

CHAPTER 10
HOSTAGE INCIDENTS
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>POLICY</u>	10-3
<u>PROCEDURES</u>	10-3
Goals	10-3
Sound Professional Judgment.....	10-3
Evaluating the Scene.....	10-3
Self-Control.....	10-3
Notification.....	10-3
Responsibilities.....	10-3
Approach	10-4
Mobile Hostage Situation.....	10-4

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CHAPTER 10

HOSTAGE INCIDENTS

1. POLICY.

2. PROCEDURES.

a. Goals. The primary concern is the protection of all life involved in these events: the hostage, innocent bystanders, police personnel, and the hostage-taker.

b. Sound Professional Judgment. An incident involving hostages presents unique problems for any law enforcement agency. Planning and coordination with allied agencies will be necessary to prepare the beat officer for the many situations that will arise when a person uses another human being as a shield or a hostage for escape. There can be no hard and fast rules. Guidelines must be set, but the ultimate test will be sound professional judgment on the part of the officer.

c. Evaluating the Scene. If confronted with a hostage situation, a containment (inner) perimeter should be established by officers acting on their own initiative.

d. Self-Control. Once the first officers on the scene realize a hostage situation has developed, officers shall consider the totality of circumstances when using their firearm, including:

(1) When feasible and objectively reasonable, based on the totality of the circumstances, officers should consider their surroundings and potential risks to bystanders before discharging their firearm.

(2) A single shot, accidental or deliberate, may cause a barrage of bullets to be fired when several officers are involved in an incident.

e. Notification. The supervisor shall be notified and should respond to the scene to coordinate or direct the apprehension as necessary. When reasonably safe and feasible to do so, officers shall request available resources.

f. Responsibilities. Should allied law enforcement agency resources be available, primary responsibility should be transferred to that agency by a California Highway Patrol (CHP) supervisor. Assistance will be provided as necessary.

- (1) The ranking CHP member on the scene should maintain direct supervision over all CHP personnel present.
 - (2) The ranking CHP member will coordinate with the ranking member of the allied agency and deploy CHP personnel as is deemed necessary.
- g. Approach. Responding units should limit the use of the patrol vehicle's siren so as not to confuse the situation or make it worse.
- h. Mobile Hostage Situation. When a hostage situation becomes mobile, maximum use of law enforcement aircraft should be made as quickly as possible.
- (1) Follow the same techniques as outlined in Chapter 8, High-Risk Apprehensions, of this manual.
 - (2) Decide on an appropriate plan of action and coordinate with all persons/agencies concerned.
 - (3) Do not rush and become careless or cause the suspect(s) to panic. Time is in favor of the officer(s).
 - (4) The officer should attempt to learn all they can about the suspect(s) and what led to the taking of the hostage(s).
 - (5) Attempt the release of the hostage(s) by communication with the suspect(s) via:
 - (a) Telephone.
 - (b) Voice to voice, but not face to face.
 - (c) Public address system.
 - (d) Radio, car-to-car with one unit close to the suspect(s) with the outside speaker on.
 - (e) Written communication.