

SWAT Team

Standard Requirements

Index Code: 1805

Effective Date: 11/01/08 (Revised 06/22/2021)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish standards by which all **Special Weapons and Tactics** (SWAT) team candidates and members shall be judged so as to determine their fitness as a functional member of the team.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff that all members of the SWAT team satisfactorily complete and maintain the requirements stated herein. Both admission and continued participation on the team shall be dependent upon a deputy's ability to continually meet these requirements as determined by the SWAT Team Commander.

III. Selection Requirements

A. Assistant Team Leader Selection

The SWAT team leader, with the approval of the SWAT Team Commander, shall designate the Assistant Team Leader(s) based on their education, experience and training. Candidates for this position must be current team members.

B. Selection Process

Candidates for the SWAT team must be currently certified law enforcement officers, by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission, who have completed their probationary period, or expect to complete it by the anticipated date of acceptance onto the team. However, the SWAT Leader may waive the probationary period requirement, with the approval of the SWAT Team Commander, if the candidate has comparable documented time and experience as a law enforcement officer employed by another recognized law enforcement agency in Maryland. Furthermore, the SWAT Leader must determine that the candidate possesses adequate abilities, knowledge and skills to fulfill the requirement

of a SWAT member. All candidates must be able to appropriately dedicate themselves to the duties and functions of SWAT, which include regular attendance at meetings, training and callouts.

C. Team Opening Announcement and Application Submission Process

1. The SWAT Leader shall inform the SWAT Team Commander that openings exist within the team.

The SWAT Leader will distribute an Office wide **notice** announcing team openings, giving at least thirty (30) day notice before the selection process begins.

2. Any sworn member interested in becoming a candidate for SWAT shall submit, via interoffice correspondence, their request for admission along with a brief resume. The following information must be included:

a. Personal Information – Name, home address, home phone number, cell phone number and anything which could impact their participation in SWAT.

b. Departmental Record – Date hired, identification number, present rank and assignment, all commendations or disciplinary actions received, and all departmental units or activities with which the applicant has been involved.

c. Education and Training – College credits/degrees, specialized schools attended, courses, seminars, or other training that may be relevant to participation in SWAT.

d. Miscellaneous – Any other abilities, knowledge or characteristics that may contribute to the quality of SWAT.

C. Performance Evaluation Review

The SWAT Leader shall review recent performance evaluations as facilitated by the Administrative Services Commander or Human Resources Manager, assessing the applicant's performance, character and attendance, complete with other relevant background information. Prior supervisors may also be requested to submit an evaluation of the applicant at the discretion of the SWAT Leader.

D. Preliminary Review

The SWAT Leader and Assistant SWAT Leader(s) shall review applications and supervisor evaluations to ensure that the applicants have met the requirements listed above. All applications not meeting the requirements, and/or upon receiving unfavorable evaluations from their supervisor, will be notified in writing of rejection. They will be encouraged to reapply at a later date when additional openings become available.

E. Physical Agility Test

A physical agility test (See Index Code 1805.1) shall be administered to SWAT members and candidates, for team members to maintain an acceptable level of physical fitness for operational readiness and the performance of tactical operations.

1. The SWAT Leader shall conduct the physical agility test on an annual basis. Additional tests shall be conducted throughout the year if deemed necessary at the discretion of the SWAT leader or the SWAT Commander. The SWAT Leader shall retain records of the physical agility test.

2. Any SWAT candidate who fails to satisfactorily complete the physical agility test after two consecutive attempts shall be rejected but may reapply after six months. Current SWAT members who fail to satisfactorily complete the test after two consecutive attempts within thirty (30) days shall be removed from the team but may reapply for available openings after six months.

F. Oral Interview

Upon successful completion of the requirements indicated above, SWAT candidates will be notified of a date and time to appear before an oral interview board. All candidates shall report promptly and shall wear the uniform of the day. Procedures for implementation of the interview board shall consist of the following: The board shall be composed of the SWAT Leader, Assistant Leader, and a Team member.

1. The purpose of the board is to gain insight about the candidate's ability to process information quickly and effectively, based on the presentation of hypothetical scenarios, and to determine his/her fitness for the team. There shall be no limit to the number of questions asked by each board member, however, the same questions shall be asked of each candidate.

2. Following the interview, each board member will provide a pass/fail grade for each candidate. Two or more failing grades shall be grounds for rejection of the candidate. If a failing grade is given, a written explanation must be provided to the candidate. The SWAT Leader shall keep all interview scores for a period of three years.

3. The names of all candidates passing the interview process will be forwarded to the SWAT Commander for a final review. The final selection of candidates for SWAT shall be the responsibility of the SWAT Commander with the approval of the Operations Commander following a review of each candidate's personnel file by one or both officers.

G. Final Notification

The SWAT Commander shall notify, in writing, all candidates that they have been either selected or not selected for the team. Those who passed the selection process but were not selected due to insufficient openings on the team shall be placed on an eligibility list for a period of one year. Those who did not pass the selection process shall be eligible to re-apply during any subsequent selection process.

H. Probationary Period

All new SWAT members shall serve a probationary period of six months. During this period the SWAT Commander shall not be bound by Section IV (Removal Process) when considering the removal of a probationary member from the team.

