



CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE

GENERAL POLICE ORDER



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| EFFECTIVE DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2020 | CHAPTER: 5 - Field Investigations | PAGE: 1 of 4 | NUMBER: 5.15.09 |
| SUBJECT: BOMB THREATS | | | |
| CHIEF: <i>Calvin D. Williams, Chief</i> | | | |

Substantive changes are italicized

PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for responding to and investigating bomb threats and actual discovery of explosive devices.

POLICY: *It is the policy of the Cleveland Division of Police* that its members shall respond to all bomb threats or explosive device discoveries systematically, efficiently and through use of extreme caution in a manner that gives primary consideration to protecting the health and safety of the public and members of the Division.

DEFINITIONS:

Bomb Threat - a situation where there is a report of or suspicion of an explosive device at a specific or defined location.

Explosive Device Discovery - an incident where an actual or suspected explosive device has been physically located or detonated.

PROCEDURES:

I. General Guidelines

- A. The Communications Control Section (CCS) shall assign bomb threat calls to plainclothes detectives from the affected district.
- B. If detectives are not available a supervisor shall:
 - 1. Respond to the scene, assess the situation, and gather information about the threat.
 - 2. Send a marked zone car until detectives are able to respond. Uniformed officers may be released from the scene when detectives arrive. If detectives cannot respond, uniformed officers shall gather information from the threatened institution or person(s).
- C. Request CCS notify the Bomb Squad Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the incident.
- D. The Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department shall investigate bomb threats for Police Headquarters.

II. Call Taker Responsibilities

- A. *Upon the CCS receiving a call for a Bomb Threat, dispatch personnel shall follow Pro Q&A Emergency Police Dispatch Protocol #109 (Bomb/Chemical, Biological,*

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Radiological, and Nuclear [CBRN]/Product Contamination Threat) for the appropriate response. Use the proper determinant code (i.e., Charley or Omega), appropriate determinant suffix, and ask the following questions:

1. What is the address of the emergency?
2. What is the phone number you are calling from?
3. What is your name?
4. Tell me exactly what happened?
5. Are you at that location now?
6. When did this happen?

B. Call takers shall keep the caller on the phone as long as possible.

1. Note the exact words used by the caller.
2. Pay attention to the voice characteristics of the caller including:
 - a. Race, gender, and age.
 - b. Noticeable accent or distinct speech characteristics.
 - c. Background noises that may give a clue to the caller's identity or whereabouts.
3. Try to determine whether the caller is identifying with a particular group or why the device was placed.
4. Attempt to gather as much information as possible about the device including a description, specific location, and potential triggers.

E. If the number does not show up on the caller ID, when the caller hangs up, dial *69 on the telephone keypad to see if the automatic callback will relay the caller's phone number.

F. Immediately notify a CCS supervisor who will contact Emergency Medical Services and the Division of Fire.

III. Threats by Other Electronic Means

A. Threats received by text, email, or social media require additional considerations.

1. Obtain all information regarding the platform or service used to deliver the message.
2. Preserve evidence including saving the message and capturing a screenshot.

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3. Attempt to determine the origin and context of the message.
4. Detectives may seek assistance from appropriate forensic analysts or experts as necessary.

IV. On Scene Procedures

- A. Move quickly without drawing undue attention.
- B. Proceed as though there is a confirmed explosive device.
- C. Do not use a radio transmitter within 300 feet of the suspected area of the bomb threat.
- D. Formulate a plan to protect the public and personnel at the bomb threat location including a preliminary perimeter. Until a device is located, any decision regarding any search or voluntary evacuation of a premise remains with the property owner or tenant. If the property owner or tenant requests assistance in a search or voluntary evacuation, provide support as much as possible.
- E. Be calm and alert to suspicious activity in the area.
- F. Interview the complainant to verify the information and determine the nature of the call.
- G. Assist the property owner or tenant in the search for the possible explosive device location:
 1. Use employees familiar with the area.
 2. Concentrate on areas accessible to the public.
 3. Look for items or objects which appear suspicious or out of place.
- H. If a suspicious object or bomb is found or there has already been an explosion on the premises then the incident will transition to that of explosive device discovery.
 1. Always be aware that there may be a secondary device.
 2. Immediately evacuate the area within at least a 300-foot radius around the suspected explosive device.
 3. Immediately notify CCS by a landline **TELEPHONE**. CCS shall notify the Bomb Squad, SWAT, Intelligence Unit, and other necessary units or agencies.
 4. **NEVER move, touch or attempt to cover any device suspected to be a bomb.**
 5. Upon arrival the Bomb Squad will take charge of all police operations regarding the explosive device as per General Police Order 4.02.03, Bomb Squad and

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Improvised Explosive Device Protocols, and Bomb Squad standard operating procedures.

V. Reporting

- A. The reporting officer shall complete a pre-structured Bomb Threat Form-1 (Attachment) and an incident report if required.
- B. The original shall be retained at the district/unit and copies forwarded to Homeland Special Operations, Intelligence Unit, and the Bomb Squad.

VI. Aircraft Threats

- A. When a member receives a bomb threat at or regarding Cleveland Hopkins International Airport or Burke Lakefront Airport, the member shall make notification in accordance with that airport's procedures.
- B. A member who receives a bomb threat involving private aircraft at non-airport locations shall make the same notifications as other bomb threats.
- C. A CCS supervisor shall notify the Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the bomb threat.

THIS ORDER SUPERSEDES ANY PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DIRECTIVE OR POLICY FOR THIS SUBJECT AND WILL REMAIN EFFECTIVE UNTIL RESCINDED OR SUPERSEDED.