



Unusual Occurrences

.01 Policy

The policy of the Bladensburg Police Department to respond promptly to all occurrences of an unusual or emergency nature and to provide for the orderly and efficient assembly of manpower, supplies, and equipment necessary to handle, control, and safely terminate any such occurrence.

In the event of an unusual occurrence or incident that exceeds the response capabilities of the Department the Prince George's County Police Department will be requested to respond to take command of the entire situation with this department acting in a support function.

.02 Terms

Unusual Occurrence: Any event, generally of an emergency nature, which involves actual or potential personal injury or property damage arising from a natural disaster, man-made disaster, or civil disturbance.

Natural Disaster: An incident in which the forces of nature threaten the lives, safety, or property of numerous persons (floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, explosions, tornadoes, landslides, drought, infestation, or significant snowfall/blizzard).

Man-Made Disaster: An incident in which the forces of man threaten the lives, safety, or property of numerous persons (nuclear/radioactive accidents, , chemical spills, major railroad accidents, or aircraft crashes).

Civil Disturbance: An action by any group that poses a substantial threat to peace, life, or property or any tumultuous or violent activity that creates a grave risk of causing public alarm.

Inner Perimeter: The immediate area of containment around the incident site.

Outer Perimeter: The peripheral control area surrounding the inner perimeter providing a safe zone for access to and from the inner perimeter as well as defining the limit of access by unauthorized persons.

Control Zone: The space or area between the outer and inner perimeter. Members manning the outer perimeter may allow authorized persons into the control zone for restricted purposes as

designated by the officer-in-charge. Unauthorized persons should be evacuated from or secured within the control zone, including bystanders, residents, merchants, and others.

Traffic Control Points: Key intersections or other locations that restrict all unauthorized vehicular traffic from reaching the boundaries of the outer perimeter.

Field Command Post: The on-scene location for command staff who will be responsible for determining the exact status of the emergency resources needed and incident strategy.

.03 Governing Legislation and Reference

Governing Legislation:

44 CFR Part 206, Subpart A expresses the policies and procedures to be followed in implementing those sections of Public Law 93-288, as amended, delegated to the Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The rules in this subpart apply to major disasters and emergencies declared by the President on or after November 23, 1988.

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 *et seq.*, expresses the intent of Congress to provide assistance by the Federal Government to state and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to alleviate suffering and development of comprehensive disaster preparedness and assistance plans.

Maryland Emergency Management Agency Act, Maryland Code, Public Safety Article, Title 14, § 14-101, *et seq.*, authorizes each political subdivision to establish a local organization for disaster preparedness in accordance with the State disaster preparedness program. The Act also provides for the rendering of mutual aid among the political subdivisions and with other states in carrying out emergency management functions.

Maryland Code, Public Safety Article, § 13-111, authorizes the Mayor for the Town of Bladensburg to declare a local state of emergency. A local state of emergency may not continue or be renewed for longer than 30 days, except by order or proclamation of the Mayor and Town Council.

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Forms: N/A

Reference:

Maryland Assistance Plan.

Maryland Emergency Operations Plan.

Prince George's County Emergency Operations Plan.

Town of Bladensburg Emergency Operations Plan.

Town of Bladensburg Facility Evacuation Plan.

General Order 113, Mutual Aid.

General Order 331, Demonstrations.

General Order 343, Weather Related Emergencies

.04 Procedure

A. General

In most circumstances, virtually all emergencies will shift to Prince George's County control well before any decision on an emergency declaration is considered or made by the Town of Bladensburg.

Exceptions

- A strike or major unrest by Town workers with threats to damage Town property;
- A threat of violence directed against Town officials; or,
- A disruptive incident affecting the Town's ability to maintain the safety of the public.

B. Planning

Chief of Police Responsibility

Review and approve written procedures prior to implementation.

Operations Commander Responsibility

Development of operational response plans of the Police Department for unusual occurrences and shall be the principal advisor to the Chief of Police on these matters.

Reviewing and updating the department's Emergency Operations Response Manual on an annual basis.

Maintain liaison with Prince George's County Emergency Management Group and will coordinate the development and implementation of the Emergency Operations Plan.

Supervisor Responsibility

All supervisors are responsible for reading and maintaining familiarity with the Department's Emergency Operations Manual in order that, when implemented, they may readily perform assigned responsibilities.

