

Georgia Department of Public Safety Policy Manual

SUBJECT CRISIS NEGOTIATORS	POLICY NUMBER 25.08
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	REVISION DATE 3/4/2011

25.08.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform guidelines for the selection, training, activation, re-certification and removal of members of the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT).

25.08.2 Policy

It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Public Safety to provide crisis negotiators, when determined by the SWAT Commander, to communicate effectively with any potential suicide victim, hostage-taker or barricaded subject, regardless of motivation.

25.08.3 Procedures

A. Vacancies

The Commanding Officer shall advertise vacancies within the CNT in conjunction with the Human Resources Division, notifying potential candidates of the vacancy, the application procedure, and the minimum requirements.

B. Minimum Requirements

1. Applicants shall:

- a. Have attained sworn status within the Georgia Department of Public Safety, provided, however, that the CNT Commander may hold the rank of captain.
- b. Not be a member of both the CNT and another specialized team including the SWAT team and the Specialized Collision Reconstruction Team (SCRT).
- c. Not have received any adverse action in the two years prior to application.
- d. Posses sound communication skills and shall pass an oral interview.
- e. Complete a Job Task Assessment.
- f. Receive a favorable recommendation regarding their psychological evaluation.
- g. Demonstrate sound problem solving abilities.

- h. Have at least “met” expectations on their previous two annual performance appraisals.
 - i. Be willing to respond to critical incidents as a negotiator for at least two years following their initial training.
- 2. Personnel selected to perform duty in the CNT shall do so on a voluntary basis, in addition to their normal duties, without any additional compensation.

C. Panel

A panel shall select the applicants with approval of the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety. The panel is comprised of:

- 1. The CNT Commander;
- 2. The SWAT Commander or his designee;
- 3. Two CNT members;
- 4. A representative from Human Resources, and
- 5. A member of a CNT external to the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

D. Training

If selected, applicants shall attend training and are required to continue training once certified as members of the CNT.

- 1. The selected candidates shall successfully complete initial training as determined by the department. As a minimum, training shall include a Georgia POST or equivalent 40 hour course in crisis negotiation that follows recognized standards.
- 2. CNT members shall attend training on the following basis:
 - a. Eight hours of training per quarter with the SWAT Team;
 - b. Eight hours of training per month with the CNT, as outlined by the CNT Commander, and
 - c. Advanced training as required.

E. On-Going Training Requirements

Every two years, each member shall obtain additional training as a negotiator to remain an active member. The negotiator shall:

- 1. Complete at least 80 percent of the above mentioned training over the previous six months, and
- 2. Complete the physical assessment required for selection as a negotiator.

F. Chain of Command

1. The CNT is an element of the SWAT team and is comprised of a Commander, Negotiators, Coaches, and Interviewers. The organizational chart of the CNT is attached in Exhibit #25.08-1.
2. It is the policy of the Georgia Department of Public Safety that the activation of the CNT takes precedence over all other assignments within the Georgia Department of Public Safety. Sworn officers assigned to the CNT become subordinates to the Tactical Team Commander until the Tactical Team Commander determines that the activation is over.

G. Authority to Activate the CNT

The SWAT Commander, Tactical Team Commander, or their designee has the authority to activate the CNT for any critical incident within jurisdictional boundaries. They also have the authority to deny the activation of the CNT upon evaluating a request.

H. Removal

There are grounds for removal of members from the CNT. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Adverse action of a nature that would have prevented the member from being selected to the CNT;
2. The failure to successfully complete required trainings;
3. A demotion to non-sworn status;
4. A failure to have at least "met expectations" on the member's performance appraisal;
5. An excessive failure to respond to call-outs;
6. Conducting themselves in a manner which may reflect poorly on, or discredit the team or the department, whether on or off duty, and
7. Voluntary removal at the request of the member, which shall be submitted in writing to the CNT Commander and shall include the effective date of inactive status. Notification shall be forwarded to the SWAT Commander.

I. Availability for Duty

1. It may be necessary to call-out a CNT member while they are off-duty. CNT members shall not respond to a call-out if they have any detectable amount of intoxicants in their system at the time of the activation.
2. The member shall immediately notify the CNT Commander of this fact and that they are not currently available for duty.
3. CNT members who are unavailable for call-outs, due to vacations, compensatory time off, schools etc., shall notify the CNT Commander of the absence and the expected departure and return dates.

25.08.4 Guidelines

The following are guidelines for the CNT selection panel to utilize during the selection process and serve as general information for prospective applicants.

A. Decentralized Concept

1. The CNT shall use a selection criteria based on the "Decentralized Concept" meaning that the applicants for the position of Crisis Negotiator shall not necessarily come from the Tactical team.
2. The Negotiator position shall be open to qualified sworn volunteers from within the Department of Public Safety.
3. Tactical team members may volunteer for the CNT, however, if chosen as a Negotiator, the member shall forfeit their position on the Tactical team.

B. Applicant Considerations

Consideration shall be given to applicants with the ability to communicate in languages other than English. The selection panel shall review the applicant's 201 file for suitability of the applicant.

C. Selection

1. Role Play - This exercise consists of the applicant engaging in a simulated negotiation. The applicant is evaluated on their ability to remain professional. All evaluations are videotaped.
2. Job Task Assessment – This exercise is not a physical fitness test, rather it is an exercise designed to determine the ability of an applicant to perform possible job required physical activity. It includes the following:
 - a. Run 100 yards while carrying a ballistic shield;
 - b. Climb over a 4-foot high barrier;
 - c. Maneuver through a confined space area;
 - d. Climb up a standard 20-foot ladder;
 - e. Proceed through and return back through the obstacle course (bullets a-d) to the starting point within a time limit of 3 minutes, and
 - f. Cognitive exercise – This exercise consists of a demonstration by the applicant of their ability to perform a cognitive task.
3. Creative conversation exercise - This exercise consists of a demonstration by the applicant of their ability to create a conversation.