

# ATTEMPTED SUICIDES

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONTROL OBJECTIVES (IC/OPERATIONS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contain scene, establish a perimeter and restrict access to the area by unauthorized persons;</li><li>• conduct evacuations as necessary, see evacuation checklist;</li><li>• control subject (do not allow person attempting suicide to have contact with anyone except initial communicator);</li><li>• establish contact with person attempting suicide (find out who, what, when, where, why - before making contact);</li><li>• have containment team in place in case of early surrender;</li><li>• consider Crisis Negotiation Team/ Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT);</li><li>• obtain floor diagram if appropriate and all background info on suspect . (consider involving area detectives to review prior criminal/mental history and photo).</li><li>• <b>Contact the Mental Evaluation Unit, who can provide mental health/criminal history information and a photo of the subject.</b></li></ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>INCIDENT COMMANDER TASKS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• establish Incident Command Post out of view of the subject;</li><li>• complete the ICS Form 201, which consist of the Map Sketch, Summary of Current Objectives and Actions, Current Organization, and Resources Summary;</li><li>• build the organizational chart appropriate to the scope of the incident/event; and</li><li>• request Rescue Ambulance and Fire Department to stand by.</li></ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NOTIFICATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Watch Commander</li><li>• Communications Division</li><li>• RACR</li><li>• Mental Evaluation Unit (MEU), <b>request a Systemwide Mental Assessment Response Team (SMART)</b></li><li>• Metro/CNT (Crisis Negotiation Team)</li></ul>

## ROLE OF THE INITIAL COMMUNICATOR

Once containment has been established, initiating dialog with the person attempting to commit suicide is essential. It is recommended that at least two officers be part of this process. One officer to establish dialog with the person attempting to commit suicide and the second (preferably a Sergeant) to communicate with the Incident Commander /Operations Section Chief regarding the progress of the negotiation process. Supervisors should generally avoid becoming involved in the role of negotiator. The following points are suggested for the initial communicator:

- establish initial contact as soon as possible;
- coordinate all actions with the Incident Commander;
- attempt to stabilize the situation through dialogue;
- remember that the communicator is not the decision-maker; and
- be prepared to remain as the communicator until relieved by the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT).

The initial conversation with the person who is attempting suicide is extremely important. As an initial communicator it is critical that words are used that will calm the situation. The following guidelines will assist the initial communicator in establishing productive dialogue:

- find out who, what, when, where, why - before making contact with the person attempting to commit suicide;
- calm down before initiating communications;
- introduce yourself by first name and as a representative of the Department;
- if the person attempting to commit suicide does not give their name, or refuses to respond, give them a name and continue to communicate;
- allow the suspect to vent his or her frustrations;
- don't rush - listen to the subject;
- avoid a critical, uncaring tone; and
- build rapport and establish trust.

## **GENERAL NEGOTIATION GUIDELINES**

The use of negotiations is another resource to control and manage the crisis situation. It is a process of combining verbal and physical tactics to affect the safe resolution of the conflict. However, there are central guidelines that should be followed during the negotiation process:

- avoid face-to-face negotiations;
- avoid third party negotiations;
- do not offer transportation;
- demands for weapons, drugs, or alcohol cannot be met;
- subjects should not be allowed to go mobile;
- communicate in English when possible; and
- do not have the subject surrender until officers at the scene are prepared to take the person into custody.

Face-to-face negotiations may occur during jumper scenarios and the ability to avoid this format may not be practical. However, it is imperative that the communicator stays a safe distance from the jumper during negotiations (in the interest of officer safety). Third party negotiators are essentially individuals other than law enforcement personnel. Third party negotiator requests are typically family members or friends. Until the Crisis Negotiation Team relieves the initial communicator, it is recommended that a third party negotiator not be introduced into the negotiation process. Any dialogue that relates to an exchange of drugs, alcohol and weapons should be avoided!

**(Refer to Field Notebook Divider – INCIDENTS INVOLVING PERSONS SUSPECTED OF SUFFERING FROM A MENTAL ILLNESS, FORM 18.47.00)**