C. Command and Control

To provide for unity of command during unusual occurrence operations within the Town of Bladensburg, which may involve personnel from other agencies, the responding County official will take command of the incident and the supervision of Town resources at the scene of the incident.

Within the Department, the normal chain of command will remain in effect.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of Responding Personnel

Initial Responding Officer

When an officer becomes aware of an unusual occurrence or emergency that may cause injury to the general public or substantial property damage, the member shall advise the dispatcher and request a supervisor immediately respond to the area.

The officer shall evaluate the situation, request all necessary assistance and take whatever action is possible to aid the injured, restore order, and/or control the situation until additional help arrives.

The officer is responsible for providing an assessment of the situation to the patrol supervisor.

Additional Responding Officers

Personnel assigned to assist at the scene shall be responsible for administering immediate first aid (within their level of training) to the injured.

Rescue work or traffic and crowd control may be required to prevent additional injuries, property damage, or related hazards.

Duties of personnel additionally assigned to the scene of an unusual occurrence can change rapidly upon the arrival of a supervisor or when the Fire Department assumes responsibility for rescue operations.

Patrol Supervisor

The patrol supervisor shall immediately respond to the scene, evaluate the situation, and determine if the situation is beyond the

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scope of the Department's resources. The Patrol Supervisor is responsible for notifying appropriate command staff.

The patrol supervisor shall assume command of the disaster scene and remain in command until relieved by a higher ranking officer.

The patrol supervisor will isolate and secure that area, and:

- If possible to accomplish safely, initiate any necessary evacuation of bystanders and victims within the inner perimeter;
- If necessary, establish a field command post, and,
- Ensure that vehicular and pedestrian traffic has been adequately diverted.

The patrol supervisor will coordinate efforts with the senior Fire Department official present at the scene.

Transfer of Responsibility

Upon the arrival of a higher ranking officer at the disaster scene, the supervisor shall brief the member on the situation and its present status. The higher ranking officer should not assume command until he or she has gained an adequate knowledge of the incident.

D. Communications

Upon confirmation of an unusual occurrence the dispatcher shall clear all unnecessary radio traffic.

Once a Command Post has been established, incident communications on the appropriate radio channel will be determined at the discretion of the Incident Commander.

E. Emergency Mobilization

The patrol supervisor or highest ranking officer at the scene will notify the dispatcher of the need for additional personnel. The Chief of Police will grant authorization to mobilize additional personnel. The nature of the unusual occurrence shall dictate the number of personnel recalled and the manner in which they are recalled. Recall is the responsibility of the dispatcher. Additional personnel will be assigned to the communications office to assist, as necessary.

In the event of emergency mobilization, the dispatcher will notify the following:

- Chief of Police;

- Operations Commander;
- Town Administrator;
- Public Works Director; and,
- Fire Department.

Mobilization of personnel may be accomplished in the following alert stages: The next shift scheduled to report for work will be called first, followed by the shift that previously left duty, followed by all off-duty personnel.

Emergency Scheduling of Mobilized Personnel

In the event of an unusual occurrence, a command officer with the rank of Lieutenant or above is authorized to conduct emergency mobilization of personnel.

Mobilization of personnel may be accomplished in the following alert stages:

- The next shift scheduled to report for work will be called first, followed by the shift that previously left duty, followed by all off-duty personnel.
- In the event that the emergency extends beyond 24 hours, the Department will remain on a two-shift emergency schedule consisting of 12 hours on and 12 hours off, arranged as follows:
 - **Shift 1**
 - Operations Commander
 - Squad 1
 - Squad 3
 - Investigator
 - **Shift 2**
 - Support Services Commander
 - Squad 2
 - Squad 4
 - COPS Officer
 - Civilian personnel will report as directed by the Chief of Police or designee.

Police headquarters will be the primary assembly area. If an alternative assembly area is needed, it shall be chosen by the Incident Commander at the scene and relayed to the dispatcher for dissemination to recalled personnel. Adequate personnel and vehicles will be assigned to shuttle personnel from the assembly area to the scene of the occurrence.

In the event the unusual occurrence extends beyond the scope of the resources of the

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Department and the Town, mutual aid or Civil Defense assistance will be requested.

