

	Houston Independent School District Police Department Directives	DIRECTIVE: 410-003
	SUBJECT: Notification and Emergency Management	EFFECTIVE DATE: September 23, 2013 REVISED DATE: January 10, 2022

POLICY

This directive establishes procedures and responsibilities for notifications and emergency management. Dispatch personnel are responsible for ensuring notifications are made and emergency management procedures are invoked. During alerts and emergencies, employees will take reasonable steps to monitor the various news outlets for announcements concerning when to report for duty. This directive applies to all employee

DEFINITIONS

Alert Status: A precursor to mobilization; a heightened awareness of the department's emergency action plan may be implemented.

Civil Disorders: The gathering of a large group during which the potential for violent action exists.

Disaster: A catastrophe threatens the extraordinary loss of life or property (e.g., severe weather, hazardous material accidents, large fires, explosions, terrorist incidents).

Essential Employees: All classified officers or employees designated by the Chief of Police or the superintendent.

Mass Gatherings: Scheduled events that overwhelm a larger than anticipated crowd. Because this crowd is law-abiding, any emergencies are short-term needing a minimum of support.

Operational Commander: The supervisor responsible for coordinating the department's response to an emergency. The patrol area where the emergency occurs will determine the operational commander unless otherwise designated by the Chief of Police.

Serious Injury/Illness: An event involving an on-duty employee that requires notification of the Chief of Police and superintendent.

Significant Event: Any event that seems likely to result in substantial media or public attention or may require additional administrative action

SIGNIFICANT EVENT NOTIFICATION

Employees discovering information involving a significant event will notify the dispatch as soon as information becomes available, and updates will be provided. Notifications will not be delayed due to incomplete information. Dispatch personnel will make the

required notifications to departmental personnel and other district departments.

Officers made aware of a significant event will immediately inform their supervisor, who will, in turn, notify dispatch. In the absence of a supervisor, the senior officer on the scene will be responsible.

The supervisor will prepare Significant Event reports for the Chief of Police and assistant chief, and captains. Significant Event reports documenting internal affair complaints will be sent directly to the Chief of Police.

A significant event includes, but is not limited to:

- a) Incidents that involve a police officer shot at or shot.
- b) Incidents involving the following except while engaged in training or lawful recreation. Any discharge of a:
 - 1. Firearm by an officer.
 - 2. Soft-impact weapon by an officer.
 - 3. Conducted Energy Device (CED) by an officer.
- c) Major accidents with serious bodily injury involving an on- or off-duty employee or a district vehicle.
- d) Death of an officer or civilian employee (on or off duty).
- e) Serious injuries to district personnel requiring medical treatment whether:
 - 1. On duty.
 - 2. Off-duty and police-related.
 - 3. Self-inflicted (on or off duty), regardless of severity.
- f) Incidents involving a departmental employee (e.g., arrest, serious injury, or death).
- g) Incidents involving a foreign government representative (employee of an embassy, mission, or consulate) who:
 - 1. Claims diplomatic immunity.
 - 2. Is seriously injured.
 - 3. Is deceased.
- h) Disasters (natural or man-made).
- i) Mass gatherings and civil disorders (e.g., rallies, demonstrations, labor action, protests, riots).
- j) Bomb threats, suspicious devices, or explosions.

- k) Hate crimes, including threats of violence.
- l) The threat of serious injury or death against:
 - 1. An officer.
 - 2. An elected official.
 - 3. A head of state.
 - 4. Immediate family of any of the above.
- m) Police actions involving:
 - 1. Special threat situations
 - 2. Threatened suicide situations.
 - 3. Mass arrests (seven or more).
 - 4. Evacuations.
- n) In-custody deaths or serious injuries.
- o) Police impersonations while committing a crime.
- p) Criminal activity, fatalities, or arrests occurring on, at, or near any district-owned property (e.g., buildings, parks, and land).
- q) Suspicious activity or information related to terrorist or extremist activity. Additionally, incidents involving the theft or loss of weapons, explosives, chemicals, radiological material, especially if it occurs at a location considered critical infrastructure.
- r) Any occurrence the reporting division thinks should be reported to the Chief of Police.

The preceding examples are not meant to be all-inclusive; officers should use their judgment in reporting incidents not included in these examples (see definition of a significant event).

Supervisors are responsible for keeping their chain of command informed of events. Command Staff members may contact the dispatch any time to update current events.

CATASTROPHIC EVENT NOTIFICATION

Department personnel will contact dispatch to report all catastrophic events required by this directive. Dispatch personnel will make the required notifications to the Chief of Police through the chain of command.

Officers made aware of a catastrophic event will immediately inform their supervisor, who will then notify dispatch. In the absence of a supervisor, the primary officer on the scene will be responsible. Notifications will not be delayed due to incomplete or unavailable information.

A catastrophic event includes, but is not limited to on-duty incidents involving:

- a) A fatality involving a district employee.
- b) More than two district employees were seriously injured.
- c) A district vehicle accident involving more than three vehicles.
- d) Injuries to a district employee include amputation, head injury, heart attack, serious electrical shock, or spinal injury.
- e) A district employee accident spectacular enough to draw news media attention.
- f) An illness or exposure due to a serious contagion or biological hazard.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The superintendent has delegated the responsibility for managing and coordinating the district's Emergency Management Plan to the Office of Risk Management. Under the district's Emergency Management Plan, the police department is responsible for law enforcement, emergency notification and evacuation of persons, traffic and crowd control, and securing damaged or disaster areas.

