Bath Township Fire Department			Standard Operating Guideline	
Section Safety	**Referral No.** S-21	**Subject:** Responding to Incidents of Violence	**Date Issued** 3/08	**Date Revised**

Purpose:

- To provide guidelines for operations during incidents of violence or potential violence
- To provide for increased safety to those personnel responding to incidents that are hostile in nature, or those incidents which become hostile or violent, either after arrival or prior to arrival.

Scope:

- This standard operating guideline shall apply to all personnel.

Responsibilities:

- Officer
  - All officers will ensure that any personnel operating during incidents of violence or potential violence are properly trained.
  - The personnel will operate in a safe manner.

- Personnel
  - All personnel have the responsibility of wearing proper safety equipment and operating in a safe manner.
  - All personnel have the responsibility to remove themselves from violent, or potentially violent, incidents and immediately notify law enforcement.

Guidelines:

- **Tactical Staging**
  - Unknown/Violent Scenes:
    - Do not pass in front of and/or within site of location.
      - Have a protective structure or barrier between staging and scene.
      - Consider having Law Enforcement secure staging area.
      - Keep back a minimum of one (1) block away.
      - Keep vehicles and personnel out of the line of sight of the incident (bullets can travel great distances in a straight line).
      - Have an escape route planned.
  - Potential explosive devices:
    - Consider keeping a greater distance of at least a minimum of two (2) blocks away.
    - Keep upwind and uphill.
    - Use routes other then the most direct and normally traveled routes.
    - Have an escape route planned.

Dispatch:

- Listen carefully to dispatch information pertaining to the nature of and/or circumstances of the emergency incident.
- Question dispatchers for further details or clarification if needed.
- Stage apparatus if appropriate, awaiting further information or law enforcement response.
- Consider staging at fire station or other fixed facility, depending on situation, estimated police response time, and/or location of incident.

Response:

- Use knowledge of address, vicinity, dispatch information, observations while en route, or any other pertinent data to assess the incident prior to arrival.
- Immediately implement the staging procedure and call for law enforcement if safety issues are apparent.

Arrival:

- Upon arrival, and throughout the incident, assess the scene for potential hostility or violence.
- Implement the Incident Management System.
    - