

**CITY OF FERGUSON  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**

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Bomb Devices

Bomb Threats

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**BOMB THREATS**

436.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures for handling of a bomb threat and bomb incidents.

436.01 POLICY

It is the policy of the Ferguson Police Department to regard all bomb threats as a serious violation of the law, and to investigate all such threats keeping uppermost in mind that the safety of human beings is the most important aspect of the investigation. The Coordinator of Civil Preparedness will review this plan on an annual basis.

436.02 PROCEDURE ON RECEIPT OF BOMB THREAT INFORMATION

- A. On receipt of a bomb threat by telephone directly to police headquarters or a bomb threat reported by others to the Department, communications personnel receiving a bomb threat should record the following information;
1. Date and time of call;
  2. Sex, approximate age, and race of the caller, if possible;
  3. Speech, mannerism, (nervousness, stuttering, drunk, etc.);
  4. Background noises
  5. As much information as possible should be obtained about the bomb and its location. The person who takes the call should ask the following questions.
    - a. Exact location of the bomb;
    - b. The time the device is set for detonation;
    - c. What does the bomb look like?
    - d. What type of explosive was used to make the bomb?

- e. Why was the bomb placed?
- B. If the threat is received in writing, every effort should be made to preserve the article for evidence analysis.
  - 1. Fingerprints;
  - 2. Handwriting or type analysis;
  - 3. Postal mark.
- C. Response to the scene of the alleged location of the bomb.

Response of these units should be without sirens and lights, and radio traffic should be restricted to emergency traffic only. If the threat is to a school, the first responding unit should make the initial contact with the school officials and report to the shift supervisor when he ascertains the status of the situation.

#### 436.03 THREAT EVALUATION

Upon arrival, the ranking field supervisor should assume the duty of Bomb Scene Supervisor until either a senior officer or a bomb specialist relieves him. The Bomb Scene Supervisor should contact the person in charge of the building or premises for the purpose of threat evaluation.

- A. It will be the responsibility of the person in charge of the building or premises to determine whether or not to conduct a total evacuation during the search, partial evacuation during the search, or not to evacuate at all.
- B. The Bomb Scene Supervisor will make the person in charge of the building or premises aware that the decision to evacuate or any consequences occurring thereof, is totally his (the citizen's) responsibility.
- C. The Bomb Scene Supervisor should request that a fire department unit respond to the scene, silently, to standby if he thinks there is a possibility that a bomb might in fact exist. This should be done especially in school bomb threats or threats to buildings with high population density.
- D. If, however, a bomb has already been found, or if one is found during a search, the bomb scene supervisor will make the decision to evacuate.
- E. The bomb scene supervisor will:
  - 1. Minimize public attention and excitement caused by search procedure;
  - 2. Determine if an ambulance should be near the scene as a safety precaution;

3. Determine if additional manpower is needed for the search and deploy as needed;
4. Determine if any explosive ordinance disposal team is needed. (St. Louis County Police);
5. Keep the office of the Chief of Police advised of the status of operation.

436.04 BOMB SEARCH

- A. The bomb scene supervisor may request additional personnel to assist in the search from the fire department.
- B. The bomb scene supervisor should solicit on a voluntary basis, employees, and others familiar with the surroundings to assist in the search.
- C. Search teams should consist of one police and one civilian whom are familiar with the building or premises if possible.
- D. The police officer should instruct the civilian counterpart in the proper safety procedures to follow, as described in section 436.05, in the event that a bomb is found.
- E. The bomb scene supervisor will assign an area of responsibility to each search team and specify the search pattern to be used.

436.05 SAFETY

- A. Electrical circuits should not be disturbed. All switches should be left as found.
- B. Doors and windows should not be opened if at all possible.
- C. Do not touch or disturb in any manner any actual or suspicious object or package. This should be left to bomb disposal specialists.
- D. Do not conduct any radio traffic within one block of the suspect area.
- E. In the event that a bomb device or suspected device is found, the bomb scene supervisor should:
  1. Immediately clear the area of all persons except those officers needed for security reasons.

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2. Call either St. Louis County Bomb Disposal Unit, or the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) for investigative assistance and to dispose of the explosive device.
3. No attempt to disarm or move the device or suspected device should be made by untrained personnel.

#### 436.06 DETONATION OF AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE

In the event that an explosive device is detonated, or it is suspected that an explosive device has been detonated, the scene should be secured and preserved as soon as possible after fire personnel leaves the area. The designated police or fire department arson investigation unit should then conduct the investigation according to their prescribed procedures. St Louis County Bomb and Arson should be notified to assist in the investigation

If the detonation of an explosive device is of significant magnitude involving loss of life and massive property destruction involving coordinated rescue efforts, the Code 1000 Incident Command System may be activated reference General Order 490.00.

#### 436.07 NEWS MEDIA ACCESS

If a bomb has exploded, the area surrounding the blast scene must be cordoned off in order to prevent injury to public and to protect the crime scene for further investigation. Police Officers at the scene are generally not authorized to prevent news photographers or cameramen from photographing an incident, or censor the content news or content of photographs. They do have authority to keep news media outside of the area cordoned off and is marked by crime scene tape. One police officer, generally the ranking officer on the scene, will be designated as a spokesperson for the news media's questions and requests.

#### 436.08 REPORTS:

- A. If a bomb is found or has been detonated a report will be completed by the investigating detective unit.
- B. If the threat is false, a report will be submitted. The bomb scene supervisor will designate who will write the report.

By order of:



COLONEL THOMAS JACKSON  
Chief of Police

#### Distribution

All Department Personnel