Code Purple – Hostage Taking

POLICY   Number: **AD-06-197**

Manual:	Global Administrative Manual	Approval Date:	May 26, 2023
Section in Manual:	Risk Management	**Approved by:**	Leadership Quality, Safety & Risk Committee

Cross References: *Emergency/ Disaster Incident Management System (IMS) Response AD-06-225, Lockdown Site Specific Sub-Plans, Code Silver – Person with a Weapon AD-06-196, Code White – Aggressive/Violent Behaviour AD-06-192, Prevention of Workplace Violence and Harassment Program, Leadership Team On-Call Protocol*

Purpose

Identify an appropriate coordinated response to a hostage situation within a St. Joseph's Care Group site.

Policy Statement

In the event of a hostage situation, St. Joseph's Care Group will work in conjunction with Thunder Bay Police Service to mitigate the risk to all building occupants.

Hostage situations are motivated from greatly differing factors. The situation usually develops in three stages: confrontation, communication, and negotiation. Actions taken during the first hour are critical.

Awareness of a hostage situation may become apparent in different ways:

- Hostage taker calls
- Hostage is forced to call
- Witness calls
- Witnessed person being forcibly confined

Care Compassion Commitment

Emergency codes that may escalate to a Code Purple:

Emergency Code	Reason for Escalation
Lockdown	When lockdown procedures fail to prevent a suspected or confirmed armed intruder from accessing the building and they have taken a hostage.
Code White (violent or threatening person)	When a violent or threatening person has taken a hostage. Immediate Police response is required.

Scope

This policy applies to all situations occurring within a SCCG site in which any person is forcibly confined into a space or held against their will with threat of violence.

Definitions

Code Purple – A situation where any person(s) is forcibly confined or held against their will with the threat of violence.

Code White - Code to initiate a cautions and proscribed response to a person who is displaying undue anxiety, yelling or otherwise represents a threat of aggression or violence to themselves or others.

Command Centre - The central command and control location/group responsible for carrying out the principles of emergency preparedness and emergency management functions at a strategic level in an emergency, and ensuring the continuity of vital operations.

Incident Manager – The person responsible for managing the incident at the affected site. The IMS Committee assigns the role of Incident Manager.

Incident Management System (IMS) – standardized and coordinated approach to emergency management

Lockdown - All entry points of the facility are secured to restrict access to the building during an emergency situation.

Weapon – Anything used, designed to be used or intended for use:
>   a) In causing death or injury to any person, or
>   b) For the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person

Procedure

FIRST RESPONSE WHERE EMERGENCY OCCURS

1. If hostage call is received, listen for key information:

    a. name, description and demands of the hostage taker(s)
    b. name of the hostage(s)
    c. weapons involved

2. Announce "**Code Purple - Exact Location**" three times, following the site specific overhead paging or communication process (e.g. *67 or radio).

3. Remove all persons from immediate danger.

4. Call 9-911 and prepare for Police intervention and transfer all information to the police.

5. Immediately notify Manager/designate and Leadership on-call of hostage situation.

6. Code Purple will not result in additional staff attending to the area of emergency.

7. St. Joseph's Care Group and Thunder Bay Police do not support staff participating in hostage negotiations.

8. Participate in the debriefing meeting if required.

IF YOU OBSERVE A HOSTAGE SITUATION AND ARE NOT IN DANGER, <u>EVACUATE</u>

1. Communicate emergency to others in the area if safe to do so.

2. Remain calm and evacuate. Leave all belongings behind. Try to evacuate without causing attention to be drawn to you. Raise hands with fingers spread when exiting to not be confused with the assailant.

3. As soon as possible, call 911 for police and advise 911 operator of all available information such as:

   - Location of hostage (current, last or direction headed if known)
   - Description
   - Type and description of weapon(s)
   - Information on hostages/victims.
   - Any comments or demands made by the assailant(s)

4. Do not speak to the hostage taker but do answer when spoken too. Listen to all demands, do not try to obtain additional information from the hostage taker if not provided.

5. Do not confront a person with a weapon.

IF UNABLE TO EVACUATE, HIDE

1. Proceed to the nearest room or office as quickly as possible and lock and/or secure the door bringing any staff, clients or visitors in the immediate area with you.

2. Lock and secure yourself by barricading the door with heavy furniture.

3. Close windows and blinds.

4. Silence all cell phones. Use only for emergency assistance.

5. Turn off lights and keep everyone in the room quiet.

6. Remain quiet and low to the ground.

7. Call 9-911 as soon as possible.

8. Announce "**Code Purple – Exact Location**" three time, following the site specific overhead paging or communication process (e.g. *67 or radio).

9. Remain secured in the room until the police have arrived or notification from the overhead paging system has declared emergency "**ALL CLEAR**"

IF YOU BECOME A HOSTAGE

1. Remain calm - the objective is to survive. Accept the situation and be prepared to wait.

2. Mentally plan an escape route, don't try to escape, unless certain you can make it, and the situation has seriously deteriorated.