F. Field Command Posts

Operations will be conducted from the field command post as described below. However, if the scope of the incident is beyond our resources and support is requested from other agencies, command post protocol will be governed by the "Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Police and Fire/Rescue Services Mutual Aid Operational Plan".

The police station is the primary command post for any unusual occurrence situation, but an alternate field command post will be established by the first responding supervisor at the scene.

The field command post should be located between the inner and outer perimeter.

The supervisor in charge will ensure that a chronological log is started to record major events of the incident, including the time the command post was established, changes in command, locations of deployed arrivals and deployment of support personnel, and all significant developments or changes in the situation.

The supervisor in charge of the command post will notify the dispatcher of the location of the command post and any available telephone numbers.

The command post will be equipped with:

- Two telephones, one for incoming calls, and one for outgoing calls. It may be necessary to support existing telephone communications with portable cellular telephones;
- P-25 Radio Network capability;
- An adequate supply of emergency response maps to permit ease in plotting logistical instructions and high priority protective areas; and,
- Adequate note-taking/ documentation materials.

G.

Traffic patterns shall be established and controlled around the site of all unusual occurrences through the use of street barricades or personnel manually directing traffic.

Barricades are located at Public Works. If the number of barricades needed exceeds the supply, arrangements for additional barricades will be made through the Director of Public Works or his or her designee.

In addition to regulating vehicular traffic, each entrance and exit from the affected area shall serve as a security checkpoint in which all persons requesting entry into the affected area will be denied access except those persons on official business.

Crowd control perimeters will be established through the use of natural or artificial barriers around the site to prevent onlookers from entering the area for their own safety and for the effectiveness of rescue operations.

H. Public Facility Security

Fixed security posts shall be established at public facilities in situations where there is a danger that damage, looting, or crowd take-over may occur at such facility.

In the event of a civil disturbance those public facilities located closest to the disturbance shall be given priority in the assignment of fixed security posts with special attention being given to those facilities which may be the focal point of the disturbance.

I. Public Information

The Chief of Police or designee, shall conduct media briefings.

Early in the incident arrangements must be made to establish a central location for all media representatives to gather and receive information updates.

Media briefings will be conducted as the need arises and should include:

- Casualty information, including the number of known dead. Names, addresses, or other identifying data shall not be released until next-of-kin have been notified.
- Other up-to-date factual information to prevent the spread of hysteria and rumor;
- The extent of property damage as well as imminent or present dangers to the public; and,
- Warnings against looting or other criminal acts.

Factual information shall be provided to media representatives, particularly with regard to rumors. All personnel will ensure that the

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incident commander is advised of rumors, so that only factual information is disseminated.

J. Request for Mutual Aid

When executing any provision of this plan the Department may request the assistance of other public safety agencies. The Department will comply with all provisions of the Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Police and Fire/Rescue Mutual Aid Operational Plan.

The following political subdivisions are parties to the Mutual Aid Operational Plan and as such are duty-bound to provide assistance to the requesting agency when a state of emergency exists and the requesting agency does not have sufficient manpower.

Alexandria	Loudon County
Arlington	Manassas
City of Fairfax	Manassas Park
District of Columbia	Montgomery County
Fairfax County	Prince George's County
Falls Church	Prince William County
Gaithersburg	Rockville
Greenbelt	

As outlined in the Mutual Aid Operational Plan:

- Initial contacts regarding police mutual aid will be made between and among Chiefs of Police or their representatives;
- The Mayor must contact the appropriate official authorized to approve the request for mutual aid assistance;
- NLETS will be used to give a general broadcast alert to all jurisdictions party to the Mutual Aid Operational Plan, and to withdraw assistance;
- Except as otherwise specified, the Chief of Police or designee will exercise command and control over all civil law enforcement resources committed to the occurrence.

As soon as practical after the onset of the incident, the appropriate chief public safety officials of affected jurisdictions will confer and determine the Incident Commander and the Incident Management Team. If issues related to command and control authority cannot be reconciled among chief public safety officials, then the principal elected officials of affected jurisdictions will be responsible for their resolution.

K. Military Support

If an incident exceeds the capabilities of the Department and mutual aid agencies, other

assistance may then be requested from the Maryland National Guard.

