

	Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives	DIRECTIVE: 450-005
		EFFECTIVE DATE: October 18, 2013
	SUBJECT: Emergency Response Team	REVISED DATE: February 3, 2022

PURPOSE

This directive aims to establish guidelines for implementing the Emergency Response Team (ERT). ERT was formed to respond to high-risk emergencies anywhere in the district. This directive applies to all Houston Independent School District Police Department Personnel.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Houston ISD School District Police Department to train its officers to respond to emergency and critical incidents on its campuses, other district properties, and as assigned.

MISSION

ERT was designed to substantially reduce the risk of injury or loss of life to students, staff, and other stakeholders during critical incidents on any of the premises of HISD. The department recognizes that an active shooter incident will have other agencies to such incidents. The HISD ERT unit will coordinate mutual joint training sessions with the Houston Police Department, Houston Fire department, and several local police agencies to ensure the response will be properly coordinated and reduce the risk of loss of life.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) mission is to provide HISD with trained and skilled officers who can respond to critical incidents on HISD properties. The team will be trained to eliminate the immediate threat to the life of students, staff, and any other civilian personnel within the boundaries of HISD. These incidents include, but are not limited to:

- a) **Active Shooter:** An active shooter is a person(s) who appears to be actively engaging in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms, and there is no apparent pattern or method to their selection of victims.
- b) **Hostage Situations:** Hostage situations involve holding any person(s) against their will by a suspect or suspects, whether armed or unarmed. ERT will stabilize and maintain the scene until Harris County, and HPD SWAT arrives. ERT will not take action unless difficult circumstances arise.
- c) **Barricade Situations:** A barricade situation is a standoff created by an armed or potentially armed suspect in any location, whether fortified or not, refusing to comply with police demands for surrender. ERT will

stabilize and maintain the scene until Harris County, and HPD SWAT arrives. The ERT will not take action unless difficult circumstances arise.

- d) **Sniper Situations:** Sniper situations involve the firing upon citizens and police by an armed suspect, usually from concealment. ERT will stabilize and maintain the scene until Harris County, and HPD SWAT arrives. The ERT will not take action unless difficult circumstances arise.
- e) **Special Assignments:** Special assignments include any assignment involving a high threat level, such as dignitary protection, perimeter control during bomb threats, and other duties as assigned. Board meetings will have a minimum of two ERT members per session.

SELECTION PROCESS

The minimum requirements for the ERT:

- a) Minimum two years/24 months of police experience.
- b) Applicant must not have any sustained dispositions of work-related incidents or probationary disciplinary action 12 months before applying for ERT.
- c) The Chief of Police will approve any minimum requirements waivers.

Applicants must also successfully pass the following tests:

- a) Physical Fitness
- b) Pistol Qualification Course
- c) Stress/Pistol Course
- d) Oral Board Evaluation

ACTIVATION

ERT could be activated by the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, or Patrol Commander. Officers serving on the ERT will do so as a "COLLATERAL DUTY." Members will be on regular patrol duty during school hours.

ERT will be activated immediately when a critical incident occurs within the confines of the Houston Independent School District. ERT members will not be required to report to their operations assignment or supervisor until the team is deactivated. The ERT may be deployed to assist other agencies in other jurisdictions as deemed necessary by the Chief of Police or the Assistant Chief of Police.

ORGANIZATION AND SUPERVISION

If ERT is called out, the primary officer in the unit will maintain control of the scene until a Patrol Commander or Patrol Sergeant arrives. The supervisor and the ERT Team Leader will work together to determine the best course of action; the Team Leader assumes the responsibility for the team's actions.

ON-SCENE MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Response Team will establish an incident command post to communicate with other law enforcement agencies in major critical incidents.

DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVATION

The Patrol Commander or designee will be responsible for maintaining a log detailing the activation and use of ERT. This report will be a standard police report detailing the operation and pertinent information required for any follow-up investigations.

AFTER ACTION CRITIQUE

After all operations, the Patrol Commander will conduct an after-action critique (written report). This critique provides a forum for ERT members to offer information or criticism to improve the team's operational procedures. The after-action critique will be evaluated to develop changes in ERT policy, if necessary.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

The chain of command for the Emergency Response Team is:

- a) Chief of Police
- b) Assistant Chief of Police
- c) ERT Commander/Patrol Commander
- d) ERT Patrol Sergeant
- e) ERT Team Leader

TRAINING

All ERT members will be trained in Specialized Weapons and Tactical Operations (SWAT) procedures and attend SWAT Instructor School and Advance Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) training when permissible. In addition, each ERT member will participate in ERT Training one (1) day a week and Firearms Range Training once a month. All minimum standards must be achieved and maintained.

Approved By


Pedro Lopez Jr., Chief of Police