

Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT)

343.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Orange County Sheriff's Department Crisis Negotiations Team (CNT) was established to provide support in the negotiation of critical incidents that may potentially exceed the scope and specialized training of patrol personnel or investigative units.

These incidents may include, but are not limited to, hostage situations, barricaded suspects, suicidal subjects, high-risk searches/arrest warrants, terrorist events and other hazardous incidents.

343.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of CNT is to preserve and protect the lives of the residents of Orange County. We stand ready to manage high-risk, critical situations by providing effective and professional, critical negotiations, in order to safely resolve events. We serve the residents of Orange County through our unwavering commitment to our tradition of professionalism and excellence.

343.3 CNT USE OF FORCE POLICY

All deputies assigned to CNT shall adhere to the Orange County Sheriff's Department Use of Force Policy, Policy 300.

343.4 CNT ACTIVATION

CNT can be utilized any time an individual threatens physical harm to themselves or others. Generally, CNT will be utilized at the direction of the relevant Incident Commander and in conjunction with a tactical element, such as Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) or Tactical Support Element (TSE); however, CNT can be utilized independently in any situation where specialized negotiation skills may help safely resolve an incident.

Requests for activating CNT should be initiated by contacting the Department Commander (DC), who will then contact the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) Commander with a request for activation. Upon approval, the SEB Commander will notify the CNT Sergeant (or designee) to initiate a response.

The minimum CNT personnel response to an activation should be a CNT Sergeant (or designee) and two negotiators.

343.4.1 OUTSIDE AGENCY REQUESTS

All outside agency requests for CNT assistance will go through the Department Commander (DC). The DC will contact the SEB Commander or designee for review and final approval.

343.4.2 AFTER ACTION REPORTS

A CNT Sergeant, Team Leader or designee will compose a detailed After-Action Report (AAR) to document all CNT deployments. This AAR will include the following:

Orange County Sheriff-Coroner Department

Orange County SD Policy Manual

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- General description of the incident
- Incident DR number
- Team assignments
- Incident resolution

All CNT recordings related to an incident will be documented and booked per Orange County Sheriff's Department Property and Evidence Policy, Policy 802.

Following a deployment, assessments and analysis of an incident will be discussed in person during an incident debrief.

343.5 ORGANIZATION

CNT is under the command of the Special Operations Division - Special Enforcement Bureau and organized under the following structural format:

- Assistant Sheriff - Investigations and Special Operations Command
- Commander - Special Operations Division
- Captain - Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB Commander)
- Sergeant - Crisis Negotiations Team Supervisors
- Deputies and Investigators - Team Leaders, Assistant Team Leaders, Negotiators
- Consultants - Civilian/Reserve/Non-Sworn OCSD personnel with specialized qualifications, such as mental health professionals

343.5.1 MEMBERSHIP

Orange County Sheriff's Department CNT is a voluntary assignment and may be on a full-time or ancillary basis.

Upon assignment to CNT, members will be considered probationary for a period of 24 months. New members are required to successfully complete the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified Basic Negotiator (40 hour) course no later than 12 months after assignments to CNT.

343.5.2 MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

CNT recruitment announcements will be e-mailed department-wide prior to the selection commencement date. An interview date, time and location will be assigned to each candidate. Following a structured interview and practical application process, a ranked list will be assembled and forwarded to the Special Enforcement Bureau Captain for selection of team members. During the application process, applicants will be graded on their communication skills, how they work in a small team environment, and their ability to remain calm under pressure.

The minimum qualifications for a member of CNT are:

- Completion of Deputy I Probation

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- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to function in a small team environment
- Ability to remain calm under pressure
- Working knowledge of OCSD Policy and Procedures
- Available for training and response to call outs
- Positive recommendation for CNT by a current supervisor

343.6 CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

CNT members will adhere to all standard team certification, participation and training guidelines and must successfully complete the required POST certified Basic Negotiator course, within the first 12 months of being assigned to CNT, prior to being utilized as a Primary Negotiator.

CNT members are expected to attend all team training dates unless an excused absence has been approved. Excused absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis as designated by the CNT Sergeants. Any outside training must be approved by a CNT Sergeant in advance.

343.7 EQUIPMENT

CNT equipment should meet agency needs and may include, but not be limited to, a command post vehicle, a remote public address system, department issued radios, and a "throw-phone" device.