



# Ripon Police Department

## Written Directive



Department Order: # 418-01

Effective Date: February 8, 2024

Index as: Mental Health Incidents – Response and Tracking

Internal Review: Annual

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## **I. POLICY AND PURPOSE**

This directive describes the implementation of a response and tracking of mental health incidents. It is the policy of the department to respond in an appropriate manner to persons involved in a mental health incident, while using the appropriate level of response to insure the safety of everyone involved and help resolve a variety of situations involving individuals in crisis.

The Ripon Police Department recognizes and understands not all subjects in a mental health crisis are considered barricaded or require an immediate police action. It is not a criminal act to express the desire or even attempt to commit suicide, and suicidal or mentally ill persons are afforded the same level of legal protection as everyone else.

## **II. PROCEDURE**

- A. Upon receiving a call or staff response to a mental health incident, staff should consider notifying San Joaquin County Mobile Crisis and request their response to the location of the incident.
- B. First responding officers should promptly and carefully evaluate all available information to determine whether an incident involves, or may later develop into, a hostage or

barricade situation.

- C. Officers will standby for the Mobile Crisis unit to respond to the location if their response was requested.
  - 1. If the Mobile Crisis unit responds to the location, the officer should coordinate with them on attempting contact with the person having the mental health crisis. When considering the decision to make in-person contact, the officer should balance the apparent need for immediate intervention against the risks to officers, the Mobile Crisis unit, the public, and the person having the mental health crisis.
  - 2. If the Mobile Crisis unit has an extended estimated time of arrival, the officer may attempt contact with the person having the mental health crisis to verify their wellbeing, along with others that may be present. Officers are not required to standby for an extended time awaiting the Mobile Crisis response.
  - 3. If the Mobile Crisis unit will not respond, or it is determined their response is not needed, the officer should consider contacting (in-person or telephone) the person having the mental health crisis to verify their wellbeing, along with others that may be present, and proceed in accordance with Policy 467 Medical Aid and Response and Policy 418 Mental Illness Commitments
  - 4. First responders may choose to strategically disengage to avoid resorting to force when it is determined the primary concern is self-harm, and he/she has not committed a serious or violent crime. The decision to disengage should be in-consideration of the totality of the circumstances, including supervisory approval, and (if available) in consultation with San Joaquin County Mobile Crisis. In instances where the decision is made to strategically disengage, Mobile Crisis is to be notified when time allows. This notification is a referral to Mobile Crisis for possible contact, at a later date and time when the subject may be more receptive to intervention.
- D. When dealing with involved parties, officers should avoid making any promises that would suggest a special relationship has been created. Officers should attempt to establish the concerned parties' expectations of on-scene law enforcement personnel.
- E. The officers' response and all relevant circumstances shall be fully documented in a written report or incident notes, with supervisor approval, when there is a lack of information or action taken by the officer.
  - 1. Upon completion of a written report, staff shall select "Mental Health Incident" under the special circumstances tab on page 1 of the report.
- F. Nothing in this directive shall supersede current policy or procedures, such as Policy 467 Medical Aid and Response, and Policy 418 Mental Illness Commitments.

### **III. ACCOUNTABILITY**

Every employee who receives a written directive, new or revised, will acknowledge electronically that he or she has received, reviewed, and understands the directive.

### **VI. PROPONENT**

Administration Unit.

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### **VII. CANCELLATION**

Cancellation of an issued directive will be made by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.

By the order of:

***Daniel Sauer, Chief of Police***

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Signature of Agency Authority/Title