3. Continue to make appropriate eye contact with captor, attempting not to stare.

4. Keep a relaxed posture not to be perceived as a threat.

5. Stay away from windows and doors if possible.

6. Avoid suggestion/opinions, avoid saying the word "No". If your suggestion goes wrong, he/she may think you planned it that way.

7. Don't speak unless spoken to, and only if necessary. Try to be friendly, if possible, but not phoney.

8. Try to get rest or sit, if you can. If the situation goes for a long period of time, try to sleep if you can.

9. If anyone needs special medication, inform your captor.

10. Be observant of everything you see and hear. Try to memorize the number of captors, their description and conversations, weapons carried, etc., also the number and identities of other hostages. You may be released, and your information will help the police.

11. If you are permitted to speak on the phone, be prepared to answer YES or NO to questions asked by the police.

12. Don't be argumentative to the captor(s) or other hostages. Put forth a co-operative attitude.

13. Don't turn your back on your captor(s) unless directed to do so, but don't stare at him/her either.

14. Be patient, the police are attempting to rescue you unharmed as soon as possible.

15. Do not assume that the police will know you are a hostage. If you believe a rescue is taking place, or you hear a noise or shooting, hit the floor and stay down. Keep your hands on your head. Do not make any fast moves.

POST EMERGENCY RECOVER

Upon hearing "**Code Purple – All Clear**" announcement:

1. All staff will immediately report to their supervisor.

2. Building will be assessed for hazards once the area has been deemed safe to return to by Police.

3. Staff involved in the incident will participate in debriefing meeting.

Roles & Responsibilities

INCIDENT MANAGER

1. Dial 911 to notify Police.

2. Direct staff to announce **"Code Purple – Location"** three times if not done so already.

3. Assume responsibility for management of the emergency until the arrival of the Thunder Bay Police.

4. Assess the situation to ensure safety of staff and residents and the need to evacuate residents and visitors from the vicinity immediately around the hostage situation.

5. Notify Leadership on-call.

6. Assign a security to isolate and secure the area where hostage(s) are being held, assuring that no staff is placed in jeopardy.

7. Ensure documentation of the emergency.

8. Keep staff and IMS committee informed on the progress of the emergency.

9. Once the Code Purple is declared over, direct staff to announce **"Code Purple – All Clear"** three times.

10. Arrange for a critical stress debriefing session for staff as needed.

11. Participate in the debriefing meeting with the authorities.

LEADERSHIP ON-CALL/ IMS COMMITTEE

1. Upon notification of potential Code Black emergency, activate the IMS committee if required.

2. Designate an Incident Manager who will be stationed on site for the duration of the emergency.

3. Activate Command Centre at the affected site to control all communications regarding the Code Black emergency. The Command Centre will keep Police, Leadership, and staff informed on the progress of the emergency.

4. If requested by police establish a communication link (telephone) to the hostage taking area.

5. Document all communications regarding the Hostage taking.

6. Arrange debriefing meeting with first responders and employees involved in the emergency.

As part of the post-emergency process, the organization will consider the physical and mental health needs of all workers. Any support utilizing Employee Family Assistance Program can be arranged by Occupational Health Nurse.

SECURITY

Upon hearing "**CODE PURPLE"** announcement:

1. Report to the Command Centre.

2. Provide a floor plan if required.

3. Provide security camera footage of the area if available.

4. Isolate & secure the area where hostage(s) are being held until the arrival of the Thunder Bay Police.

5. Notify program/unit manager if existing hazard(s) and conditions in patterns that may indicate causes of aggressive behaviour and assaults prior to entering the facility.

6. Limit access to program areas to eliminate unwanted or dangerous persons.

7. Ensure access into the building is limited and patrolled by security after regular business hours.

ALL STAFF

Upon hearing "**CODE PURPLE**" announcement:

1. Do not return to your department and avoid the area of emergency.

2. Secure your department, clear the halls of patients, visitors and staff.

3. Remain alert to further instructions from Manager/Command Centre/Designate.

4. Code Purple will not result in additional staff attending to the area of emergency. **DO NOT** go to the location of the incident.

4. Staff who have witnessed the event or are emotionally/physically injured will inform their Manager.

Education & Training

1. All employees are required to complete the Fire Safety & Emergency Code LMS module once per year.

2. Managers are required to ensure that employees review the corporate emergency code policies and emergency site sub-plans at least annually.

3. Emergency Code Audits must completed after every emergency code.

4. Each department/site will complete mock exercises or table top exercises at a minimum of once per year and provide documentation of such to Occupational Health, Safety & Wellness.

Related Practices and/or Legislation

Ontario Health and Safety Act and regulations, Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, Canadian Standards Association – Emergency Preparedness and Response Standards

References

OHA Emergency Management Toolkit, Thunder Bay Police