IV. Removal Process

A. All SWAT members shall bear in mind that participation on the team is voluntary, and that this participation is a privilege. Therefore, as with any other privilege extended to the member by the Office of the Sheriff, an individual's membership with the team may be revoked when it proves to be detrimental to the overall success of the team.

B. The nature of SWAT operations is such that each member must be self-sufficient and contribute to the cooperative effort of the team. Absolute trust among members is essential. Any action by a member that could potentially jeopardize such trust, or unnecessarily endanger the safety of a team member, another law enforcement officer or a member of the public shall be seriously considered, and could justify removal of that member from the team. As an emergency procedure, the Team Leader and/or Assistant Team Leader shall possess the authority to immediately suspend a member from the team when, in his/her discretion, that member has jeopardized the team in any manner. This suspension shall be subject to the following review procedures:

1. A meeting shall be held with the member in question as soon as possible after the incident to discuss the issue and fully document the incident.

2. The SWAT Commander and Team Leader shall thoroughly review the incident and determine the final disposition concerning the member's continued participation on the team. The member may be:

- a. Retained without further action
- b. Counseled on the issue
- c. Sent for additional training
- d. Suspended for a specified period of time
- e. Removed from the team

3. The Operations Commander shall be notified of any decision made by the SWAT Commander

V. Training

A. Members of the team will attend and successfully complete an MPCTC approved tactical school as soon as possible after being selected for the team and prior to any deployment with the SWAT team unless the deputy is not to be involved in any tactical operations such as entry, assault, etc. This 40-hour minimum course of study must include:

- 1) Philosophy of SWAT operations
- 2) Tactical response theory and concepts
- 3) Overview of individual and team equipment
- 4) Operational planning
- 5) Overview of specialized tactical response functions
- 6) Command post operation
- 7) Individual and team movement
- 8) Basic entry and search techniques
- 9) Chemical agents and deployment
- 10) Less lethal munitions and deployment
- 11) Diversionary device usage
- 12) Crisis negotiation and de-escalation skills
- 13) Individual and team firearms training
- 14) Purpose and intent of warrant service
- 15) Problem solving situations in a scenario-based learning environment
- 16) Legal requirements
- 17) Tactical response theory and concepts
- 18) Operational planning
- 19) Basic entry and search techniques
- 20) Multi-agency mutual aid warrant services procedures

The deputy must achieve a minimum 80% score in all of the above classes. (A commission approved no-knock warrant service course shall include a minimum of 24 hours of instruction.)

B. The SWAT Commander and Leader shall attend and successfully complete a documented tactical commander course within one year of assignment as SWAT Commander or team Leader followed by their attendance at a minimum of 16 hours of biennial training to include one or more of the following topics:

- 1) Review of criminal incidents and tactical response operations
- 2) Legal issues
- 3) Mutual aid procedures
- 4) Deployment and guidelines for deployment
- 5) Hostage rescue
- 6) Tactical team operations
- 7) Command and control
- 8) Command post operations
- 9) Tactical operation procedures
- 10) Tactical components and capabilities
- 11) Tactical considerations and mission and/or
- 12) Training scenarios and problem-solving simulations

C. Members of the team will undergo firearms qualifications semi-annually, at a minimum, and successfully qualify with their pistol and each additional firearm assigned to them (i.e. shotgun, assault rifle, submachine gun, etc.).

D. Members who are authorized to carry the shotgun, assault rifle and/or submachine gun are selected by the Team Leader, with approval of the Team Commander, based on who he/she believes are best suited for the assignment. These deputies must receive a minimum qualifying score of eighty percent (80%) for each assigned weapon.

E. At least 24 hours of training in tactical operations shall be scheduled by the Team Leader each quarter for weapons, munitions and equipment, individual and team movement, decision making and/or specialized tactical functions. On a yearly basis, 40 hours of each SWAT team member's 96 hours of training must be with the full team consisting of lectures, drills and/or scenario-based exercises. Classroom presentations, simulations and video

presentations may be utilized for such training.

F. A detailed training log will be maintained of all SWAT training by the SWAT Team Commander. This log will contain the training performed and a list of members in attendance. Weapons qualification scores will be maintained by the SWAT Team Commander as well as the Lead Firearms Instructor.

G. An annual report will be submitted to the Operations Major and Chief Deputy no later than the first week of February outlining all training that took place during the previous year. Included in the SWAT annual report shall be:

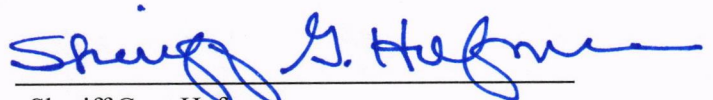
- 1) All training held during the year
- 2) All knock-and-announce as well as no-knock warrants served with outcome
- 3) All emergency SWAT call-outs with outcomes and all other SWAT activity with details
- 4) Any injuries to law enforcement and/or civilians must be documented
- 5) Equipment procured during the reporting year must be identified
- 6) Comprehensive equipment inventory must be included

G. H. The SWAT Commander shall be responsible for all SWAT related mandated reporting to the GOCAP, MPCTC and any other entities requiring statistical reports. Copies of all reports submitted to any outside entities shall be provided to the Operations Major and Chief Deputy.

VI. CALEA References: 33.6.2

VII. Cancellation of directive 1802 dated 8/23/16

VIII. Proponent Unit: SWAT Team



Sheriff Gary Hofmann