



# BOMB THREATS/ EMERGENCIES

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<i>C.A.L.E.A.</i> <b>46.1.5</b>	<i>Reference</i> <b>(see "INDEX AS:")</b>

## **INDEX AS:**

Building Searches  
Communications  
Media

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this order is to provide officers with procedures for dealing with actual or threatened bomb incidents to include response, deployment, search, evacuation and assistance to specialized units.

## **II. POLICY**

While many bomb threats are later determined to be hoaxes, they all present particularly serious response requirements for law enforcement agencies. It is the policy of the Iowa City Police Department that all responses to bomb threats or emergencies be conducted systematically, efficiently and in a manner that gives primary consideration to the protection of human life.

### III. DEFINITIONS

Bomb Threat:	A bomb threat condition exists when an explosive device has been reported or is suspected to be at a given location.
Bomb Emergency:	A bomb emergency exists when a suspected or actual explosive device has been located or detonated.
Bomb Disposal Commander:	Current Bomb Team Commander.

### IV. PROCEDURES

#### A. COMMUNICATIONS RESPONSIBILITIES

Emergency communications will be conducted according to the established policies and practices of the Joint Emergency Communications Center and currently includes the following:

1. Communications personnel receiving bomb threats or warnings from callers shall, to the degree possible:
  - a. Keep the reporting party on the line.
  - b. Identify the location of the device with as much precision as possible and determine when it will be or if it has been detonated.
  - c. Attempt to determine;
    1. What the device looks like;
    2. The type of explosive device which is involved;
    3. What will make it detonate, (e.g., radio signal, time delay, fuse;)
    4. Why was it placed?
2. Communications personnel receiving reports from individuals or organizations that have received bomb threats shall:
  - a. Alert the supervisor in charge;
  - b. Determine the location, time of detonation, appearance and any other available information concerning the nature of the threat or identity of the perpetrators;
  - c. If no explosive device has been identified, ask the caller to check with employees and others for the presence of unusual parcels or items on the premises;
  - d. Dispatch requisite patrol units and emergency personnel; and
  - e. Ensure that the watch supervisor is notified as soon as practical.
3. Based on the nature of the threat, the supervisor in charge will, as required, make certain the following are alerted:
  - a. Commander of Field Operations or designee;
  - b. Chief of Police or designee;
  - c. Fire, rescue and ambulance units;
  - d. Bomb disposal personnel;
  - e. Emergency rooms of local hospitals;
  - f. Public Information officer;
  - g. Local utility companies;
  - h. When a bomb threat is received, the supervisor in charge may cause bomb disposal personnel to be notified for informational purposes; however, if the threat is directed at a school and time allows, the Bomb Team Commander and/or Bomb Team would like to be notified. If a

suspected or actual device is located, bomb disposal personnel shall respond to the scene and the Bomb Disposal Commander shall have control of the bomb scene, with the Incident Commander maintaining overall control of the incident.

4. When a bomb threat is received in writing, every effort shall be made to preserve the notice as evidence.

B. RESPONDING OFFICERS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Responding patrol units should not use any electronic transmission device within 300 feet of the reported location. This includes car and portable radios, MDTs, Cell phones etc.
2. If applicable, responding officers will contact the individual who received the threat to obtain additional information, including:
  - a. Whether previous threats have been received;
  - b. Possible motives and/or suspects;
  - c. Vulnerabilities of equipment and personnel; and
  - d. Exploration of any basic information provided to communications.
3. In bomb emergencies, responding officers shall establish and secure a suitable perimeter.

