



Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency  
for the District of Columbia

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# POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement 5802

Policy Area: Security

Effective Date:

SEP 26 2005

Approved:

Paul A. Quander, Jr., CSOSA Director

Approved:

Susan W. Shaffer, PSA Director

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## Hostage Response Procedures

### I. COVERAGE

This Policy Statement establishes procedures for staff of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) and Pretrial Services Agency (PSA), an independent entity within CSOSA, who are involved in a hostage crisis either on Agency property or in the field. This policy covers all permanent and temporary employees, consultants and part-time employees of CSOSA and PSA (CSOSA and PSA are collectively referred to as "Agency"), as well as interns, and contractors. The term "employee" as used in this policy covers all of these categories. CSOSA and PSA staff with specific responsibilities under these procedures include supervisors, CSOSA senior staff, PSA senior staff, Office of Security staff, CSOSA Security Officers, respective Office of Human Resources staff, Office of Legislative, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs staff, respective Office of Facilities staff, and Agency employees. Depending on the situation, CSOSA or PSA support staff (i.e., respective Office of Human Resources, Office of Information Technology (IT), and the Office of Facilities) are to respond to the requirements of this policy. For purposes of this policy, the term "respective" connotes the responsible CSOSA or PSA Office based on the location of the incident and the hostage(s) taken.

### II. BACKGROUND

CSOSA and PSA employees regularly perform their duties in Agency-controlled or leased space. Community Supervision Officers (CSOs), Pretrial Services Officers (PSOs) and other Agency staff perform a portion of their work outside the office and in the field. Terrorists and/or criminals can use hostages to gain negotiating advantage. Agency staff are particularly susceptible to the threat of violence and possibly hostage-taking due to the nature of continuing contacts, whether in the office or the field, with criminally involved persons.

### **III. POLICY**

This policy outlines the Agency's procedures to be followed in the event of a hostage incident with an emphasis on:

- A prompt Agency response to such an incident
- Accountability of Agency staff
- Assisting the responding law enforcement agency
- Hostage safety

### **IV. AUTHORITIES, SUPERSEDURES, REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS**

A. Authorities

5 U.S.C. § 552a (Privacy Act)  
18 U.S.C. § 930

B. Supersedures

Draft CSS Staff Safety-Hostage Response Procedure Statement dated November 13, 2000

C. Procedural References

CSOSA Occupant Emergency Plan

D. Attachments

Appendix A. General Procedures

## APPENDIX A GENERAL PROCEDURES

### A. Definitions

Agency-Controlled Facility. A facility where the Security Officers are under contract to the Agency and control access to the facility (i.e., 25 K Street, NE; 401 New York Avenue, NE; 633 Indiana Avenue, NW; 1230 Taylor Street, NW; 1418 Good Hope Road, SE; 3850 South Capitol Street, SE; 1301 Clifton Street, NW, and portions of 601 Indiana Avenue, NW).

Dangerous Weapon. A weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. Dangerous weapons are those items that cannot be knowingly possessed or caused to be present in a federal facility pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 930.

Designated Official. The senior official on-site at an Agency-Controlled Facility whose instructions are to be followed during a hostage situation. At Non-Agency Controlled Facilities, the Designated Official may be from another organization or agency.

Field. Any area outside Agency-Controlled and Non-Agency Controlled Facilities.

Hostage Situation. A situation in which a person or persons hold another person or persons against their will by force, threat, or violence.

Non-Agency Controlled Facility. A facility where the Agency is a building tenant and the Security Officers are not under contract to the Agency (i.e., 300 Indiana Avenue, NW; 500 Indiana Avenue, NW; 808 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW; 800 North Capitol Street, NW).

Program Office. The Agency entity referenced in this policy where action must be taken with regards to a hostage situation (e.g., PSA, CSS, Office of the Director, respective Offices of Facilities, respective Procurement Offices, respective Offices of Human Resources, etc.). For purposes of this policy, the term “Program Office” denotes the responsible Office based on the location of the incident and the hostage(s) taken.

Senior Management. The executive staff of the affected program office and the Agency.

Visitors. Offenders, defendants, and any other persons on Agency property who are not “employees” under this policy, are considered to be visitors for the purposes of this Policy Statement.

## **B. Procedure**

### **1. Information Sharing**

- a. CSOSA and PSA will maintain hostage response procedures for incidents involving hostages taken in any Agency-Controlled facility, Non-Agency Controlled facility, or in the field. The Program Office affected by the hostage incident and its support staff will take responsibility for steps “b” and “d” listed below.
- b. The Program Office and the Office of Security maintain data on employees, contractors, consultants, interns, and in some instances, visitors. In the event of a hostage situation, these offices will provide pertinent information (e.g., emergency contact, photo identification, home address, etc.) to law enforcement personnel as requested. All information shall be provided in accordance with the Privacy Act.
- c. The respective Office of Human Resources (OHR) will immediately retrieve pertinent and available information from the personnel files of individual(s) taken hostage. Emergency contact information for each individual will be made available to appropriate senior Agency officials as soon as possible.
- d. The Office of Facilities, Program Office, and the Designated Official (D.O.) of each facility shall maintain a physical layout/floor plan of the facility to share with law enforcement personnel responding to any hostage situation.

