain flexible
* If safe to do so, try to call 911 and keep the line open
* Be polite and cooperate with the perpetrator(s) while finding a middle position – not too assertive and not too passive
  + Speak in a calm voice
  + Do not complain or argue and avoid being belligerent
  + Comply with all instructions from the perpetrator(s)
  + Try not to stand out – whining and cowering reinforces the perpetrator(s) power and can encourage aggression
* Remove any indications of authority or leadership to avoid taking on added value
* Seek and move to the safest position possible. Identify positions of cover to use if the perpetrator becomes violent. If cover is not possible, seek positions of concealment.
* Begin to develop plans for situations such as escape, survival, or fighting back early
* Stay alert and take note of your surroundings
  + Identify who the other hostages are
  + Your physical position within the building
  + Identify potential escape routes
  + Identify areas of cover and concealment
  + If taken offsite, take a mental note of identifiable landmarks around you (i.e., street signs, building signs, etc.), if possible

**PROCEDURES IF TAKEN HOSTAGE (CONTINUED)**

* Observe the perpetrator (s) and make a mental note of their physical traits. This is important because if you are released you may be able to help authorities. Details to take note of:
  + Hair Color
  + Eye Color
  + Clothing
  + Shoes
  + Height
  + Age
  + Identifying Marks (i.e., scars, tattoos, etc.)
  + Voice Patterns/Accents
* Do not turn your back to the perpetrator(s) unless you are told to. Keep eye contact with the perpetrator(s), but do not stare. It is easier for the perpetrator(s) to harm someone if they cannot see their face – it is important to humanize yourself as much as possible.
* Speak only if spoken to. If spoken to, try to establish a relationship with the perpetrator(s) so that they see you as a person. Try discussing things such as:
  + Your Name
  + Family
  + Interests/Hobbies
  + Advise on, and request medication(s) or aid if needed.
  + AVOID POLITICAL OR SENSITIVE TOPICS OR ANY TOPICS THAT APPEAR TO UPSET THE PERPETRATOR(S)
* If required to make demands to the authorities, state clearly that the demands are from the perpetrator(s).
  + Carefully indicate whether the perpetrator is listening
  + If possible, provide information regarding the hostages’ welfare and medical conditions, in addition to the number of perpetrators and weapons
* Do not draw attention to yourself with sudden movements, comments, or actions. Impulsive actions may lead to retaliation by the perpetrator(s), resulting in potentially harming other hostages or yourself.
* Only attempt to attack or subdue the perpetrator unless the situation is showing signs of deterioration and/or you feel you are at great risk of death or serious injury
  + Take action as a group
  + Act with physical aggression
  + Improvise weapons (i.e., garbage can, fire extinguisher, scissors, coat rack, or other heavy objects)
  + **COMMIT TO ACTION**
* If there are injuries and if permitted by the perpetrator(s), render aid. For life-threatening bleeding:
  + Apply pressure with hands
  + Apply dressing and press
  + Apply tourniquet – wrap, wind, secure, and write time

**ATTEMPTED ESCAPE PROCEDURES**

**ONLY ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE IF YOU JUDGE THE LIKELIHOOD OF SURVIVAL TO BE EXTREMELY HIGH AND/OR YOU BELIEVE THE PERPETRATOR IS ABOUT TO CAUSE SERIOUS HARM**

* Consider the impact of escape on other hostages
* If possible coordinate escape with other hostages
* Consider the use of distractions
  + Try to take advantage of situations where the perpetrator(s) may be distracted (i.e., backs turned, changing of guards, dealing with negotiators/rescuers
  + If possible, and safe to do so, try to create a distraction or disorient the perpetrator(s) (i.e., throwing a chair)
* If the situation begins to deteriorate (i.e., the perpetrator(s) begin shooting), make every attempt to escape. If you cannot make it to an exit safely, seek areas of cover and/or concealment until it is safe to continue attempting to escape.
* **COMMIT TO ACTION**

**RESCUE PROCEDURES**

**REMEMBER EVERYONE IS A SUSPECT UNTIL ORDER IS RESTORED**

* If you believe law enforcement is conducting a rescue operation:
  + If you are confronted by law enforcement, DO NOT RUN
  + Remain calm and follow all instructions
  + Drop to the floor, remain still, and keep your hand visible and empty at all times
    - If that is not possible, show your hands, bow your head, and stand still. Your hands should be empty. Make no sudden movements that tense rescuers could interpret as hostile behavior.
  + Avoid pointing and yelling
  + Do not argue or resist with rescuers. The situation may be very chaotic, and rescuers may not be able to immediately identify who is the hostage or perpetrator.
  + Know that help for the injured is on the way
* The **Incident Commander** will make the determination if Reunification Procedures are needed. If the determination is made that it is necessary, **Reunification Procedures** will be activated.