



CITY OF MADISON POLICE DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



**Robberies in Progress and Silent Robbery Alarms**

Eff. Date 12/21/2020

**Purpose**

All robbery in progress reports or robbery alarms will be treated as robberies in progress until such time as an officer is able to positively determine otherwise. Procedures are intended to reduce risk to officers, business employees, and bystanders, and to enhance the probability of making a safe apprehension while minimizing the potential for development of a hostage situation.

**Procedure**

**DEFINITION OF ALARM TYPES**

Robbery in progress calls and alarms fall into three categories:

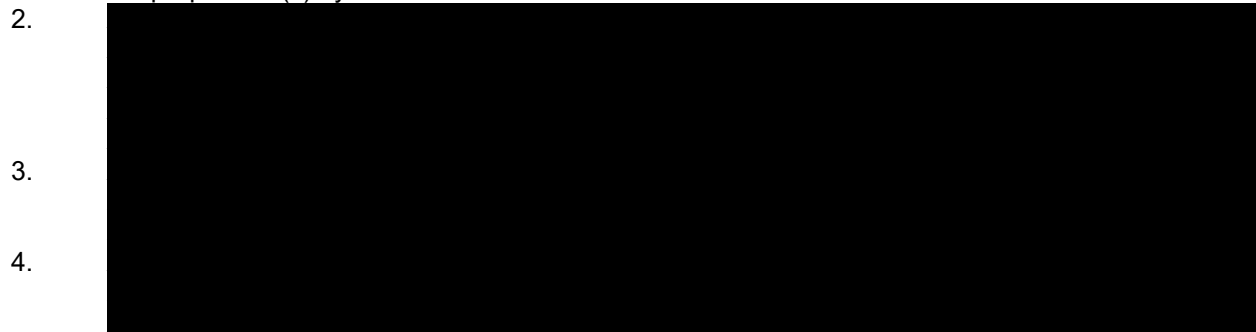
1. An off-site alarm company advises Dispatch of an alarm.
2. A personal call by a victim or witness to Dispatch that a robbery has occurred and suspects are presumed to have left.
3. A personal call by a victim or witness to Dispatch that a robbery is in progress with suspects at the scene.

**COMMUNICATIONS CENTER STAFF**

1. The dispatcher will broadcast information regarding an armed robbery on all police patrol channels after activating the Alert Tone.
2. The dispatcher will send a minimum of two units to reported robberies in progress/alarms calls and will, when appropriate, assign a separate frequency for tactical deployment.
3. In the event of an alarm only, the dispatcher will immediately attempt to contact an on-site person.
4. Upon receiving a report that an armed robbery has or is occurring, the dispatcher will obtain as much of the following information as possible:
  - a. Last known location of the suspect(s)
  - b. Address and name of business involved
  - c. Physical description of suspect(s)
  - d. Weapon involved (type and number)
  - e. Mode of escape
  - f. Vehicle involved
  - g. Direction of travel

**RESPONDING OFFICERS**

1. Responding officers will proceed to the location as quickly and safely as possible and avoid alerting the perpetrator(s) by visual or audible means.



5. The primary officer and backup officers shall immediately contact the witness/victim at the scene and obtain a detailed description of the suspect(s). The backup officers shall protect the crime scene and shall be responsible for directing all non-committed personnel to search areas/perimeters until relieved by a field supervisor or commanding officer and for preserving the physical scene.
6. If a robbery occurs at a time when district detective resources are not available, a sergeant should contact the Officer in Charge to provide an update on the case and discuss the potential need for additional investigative resources.

### **RESPONSE BY PLAINCLOTHES PERSONNEL**

1. Plainclothes personnel may respond to robbery alarms and reports of robberies in progress after informing the dispatcher of their response on the tactical channel for the incident. They must advise they are in plainclothes, along with a description of their clothing.
2. If plainclothes personnel are the first to arrive on the scene, they shall take a perimeter post and take direction from the sergeant or officer in charge of the scene.
3. All movement of plainclothes personnel within the perimeter of a robbery will be communicated with the uniformed personnel on the scene.

### **FALSE ALARMS**

1. If Dispatch receives information that the alarm is false, the responding officers will immediately be notified. If the dispatcher feels the information is suspicious, this will be relayed to the responding officers.
2. Upon notification of a possible false alarm, the responding officers will modify their response from a silent, emergency response to a routine response. The responding officers will visually determine if the scene appears safe. Dispatch will instruct an employee to exit the building and contact an officer on the scene. After such contact, officers should cautiously enter the building and confirm the alarm was false.

### **POLICE ARRIVAL AFTER A ROBBERY**

1. If the dispatcher is notified that the suspect(s) left prior to arrival of officers, he/she shall obtain pertinent information and instruct the employee to meet officers outside. Officers shall proceed with caution in verifying information as outlined above.
2. A complete investigation shall follow.
3. The above procedure will be followed when it is assumed that the suspect is such a distance from the scene as to pose no further threat to the victim.
4. A description of suspect(s) and vehicle(s) and the estimated time lapse should be broadcast to all responding and district units as soon as possible.

### **HOSTAGE SITUATIONS**



Original SOP: 02/25/2015  
(Reviewed Only: 01/22/2016, 12/26/2017, 01/30/2019, 02/04/2022, 01/31/2023)  
(Revised: 11/15/2016, 01/03/2020, 12/21/2020)