Requests for assistance from the Maryland National Guard will be made by the Mayor and directed to the Director of the Office of Emergency Planning for Prince George's County. The request will then be forwarded to the Director, Maryland Emergency Management Agency as established in Article 16A, of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Should law enforcement personnel still be insufficient to handle the emergency, the Mayor, through the County Executive, may request that the Governor of the State declare a portion of, or all of the Town a disaster area and send assistance pursuant to Article 41, Section 15(b) of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

L. Martial Law

The Governor shall have the power in times of public crisis, disaster, rioting, catastrophe, insurrection, invasion, tumult, breach of the peace or upon reasonable apprehension of the imminence thereof, or to enforce the laws of this State, or to carry on any of the functions of the militia of this State, or any part thereof, or whenever, by the law of the land, martial law may be declared, to order into the active service of the State all or any part of the militia as he may deem proper or necessary." Article 65, Section 8, Annotated Code of Maryland.

M. Declaration of a State of Emergency (Local)

A local state of emergency may be declared only by the principal executive officer of a political subdivision. It may not be continued or renewed for a period in excess of seven days except by or with the consent of the governing body of the political subdivision. Any order of proclamation declaring, continuing, or terminating a local state of emergency shall be given prompt and general publicity and shall be filed promptly with the chief local records-keeping agency. Article 16A, Section 6D, Annotated Code of Maryland.

Whenever a state of emergency exists, the Mayor, or the County Executive, may issue a Proclamation and order any or all of the following:

- A general curfew limited to any geographical area or any hours;
- The closing of all retail liquor stores or taverns;

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- The closing of all private clubs or portions wherein the consumption of intoxicating beverages takes place;
- Suspension of the sale of beer and/ or liquor;
- Discontinuance of the sale or distribution of gasoline or other flammable or combustible liquids or products in any container other than a gasoline tank affixed to a motor vehicle;
- Suspension of the sale, distribution, dispensing or giving away of any firearms or ammunition;
- That no person will carry, possess or use any club, brick, or gasoline filled bottle or container with a fuse type wick inserted in the neck, or petroleum-based fire-bomb or other incendiary missile or weapon;
- The closing of any and all businesses, commercial and industrial establishments;
- The designation of any public street, thoroughfare or vehicle parking lot closed to motor vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and,
- Such orders as are imminently necessary for the protection of life and property.
- Such proclamations become effective upon filing with the Clerk of the Circuit Court and remain in effect until a termination decree is filed.

N. Civil Disturbances

Civil disturbances may take various forms and vary in size and amount of danger to the general public. Of primary importance in any civil disturbance is defusing of the situation and restoring of general public order. The police must be able to respond to any civil disturbance, isolate it from the remainder of the community, protect life and property, and maintain control. First responding officers will:

- Observe the situation from a safe distance and determine if the crowd is peaceful or potentially violent;
- Notify the dispatcher as to the seriousness of the situation and request the patrol supervisor and additional back-up personnel; and,
- Attempt to identify, by observation, the leader of the group.

The responding patrol supervisor will take command of the incident until otherwise

relieved and will:

- Assess the situation for seriousness and potential danger. If the situation is minor in nature, the supervisor may elect to handle it with existing resources;
- Maintain communications with the dispatcher and, at a minimum, provide information on:
 - Estimated size of the crowd and area involved;
 - Assessment of the mood of the crowd;
 - Weapons involved, if any; and,
 - Property destroyed or involved;
- Establish a command post from his or her vehicle, begin assessing the number of personnel needed, and ensure that proper notifications are made to command staff.

Once appropriate equipment and adequate personnel have been deployed, the incident commander or designee will:

- Approach the crowd and inform the leader or leaders that the assembly is unlawful and that they have to disperse. If the crowd is violent, instructions and orders should be accomplished by utilizing a portable speaker or cruiser PA system. A time limit for dispersal should be established and no extension allowed; and,
- If the crowd fails to disperse and continues its activity, the incident commander may, after consultation with the Chief of Police or designee, authorize the use of force to move and/or disperse the crowd.

O. Processing Mass Arrests

Alternatives to mass arrests should be actively sought whenever possible.

The State's Attorney's office will be contacted whenever mass arrests are contemplated. The incident commander will request that an Assistant State's Attorney be assigned to the incident command post to serve as an advisor for legal issues and considerations. If possible, mass arrests will not be made until the appropriate State's Attorney's office has been notified, appraised of the situation and consulted.

