

ORLANDO POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE
1505. 5, CRISIS NEGOTIATION TEAM

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CONTENTS:

1. STAFFING
2. ACTIVATION OF THE CNT
3. RESPONSE AND COMMAND
4. TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT
5. SELECTION PROCESS
6. AFTER-ACTION DEBRIEFING AND REPORTING

POLICY:

The Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) may be activated according to Department policy to negotiate in an attempt to peacefully resolve hostage/barricade situations.

The overall philosophy of the Orlando Police Department may be found in the current issue of P&P 1306, Guide for Hostage, Suicidal, and Barricaded Person Situations. The primary goal is to ensure the preservation of human life.

The Crisis Negotiation Team is a volunteer group staffed by members from various units of the Department who are committed to that ideal.

This directive specifies criteria for selection to negotiator positions, including documentation of selection criteria; lists guidelines for handling a hostage/barricaded person situation, addressing call-out criteria and notification procedures; and requires the completion of the After-Action Report.

PROCEDURES:

1. STAFFING

The High Risk Incident Commander (HRIC) is responsible for ensuring that CNT is properly staffed, trained, and equipped. The HRIC shall exercise budgetary and administrative control over CNT.

Team Commander (1 Captain)
Deputy Team Commander (1 Lt., Blue Team) Deputy Team Commander (1 Lt., Silver Team)
Team Leader (1 Supervisor, Blue Team 1) Team Leader (1 Supervisor, Silver Team 3)
Team Leader (1 Supervisor, Blue Team 2) Team Leader (1 Supervisor, Silver Team 4)
24 Negotiators
2 Intel Liaison Officers
34 Total Members

Team Commander: A commander holding the rank of Captain shall command the Crisis Negotiation Team.

Deputy Team Commander: The Deputy Team Commander shall be a command officer. In the absence of the Team Commander, a Deputy Team Commander will assume the role of Team Commander.

Team Leader: Each team will have a Team Leader with a rank of sergeant or higher who reports to the assigned Deputy Team Commander. The Team Leader shall supervise each negotiator team.

The Crisis Negotiation Team maintains two teams of negotiators: CNT Blue and CNT Silver. Each team is further subdivided into two teams each (Blue 1, Blue 2, Silver 3 and Silver 4) so that multiple on-call assets are available during an on-call month.

Each team is on call every other month, and will each have an assigned Deputy Team Commander. All teams shall be capable of independent action should multiple simultaneous incidents occur. Each team will have a Team Leader with the rank of sergeant or higher who reports to the assigned Deputy Team Commander. The Team Leader shall supervise each negotiator team.

Each team (Blue and Silver) shall also have an assigned intelligence liaison who shall be responsible for the gathering and dissemination of all information across all teams and structures (CNT, SWAT, ESU, Patrol and HRIC/Command Post) at a given incident, in conjunction with members of the Criminal Investigations Division Intelligence Unit.

Negotiation assignments will be made by the Team Leader with the approval of the CNT Deputy Team Commander and Team Commander. CNT member assignments at each call-out shall include primary negotiator, secondary negotiator, coach, scribe and intelligence analyst. CNT members report to a Team Leader.

The OPD Emergency Services Unit (ESU) is responsible for all technical and equipment needs related to a CNT callout, as well as for regular training needs. The ESU Commander shall appoint one ESU member to serve as a point-of-contact for CNT.

2. ACTIVATION OF THE CNT

The Crisis Negotiation Team shall be activated in the following circumstances:

- a. A contained person who is holding others against their will and is threatening the lives or safety of others.
- b. A contained person who is believed to be or claims to be armed and refuses to surrender.
- c. A contained person who is armed and is threatening to take his/her own life, and has the apparent ability to do so, and refuses to surrender.
- d. A sniper or terrorist is involved in any incident.
- e. Any time a command officer believes a CNT response is in the public's or the Department's best interest.

On-duty negotiators may be utilized during fast-breaking incidents, but they should only be utilized to stabilize a situation. Crisis Negotiation is a team-based discipline. The on-duty watch commander should be notified immediately when personnel are attempting to communicate with a contained person. The watch commander shall contact the HRIC in cases when communication with a contained person lasts longer than 15 minutes. The HRIC will determine if CNT activation is necessary after being briefed on the situation.