### **2. Hostage Situation in a CSOSA or PSA Facility**

- a. Any employee witnessing or becoming aware of an unfolding hostage situation must dial “911” and notify his/her supervisor and a Security Officer. The supervisor must ensure that the police have been notified via “911.” The supervisor must also immediately notify the appropriate employees about the incident through the chain-of-command. Upon determining that a hostage situation exists, this information must be communicated as quickly as possible.
- b. Security Officers must also ensure that police have been notified via “911” and the situation reported. The Security Officer must notify the Office of Security as soon as possible. The Office of Security must notify its chain-of-

command immediately and also inform the respective Office of Human Resources, Office of Facilities and Office of Information Technology.

- c. The area involved shall be isolated and the evacuation of the building must be immediately ordered thereafter. Evacuation of the building must be handled in accordance with the published Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP) for the particular facility. Staff must be instructed by the Designated Official or Security Officers on areas of the facility to be avoided based on the situation. On-site supervisors shall immediately account for all staff and report results to the D.O.
- d. The D.O. (or the specified senior staff person on site in the absence of the D.O.) shall notify Agency officials using his/her chain-of-command. Upon notification, the Program Office senior staff, Office of Security staff, respective OHR staff, and the respective Office of Facilities will gather any required information and forward to the D.O. or senior staff person on site. Additionally, the Office of Legislative, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs (OLIPA) must be informed.
- e. OLIPA will appoint a Public Affairs Officer to provide releasable information and act as an Agency spokesperson for public inquiries. All requests for information from the public or press shall be forwarded to the Public Affairs Officer.
- f. A command center will be established on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of Agency Headquarters (alternate site will be designated if the hostage situation occurs at Agency Headquarters or the 12<sup>th</sup> floor is inaccessible for any reason). The conference room area will have conference call capability and be able to support laptop computers as required. Staff at the command center will include representatives from senior management, and respective OHR, OLIPA, Facilities, Security, Information Technology offices and the affected Program Office.
- g. The D.O. or senior staff person and Security Officers shall provide assistance to law enforcement personnel as required (e.g. supplying as many details as possible including the number of people involved, description of hostage takers, dangerous weapons or tools displayed, threats made, etc.).
- h. The respective OHR, along with senior management, shall coordinate with law enforcement to notify the emergency contacts designated by the person(s) taken hostage. The OHR will also immediately contact the CSOSA/PSA Employee Assistance Program counselor.

- i. As required, the Office of Security and the respective Office of Facilities shall appoint a representative to assist law enforcement on the scene. The Office of Security, as required, shall appoint a representative to remain at the headquarters site to assist law enforcement officials with physical security and access control and serve as a law enforcement liaison.
- j. To the maximum extent possible, the procedures outlined above will be followed in Non-Agency Controlled facilities. The senior Agency Program Office official at the Non-Agency Controlled facility must cooperate and coordinate Agency actions with the D.O. In the absence of an OEP and/or security staff, items “a” through “h” above will be followed.

### **3. Hostage Situation in the Field**

- a. The D.O. (or specified senior staff person on site in the absence of the D.O.) at the work site of the affected employee(s) shall ensure that 911 notification is made and also notify both the Office of Security and Agency officials using his/her chain-of-command. Upon notification, the Program Office senior staff, Office of Security staff, respective OHR staff, and the respective Office of Facilities shall gather any required information and forward to the D.O. or senior staff person on site.
- b. The Office of Legislative, Intergovernmental and Public Affairs will appoint a Public Affairs Officer to provide releasable information and act as an Agency spokesperson for public inquiries. All requests for information from the public or press shall be forwarded to the Public Affairs Officer.
- c. The D.O. or senior staff person and Security Officers shall provide assistance to law enforcement personnel as required.
- d. The respective OHR, along with senior management, shall coordinate with law enforcement to notify the emergency contacts of the persons taken hostage. The respective OHR will immediately contact the CSOSA/PSA Employee Assistance Program counselor.

### **4. Law Enforcement Response**

- a. All D.O./senior staff actions will be shared with the senior law enforcement official (LEO) responding to the scene. Future Agency actions must be coordinated with the senior LEO.

## **C. Staff Safety Response and Tips**

### **1. Response:**

In the event a hostage situation occurs, uninvolved staff will:

- Dial 911 and notify the supervisor and Security Officer on site.
- Evacuate as directed.

### **2. Safety Tips:**

If staff members are taken hostage, the following tips are provided for guidance:

- Do not antagonize the hostage taker.
- Act cooperatively with hostage taker(s).
- Listen to and observe carefully what the hostage taker says and does.
- Do not attempt to negotiate or argue with a hostage taker.
- Try to get others to remain calm.
- Make a concerted effort to relax. Prepare yourself mentally, physically and emotionally for the ordeal.
- If questioned, keep your answers short. Do not volunteer information or make unnecessary overtures.
- Think positively. Avoid a sense of despair. Rely on your inner resources. Remember that you are a valuable commodity to your captors.

### **3. If staff are being held hostage and a rescue attempt is made:**

- DO NOT RUN. Drop to the floor and remain still. Make no sudden moves that a tense rescuer may interpret as hostile.
- Wait for instructions and obey all instructions you are given.
- Don't be upset if a rescuer is not sure whether you are a hostage taker or hostage. Even if you are handcuffed and searched, do not resist. Wait for the confusion to clear.