In the event that mass arrests must be made, the following guidelines apply:

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- The primary processing site will be at police headquarters;
- Processing is the responsibility of the arresting officer. If the situation dictates, that responsibility may be reassigned by the incident commander;
- Processing of prisoners will be done in accordance with established policy;
- Prisoners will be handcuffed and searched for weapons and contraband prior to being transported. If there is an insufficient supply of handcuffs at the scene, flex-cuffs will be provided and used;
- If possible, prior to transporting the prisoner, a photograph should be taken of the prisoner and arresting officer together. This photo is in addition to any other photos necessary for processing;
- Should the number of persons exceed the transport capability of this Department, arrangements will be made with other agencies for assistance;
- Detention of prisoners can be accomplished by placing them in the secured rooms in the processing area. If additional space is needed, prisoners may be transported to the Prince George's County Police Department, District I Station;
- Arrested juveniles shall not be held in any area occupied by adult detainees;
- If the scope of the incident is beyond the capability of Bladensburg Police resources, the mass processing of prisoners, transportation and operation of temporary detention facilities will be carried out jointly by this Department and assisting agencies under the direction of the overall incident commander, in accord with the Greater Metropolitan Washington Area Police and Fire/Rescue Services Mutual Aid Operational Plan;
- Evidence collection and preservation is the responsibility of the incident commander;
- Whenever the number of prisoners exceeds the normal limits of the holding facility, arrangements must be made for adequate food, water and sanitation. Arrangements may include bringing in food and drinking water from commercial/ public sources, and arranging for portable toilet facilities at the detention area;

- Efforts must be made to provide each person detained an opportunity to have conversation with legal counsel; and,
- Prisoners injured or who become ill while detained will be given immediate medical attention.

P. De-escalation Procedures

Evacuation of an area may be necessary to prevent loss of life, protect property or to contain an incident. Should a decision be made to evacuate, arrangements must be made to provide temporary shelter for displaced persons. The following guidelines will be used when an evacuation is ordered.

The Council Chambers in the Municipal Building will be the primary relocation area for displaced families or persons.

Authorization to open the Municipal Building shall be obtained from the Mayor or Administrator.

The county chapter of the American Red Cross shall be contacted and requested to provide necessary emergency services which may include food, cots, blankets, medical supplies, etc.

The incident commander or designee shall ensure that all persons sheltered due to evacuation are kept informed as to the status of the incident.

Q. Traffic control

Traffic patterns should be established around the site of any unusual occurrence through the use of street barricades and/or personnel manually directing traffic. Whenever traffic patterns are altered or re-routed, the incident commander will ensure that notification is made to:

- Public transportation carriers;
- Fire/rescue communications; and,
- Local radio/television news stations.

R. Crowd Control

Crowd control around the site of an unusual occurrence may be maintained by establishing artificial barriers, and/or using natural barriers around the area. This action is necessary to prevent on-lookers from entering the area and to enhance rescue operations.

Patrols must be established in the area to prevent looting and other criminal acts.

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S. Post Occurrence Duties

All personnel assigned to the incident will follow the de-escalation procedures outlined herein.

Any incident which occurred during mobilization will be documented as soon as possible in accordance with Department reporting procedures.

Any member involved in an incident may provide his or her supervisor with an assessment which may be considered during the incident critique.

All equipment issued at the onset of the incident is to be promptly returned to either the staging area or the location where the equipment was issued. Equipment damage will be documented in accordance with Department procedures.

After Action Reports

In an attempt to plan for future unusual occurrences, an "After-action Report" will be prepared by the incident commander and submitted as soon as possible to the Chief of Police. The incident commander may assign subordinate staff members to assist with the preparation of the report. After-action reports will contain, at the minimum:

- Date and time the occurrence was initially reported;
- Date and time the field command post was established;
- Description of the field command post, to include: location, personnel assigned, communications capabilities utilized, and notifications made;

- Significant adverse events encountered and corrective or reactive actions employed, to include: location that personnel and equipment were deployed, life-saving efforts, evacuation and/or relocation efforts, restoration of utilities, total casualty figures, property damage by location, and estimate of total cost of the police operation; and,
- Lessons learned and recommendations for future situations.

HISTORY: Adopted July 1, 2014

This General Order supersedes all other orders and memoranda in conflict therewith.

Authority:



Charles L. Owens
Chief of Police