Dispatch is the department's liaison to the district's Risk Management department. The Emergency Response Plan (ERP) is the district's written plan for mobilizing department personnel to respond to a wide range of incidents, events, and disasters. The plan describes the basic response concepts of, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Managing and mitigating incidents under the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- b) Operational commander
- c) Special Response Group (SRG)
- d) Rapid Mobilization Personnel (RMP)
- e) Alert status and emergency readiness
- f) Partial and full mobilization procedures and responsibilities
- g) Dispatch operations
- h) Specialized equipment
- i) Required reports
- j) Outside assistance
- k) Response guidelines to specific types of incidents or emergencies

The Chief of Police may place the entire department in an alert status when an emergency is anticipated or has already occurred. The location and type of emergency will determine what impact an alert status has on any particular division.

During an alert, personnel should anticipate any of the following:

- a) Working extended hours and different shift hours.
- b) Cancellation of days off and leaves of absence.
- c) Reassignment to different duties and responsibilities, supervisors, divisions, and commands.
- d) Classified personnel reporting with a complete uniform, including authorized and issued equipment.
- e) Civilians designated as "essential" reporting for assignment.

Unless otherwise directed, sergeants, and police officers, once notified of emergency response, are to report at their regular shift times to the mobilization site in full uniform with all authorized and issued equipment.

If officers cannot report to their regular duty stations during an emergency response (e.g., due to weather or road conditions), they will report to the nearest district facility. Upon arriving, officers will report for duty and contact their supervisor, advising them of the situation.

Essential employees' duty to report supersedes any announcement of an ordered evacuation from the local news outlet. During an emergency response, civilian personnel not designated as "essential" will make a reasonable effort to report to work during their shift for duties and special assignments. However, if employees must leave their residence for another location, they will make a reasonable effort before leaving to call their work assignment to confirm they are not needed.

Dispatch personnel will make the initial call-up notifications necessary to set the department's emergency response in motion. In emergencies, a supervisor has the authority to reassign department personnel and resources to ensure the effectiveness of the department's initial response.

SEVEN CRITICAL TASKS

During an emergency response, the on-duty area campus or patrol sergeant will immediately respond to the emergency scene and take charge of the department's response until relieved.

The first supervisor on the scene of an emergency should ensure seven critical tasks are accomplished:

- a) Secure and establish communications.
- b) Identify any danger or kill zones and safe routes to the scene.
- c) Establish an inner perimeter.
- d) Establish an outer perimeter.
- e) Establish a field command post.
- f) Establish a staging area.
- g) Request additional resources as necessary.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INCIDENTS

The fire department where the HAZMAT incident occurs has primary responsibility for hazardous material incidents. Officers working a scene involving hazardous materials must protect themselves and citizens from the harmful effects of hazardous materials.

When emergencies involve hazardous materials, the following actions will be taken. In addition to the seven critical tasks listed in this directive, employees will:

- a) Immediately notify the dispatcher of a hazardous material incident. The dispatcher will notify HFD.
- b) Resist rushing in. Stay clear of all spills, vapors, fumes, and smoke. Officers should seek shelter (e.g., vehicle or building) upwind from the incident if a harmful chemical release occurs.
- c) If possible, cautiously approach the incident from upwind to a point where the hazardous material placard or orange panel information can be read.
- d) Identify the hazardous material by finding any one of the following:
 - 1. The 4-digit identification number on the placard or orange panel.
 - 2. The 4-digit identification number (after UN/NA) on a shipping paper or package.
 - 3. The name of the material on the shipping paper, placard, or package.
- e) Determine what hazardous material is involved by typing the abbreviation for chemical (CHEM), a blank space, and then the 4-digit identification number (e.g., "CHEM 1234") or the name of the chemical into one of the computer systems (mainframe, mobile digital terminal [MDT], or computer-aided dispatch).
- f) If possible, remove injured persons from the affected area with as little direct, personal contact as feasible, wearing multiple layers of clothing.
- g) Separate and detain all persons for further examination, including emergency first responders, who may have had contact with hazardous or radioactive materials or persons.
- h) Ensure all equipment and persons are checked by HFD personnel for radiation or other hazardous materials contamination.
- i) Not eat, drink, or smoke in the affected area.

REPORTS

If no motor vehicle is involved, the officers dispatched to the call of an incident involving hazardous materials will make the original report. A supervisor will be dispatched in all cases involving hazardous material incidents. The supervisor dispatched to the incident will make a supplemental report to the original report. The supervisor's supplemental report is necessary to provide a formal record for future reference should any officers experience unforeseen medical complications from exposure to the hazardous material.

All hazardous material reports and supplements will contain the following information:

- a) Names of all officers involved in the incident or accident.

- b) b. Names of the hazardous material(s) involved.
- c) c. Actions taken by officers to evacuate personnel and handle the scene.
- d) d. Details of the incident or accident.

The supervisor will submit the appropriate injury-on-duty paperwork if an employee is injured.

AFTER-HOURS ASSISTANCE AND REQUESTS

The ranking supervisor and dispatch serve as the Chief of Police's designated representative during after-hours absences. If another criminal justice agency requests the use of personnel or equipment, the on-call captain will coordinate those requests with the appropriate assistant chief before providing the aid.

During large-scale (regional) emergencies or special events, requests from outside agencies for equipment, personnel, or assistance will be directed to the dispatch to track these resources for reimbursement.

The on-call captain will record all complaints and forward them as directed by department policy. A

When Public Affairs Office personnel are absent, a supervisor will notify the on-call captain for in-progress significant events that require a public information officer's assistance. Under no circumstances will news media representatives be told to contact dispatch.

Approved By

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. L. Lopez", is written over a horizontal line.