The Crisis Negotiation Team may be requested by any member with the rank of lieutenant or higher. Activation of the Team will be accomplished by contacting the HRIC and providing a briefing on the activation of the Crisis Negotiation Team. Once the HRIC approves a CNT call-out, the watch commander shall contact the CNT Commander. The CNT Commander shall contact the Communications Division and request that the on-call CNT Team (Blue or Silver) be notified. Only in rare circumstances, at the specific direction of the CNT Commander, shall the entire CNT be activated at the same time. The Communications Division has an established system for CNT activation and will make the appropriate contacts upon request.

3. RESPONSE AND COMMAND

Each CNT member serves (voluntarily non-compensated) in an on-call status every other month. During this time period, the on-call members must be available by phone and page in case of a call-out. Team members summoned on a call-out will report to the incident location or other staging location designated by the CNT Commander.

Members who cannot fulfill their scheduled on-call obligations must contact their CNT Team Leader after arranging for another team member to fill in. If a CNT member is notified and then fails to respond to a call-out during the on-call period (one month), it will result in suspension from the CNT unless the failure to respond is approved by the CNT Commander.

Two negotiators must respond to all SWAT-executed search warrants.

With the exception of search warrants, no team unit will be utilized unless commanded by a CNT Commander. Upon arrival at an incident, the CNT Commander will establish liaison with the HRIC and watch commander and receive an incident briefing.

The watch commander is in overall command of any incident unless relieved by higher authority, i.e., the HRIC.

The Crisis Negotiation Team is commanded by and receives orders from the CNT Commander, Deputy Team Commander, or ranking Team Leader on the scene.

For extended incidents, available CNT members will split into two 12-hour shifts to staff the incidents. Designated Commanders and Team Leaders shall respond at least 30 minutes before the remaining members of the oncoming shift to ensure timely briefing and relay of information prior to the change of negotiators and technicians.

4. TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT

Team members shall complete a basic negotiation course and the crisis intervention course within one year of joining CNT.

The Team Commander shall appoint one member of CNT to be the Training Coordinator. This member shall be responsible for arranging quarterly training days, to include an annual joint training day with SWAT and ESU.

Training topics, scheduling, maintaining Team training records, and notification are the responsibility of the Training Coordinator.

Requests for excusal from CNT training shall be communicated in writing or electronically (e-mail) to the member's Team Leader and are subject to approval by the Team Commander. Each member can be excused from one training session per year, subject to approval by the CNT Commander. Unexcused absences or more than one excused absence in one year may result in suspension or termination from CNT.

ESU shall ensure that all special equipment used by CNT is inventoried and inspected for operational readiness the first month of each quarter. A report of the inventory and inspection shall be kept on file by ESU.

5. SELECTION PROCESS

CNT members shall have a minimum of three years of law enforcement experience. Negotiator candidates shall demonstrate effective communication and interviewing skills and possess a high level of emotional and professional maturity as demonstrated in performance evaluations.

The Crisis Negotiation Team will conduct a selection process for new members when there is an anticipated opening. This process will be scheduled at the discretion of the Team Commander. The selection process for negotiators will consist of an oral interview and a hostage/barricade negotiation scenario.

The CNT Commander shall forward a list of eligible candidates to the Chief of Police for selection of the new member.

Selection processes may be modified at the discretion of the CNT Commander or to bring a process within the guidelines of any legal decision.

6. AFTER-ACTION DEBRIEFING AND REPORTING

At the conclusion of any call-out, a period of time shall be set aside by the Team Commander for debriefing and discussion of the incident. If the Team Commander finds it necessary, a critique may also be conducted at a later time. The activated Team Leader or his or her designee shall ensure that the following documents are prepared, gathered, and submitted via the CNT chain of command to the HRIC within two weeks of the date of the incident:

- a. After-Action Report Cover Memorandum
- b. After-Action Report (includes CNT job assignments)
- c. CNT Cost-Analysis Spreadsheet
- d. Incident Report

In addition, all other materials created or generated during the incident shall be forwarded to the CNT Commander for inclusion in the CNT case file. These include intelligence data, criminal background information, any digital media, scribe notes, and any other data deemed relevant by the CNT Commander. If a criminal case is developed on the subject(s), the negotiations will be placed into evidence with a copy placed in the CNT case file.