



OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTINGS / LETHAL INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

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INDEX AS:

Use of Force
Shootings

Deadly Force
Internal Affairs

I. PURPOSE

It is the purposed of this policy to provide guidelines for the investigation of officer-involved shootings or incidents resulting in the death or serious injury of person possibly resulting from police actions.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Iowa City Police Department that officer-involved shooting incidents and incidents resulting in serious injury or death be investigated with the utmost thoroughness, professionalism and impartiality to determine if officer actions conform with the law and departmental guidelines and directives. Further, the Iowa City Police Department will provide necessary assistance to officers involved in these type incidents.

III. DEFINITIONS

IV. PROCEDURES

A. OFFICER ON SCENE RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers involved at the scene of a shooting or other incident resulting in the death or serious injury of a person resulting from the actions or involvement of a member of the Iowa City Police Department, shall take those measures that are reasonably possible and appropriate to protect their safety, the safety of others, and to preserve evidence essential to the investigation of the incident. This includes but is not limited to the following actions as appropriate:

1. Ensure that the threats to officer safety and the safety to others are addressed.
2. Secure and separate suspects.
3. Relay information on fleeing suspects to communications and other field units and work with them to establish a containment area.
4. Request a supervisor and additional backup, emergency medical service and any other assistance immediately required.
5. If injured, administer emergency first aid to oneself if possible, then administer basic medical aid to suspects and others as necessary, pending arrival of emergency medical assistance.
6. Secure any suspect weapons as evidence. **DO NOT** open, reload, remove shell casings or in any other manner alter the weapons involved other than taking those steps required to make the weapon and scene safe. (After the scene is secure)
7. As time and capabilities permit before supervisory and other assistance arrives:
 - a. Secure the area, establish a perimeter with crime scene tape and limit access to authorized personnel necessary to investigate the incident and assist the injured.
 - b. Note time, survey the entire area for relevant facts, individuals who are present and who departs/departed the scene, witnesses, potential suspects and suspect vehicles.
 - c. Protect evidence from loss, destruction or damage that is likely to occur before backup can arrive. Ensure that evidentiary items are not moved, note original location and position of persons, weapons, and other relevant objects and evidence.
 - d. Record the names, addresses and phone number of all witnesses and other persons present at the scene and request that they remain on hand in order to make a brief statement whether or not they saw the incident.

B. SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE SCENE

1. Ensure the safety and determine the condition of the officer(s), suspect(s) and third parties.
2. If the officer has been shot or otherwise injured in the incident:
 - a. Ensure that an officer accompanies and remains with the officer at the hospital.
 - b. Ensure that the officer's family is notified on a priority basis and in person by a Watch Commander or Supervisor when possible. Ensure that they are assigned transportation to the hospital or other location where they are needed as soon as possible. Watch Supervisors should refer to the officer's Emergency Notification form prior to making the notification.
 - c. Do not release the officer's name to the media or unauthorized parties.
 - d. Summon Crime Scene Technicians to the scene.
 - e. Assign an officer to the family for security, support, control of the press and visitors, establishment of communications and related matters.
 - f. Ensure that the clothing of officers and other injured persons is collected for potential evidentiary purposes and that related equipment of the officers is safeguarded.
3. If the officer is not injured, move him/her away from the center of activity accompanied by another officer.
4. Secure the officer(s) weapons as evidence. This shall be done in as discreet manner as possible and away from the immediate scene. The weapon shall be replaced as soon as reasonably practical, preferably immediately upon removal of the involved weapon. **DO NOT** open, reload, remove shell casings or in any other manner alter the weapons involved other than taking those steps required to make the weapon and scene safe. (After the scene is secure)
5. Confirm that the preliminary steps in item IV-A have been adequately addressed and, if not, take appropriate action to ensure that necessary actions are taken.
6. Ensure that the immediate area is contained and detain any suspects therein.
7. To the extent necessary, ensure notifications are made, to other agency personnel, to include:
 - a. Lieutenants and above
 - b. Public Information Officer
 - c. Medical Examiner
 - d. Chaplain

8. Establish a command post if necessary.
9. Appoint a recorder to make a chronological record of activities at the scene, to include: persons present, actions taken by police personnel and the identity of any personnel who entered the incident/crime scene, to include emergency medical and fire personnel.
10. Diagram the scene and photograph it as soon as possible.
11. Establish a media staging area as time permits unless the Public Information Officer assumes this responsibility.
12. Begin the following:
 - a. Locate and secure-or secure in place - the officer's weapon(s) and ammunition casings. Check the weapons of all officers present, for discharge and secure the weapon when evidence of discharge exists.
 - b. Locate the suspect's weapon(s) ammunition and expended cartridges.
 - c. Collect information about the suspect, including name, physical description, domicile and other pertinent information.
 - d. Locate and secure as evidence any clothing that may have been removed from the suspect by emergency medical personnel or others.
 - e. Determine the original position of the officer(s) and the suspect(s) at the time of the shooting or use of force.

C. POST-SHOOTING TRAUMA

1. Sworn and non-sworn personnel shall be familiar with and follow the provisions established by the Iowa City Police Department in post-shooting/use of deadly force emotional trauma in police personnel.
 - a. The Officer in Charge shall ensure that those involved in the incident are allowed to contact family members as soon as practical after the incident. In the event the officer is injured and unable to contact family members, the Commanding Officer Field Operations or designee shall ensure that immediate family members are notified in person as soon as reasonably practical after the incident.
 - b. The name of the officer(s) involved in the incident shall not be released until authorized by the Chief of Police.
 - c. The Commanding Officer Field Operations or designee shall make contact with all involved officers within 24 hours of the incident and explain Employee Assistance Programs that are available to the employee.
 - d. Within 72 hours of the incident, the Commanding Officer Field Operations or designee shall contact a traumatic stress

professional. He/she shall arrange for private appointments for the officer(s) determined to be directly involved in the incident and as requested, for their immediate family members.

- e. Upon request, agency personnel will be provided counseling services, for post incident stress. Counseling services will be available for families of personnel, either through Departmentally sponsored programs or via the City's Employee Assistance Program.
2. All personnel should be familiar with available mental health services and avail themselves of these services following officer-involved shooting/use of deadly force incidents.
3. The Chief of Police shall place an employee involved in an incident resulting in death or serious injury on administrative leave or remove him/her from field duty consistent with the departments Use of Force Order. Prior to returning to field duty, employees involved in the incident shall be required undergo a fitness for duty evaluation.

D. INVESTIGATOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Investigation of officer-involved shootings/use of deadly force shall be the responsibility of the Commanding Officer Field Operations. In cases where the force is used by the Commanding Officer Field Operations, the investigation shall be assumed by the Chief of Police or designee. The Commanding Officer Field Operations may appoint an Officer in Charge (at the rank of sergeant or above) who shall be responsible for ensuring that the following tasks are adequately addressed in the order deemed necessary and appropriate.

1. Ensure that tasks itemized in sections IVA and IVB of this policy have been appropriately and adequately completed. Take measures to ensure that any deficiencies in completing tasks are immediately remedied.
2. Receive a general briefing and walk-through by the supervisory officer regarding the circumstances surrounding the shooting/use of deadly force.
3. Ensure that the overall scene and evidentiary items are photographed and videotaped. Videotape all persons present at the scene. Color photographs of the officer as he/she appears at the scene shall be taken, to include any injuries sustained.
4. Ensure thorough inspection of the scene and proper collection of all items and substances of evidentiary value.

5. Obtain taped statements from the suspects.
6. Ensure that notification is provided to next-of-kin of injured or deceased suspects, preferably by someone of the rank of sergeant or above.
7. Locate and identify witnesses and conduct initial tape-recorded interviews.
8. Tape record interviews with fire department personnel, emergency medical service providers and other first responders to the scene.
9. Conduct separate recorded interviews with each officer involved.
 - a. Conduct the interview in a private location away from sight and hearing of others who do not have a need and a right to the information.
 - b. Advise the officer(s) not to discuss the incident with anyone except a personal attorney or attorney representing the city, union representative, family member, health care professional, outside agency investigator (Division of Criminal Investigation) assigned to investigate the incident, or departmental investigator until the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.
 - c. When conducting an interview be cognizant of signs of post-traumatic stress, to include time and space distortions, confusion, hearing and visual distortion and emotional impairment, including shock. If these signs are present or at the request of the officer, the investigator may defer the interview.
10. Take any weapon used by the officer(s) into custody and handle it as evidence. The officer shall be provided a replacement weapon when practical after collection of his/her weapon. Firearms shall be taken from officers in a discrete manner.
11. Where an officer has died, the Officer in Charge shall ensure that procedures established for line-of-duty deaths and death notifications are followed.
12. Contact the medical examiner and attend the autopsy of officer and/or suspect. Determine entrance and exit wounds, estimates of the shooter's position, the presence of controlled substances in the decedent's blood, or other related evidence.
13. Obtain search warrants as necessary for searches of vehicles, containers, homes and vehicles.
14. Develop a statement of preliminary basic facts for the media to be delivered by the agency spokesperson in conformance with the department's media policy.

15. Other investigative procedures as determined by the Officer in Charge or Commander of Field Operations.

16. Complete a report detailing the finding of the investigation.

E. CHIEF OF POLICE

The Chief of Police will coordinate the activities of responding commanders.

The Chief of Police will determine the appropriate time to release the names of involved parties to the media.

The Chief of Police or designee may request the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation to conduct an independent investigation of all incidents resulting in the death of an officer or citizen, resulting from or in the performance of their duties.

The Chief of Police shall cause an Internal Affairs investigation to be initiated in incidents resulting in death or serious injury of an officer or citizen, resulting from or in the performance of the officer's duties.

The Chief of Police may require a Critical Incident Debriefing upon completion of the investigation. The debriefing will include all officers involved with the incident.

Samuel Hargadine, Chief of Police

WARNING

This directive is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The department policy should not be construed as a creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third-party claims. Violations of this directive will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions.