



Sheridan Police Department  
Policies and Procedures  
21.8  
Chapter 21 – Emergency Operations  
Section 8 – Active Shooter

Date: January 1, 2013  
Revised: 03/17/2022

Signature:

It is the goal of the Sheridan Police Department to intervene in active threat situations to prevent further injuries or loss of life. These situations require rapid deployment of initial responding officers prior to the arrival of special resources. Officers responding to an active threat incident shall evaluate the situation and implement immediate efforts to stop the suspect if possible. This may include arrest, containment, or use of deadly force. There is the possibility in an active threat incident for the suspect(s) to cease being an active threat, take hostages, and or barricade themselves. If one of these situations were to occur, standard hostage/barricaded gunman procedures would apply (see section 21.7).

**21.8.1 Characteristics of an Active threat**

- A. The term “active threat” is not limited to those subjects using firearms in accomplishing their attack on victims. They may use bladed weapons, vehicles, or any tool that, in the circumstance in which it is used, constitutes deadly physical force.
- B. Situations involving active threats are not specific to schools or public buildings. They can occur in outdoor public areas as well as private dwellings and buildings.
- C. Active threats may have a planned attack and be prepared for a sustained confrontation with the police. Escape from the police is usually not a priority of the active threat.
- D. Active threats may make use of explosives, booby traps, body armor, and may employ some type of diversion.
- E. Active threats may be indiscriminate in their violence or they may seek specific victims.
- F. Active threats may be suicidal, deciding to die in the course of their actions either at the hand of others or by self-inflicted wound.
- G. Active threat events are dynamic and may go in and out of an "active" status; a static incident may turn into an active threat event or an active threat may go "inactive" by going to a barricaded status with or without hostages.

**21.8.2 Initial Response**

- A. In an active threat situation, the initial responding officer shall neutralize the threat to prevent the injury or death of innocent victims. The priority of activities in order of importance is:
  - 1. Stop, delay, or hinder the active threat from further hostile actions;
  - 2. Contain and isolate the situation;
  - 3. Rescue the victims. (While it is important to provide aid to the wounded and dying, it is the department's public safety duty to first protect lives by stopping the homicidal actions of the active threat); and
  - 4. Protect the crime scene.

- B. Upon arrival at the scene where aggressive deadly behavior is ongoing, intelligence may be sparse and fragmented. Information may be obtained on the run from fleeing witnesses, observing spent casings on the ground or damage from fired rounds, and any information reported by communications. As soon as practical, the following information should be obtained:
  - 1. The identity of the assailant(s);
  - 2. The description of the assailant(s);
  - 3. The location of the assailant(s);
  - 4. The types of weapon(s) the assailant(s) possess;
  - 5. Information about the assailant's tactical abilities or specialized knowledge; and
  - 6. Information on the assailant's agenda or motive.
- C. The first priority is to locate the assailant(s) and stop the aggressive deadly behavior. First responders should:
  - 1. Proceed to locate and stop the threat while;
  - 2. Communicating a quick overview of the incident while deploying; and
  - 3. Communicating unit movement to other dispatch and other responders.

### **21.8.3 Command and Control**

- A. After the initial deployment, a senior officer on scene must assume the role of incident commander to facilitate the information gathering and dissemination process. The initial incident commander will remain in that role until relieved by a higher ranking individual.
- B. The incident commander should:
  - 1. Establish a command post to coordinate resources and gather/disseminate information;
  - 2. Analyze the situation and determine if rapid deployment is justified;
  - 3. Conduct continuous situational analysis to determine the best deployment tactics of responding resources;
  - 4. Establish communication with the initial contact team;
  - 5. Assemble additional contact and rescue teams;
  - 6. Designate an initial inner perimeter to contain the perpetrator and control access to and egress from the location;
  - 7. Select a suitable secure staging area for responding officers and other emergency responders. Establish ingress and egress routes for emergency vehicles;
  - 8. Notify command staff of:
    - a. Location and number of suspects and type of weapons involved;
    - b. Estimated size of the crowd and number of casualties and fatalities -- if known; and
    - c. Additional assistance needed (i.e. - fire, medical, canine, bomb squad, etc.);
  - 9. Establish talk groups;
  - 10. Coordinate with owners or officials of the target location for floor plans, site layout, and a roster (including emergency contact information as available) of employees, students, residents, visitors, or others believed to be on site; and
  - 11. If a lockdown has occurred, the incident commander will determine whether to order a law enforcement supervised evacuation or leave it in lockdown mode.

- D. Incidents may occur that involve unexploded devices (bombs). When a contact (or rescue team) locates a possible explosive device they should:
1. Visually inspect the device;
  2. Consider an alternate route based on condition of device;
  3. Move quickly away from device;
  4. Not move or touch the device;
  5. Verbalize location of the device to the rest of the contact team;
  6. Report location of the device to the incident commander;
  7. Mark the location of the device to warn others;
  8. Limit the use of radios, cell phones, or other electronic devices; and
  9. Move past the device and continue the search.

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- ### F. Perimeter assignments

1. Officers working perimeters shall prevent the suspect(s) from escaping and unauthorized personnel from entering the scene.
2. It should be anticipated that innocent civilians will be fleeing from the active threat(s). Such victims are to be searched and directed to a place of safety designated by the incident commander.

### 21.8.4 Aftermath

- A. No location associated with an active threat will be considered secure until a thorough search of the facility is completed. The incident commander will make the decision to declare the scene secure. Officers assigned to security functions will maintain positions until properly relieved.
- B. Once the area is considered secure, police actions shift toward conducting an investigation and the incident commander should then direct personnel in the accomplishment of that function while keeping in mind needs for scene security, aid for victims, and communications with the public and outside groups.

- C. A detailed after action report will be submitted to the chief of police by the incident commander or designee.