C. SEARCHING FOR EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

1. If an explosive device is alleged to be within a building but has not been located, the supervisor in charge will contact building owners and/or management to determine if a search of the facility is desired.
2. The decision to search, evacuate or to reenter a structure/location during a bomb threat will be the responsibility of the individual in charge of the property.
  - a. The supervisor in charge at the scene shall provide information, as available, to responsible parties in order to assist them in making decisions on searching, evacuation or reentry.
  - b. If building management and/or the responsible party does not wish that a search be conducted, no further action by the Iowa City Police Department is warranted pertaining to a search of the premises. The Iowa City Police Department will follow-up on all leads pertaining to the call and complete all reporting requirements.
  - c. In cases where a real or suspected explosive device, as determined by bomb disposal personnel, has been detected, the officer in charge shall cause the evacuation of the property regardless of the desires of the responsible party and/or property management.
3. Searches of target buildings/properties shall be conducted only with the direct assistance of employees or others knowledgeable of the contents and layout of the building.
  - a. The supervisor in charge may request the assistance of a bomb detection canine and/or bomb disposal personnel in order to assist in conducting the search.
  - b. A search plan shall be developed identifying the extent of the search, depending upon the type of establishment, the motivation of the perpetrator and accessibility of the building.

- c. Whenever practical, a floor plan shall be obtained and a systematic search organized by the supervisor in charge. The search plan shall establish communications within the search area.
  - d. In **no case** will a member of this department declare that no bomb is present or in any way make the representation that the building is safe to enter or occupy; regardless of the thoroughness of the search.
- 4. When conducting a search without the assistance of bomb disposal personnel, officers should be particularly alert to the following items as indicators that there may be explosives at the location. Officers should be cautioned that the absence of these items **does not assure** the absence of an explosive device:
  - a. Explosive-related pamphlets, periodicals and books;
  - b. Excessive amounts of galvanized or PVC pipe nipples, and end caps, especially if they have drill holes in the nipple or cap;
  - c. Low-explosive powders or other incendiary mixtures;
  - d. Fuses of any type to include homemade burning fuses, such as string soaked in a burning powder;
  - e. Electrical switches; and
  - f. Electrical matches, blasting caps or similar initiators.

#### D. LOCATED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

- 1. If a real or suspicious device has been located or explosive paraphernalia identified, officers should:
  - a. **Not** attempt to move or otherwise disturb the device(s);
  - b. **Not** use devices which transmit an electronic signal;
  - c. Proceed with immediate evacuation of the structure and/or the area to a point consistent with the threat but not less than 300 feet from the device(s);
  - d. Define and secure the perimeter;
  - e. Notify communications of the discovery of the device;
  - f. Notify the bomb disposal unit.
- 2. The supervisor in charge is responsible for the briefing of investigators and ordnance specialists as appropriate.
- 3. The bomb disposal commander shall have functional authority at any bomb emergency to direct departmental personnel in a manner necessary to accomplish its mission in a safe and efficient manner.
- 4. In situations where explosive or suspicious devices are found, the watch supervisor **shall** notify bomb disposal personnel. This includes situations where citizens wish to surrender explosive devices and/or military ordnance.

#### E. POST-INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

The Johnson County Metro Bomb Squad shall have primary responsibility for investigating bomb incidents. During the investigation of bomb incidents, the Johnson County Metro Bomb Squad will work under the direction of the Investigative Supervisor or designee. The investigation is to include:

- 1. Checking the site for undetonated explosives or secondary devices;
- 2. Coordinating evidence recovery;
- 3. Requesting the assistance of other agencies to determine the nature and construction of explosives and identification of suspects;

4. Coordinating with intelligence operations of this department, and those of state and federal sources; and
5. Assisting in the evaluation procedures, area and perimeter security, the availability of emergency services and coordination with the incident commander.
6. Completion of all state and federal reporting requirements.

F. **REPORTING**

On an annual basis the ranking Iowa City Police Department Bomb Team member shall forward a report to the Commander of Field Operations. This report shall at a minimum contain:

1. The number and summary of calls received during the year;
2. The number and summary of bomb threats received during the year;
3. The number and summary of bomb emergencies during the year;
4. The number and summary of explosive devices "sweeps" during the year;
5. The actual number of explosive devices located during the year;
  - a. Description of actual devices.
6. Number of hours of explosive related training during the year;
  - a. Summary of Training.

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Denise Brotherton, Interim 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.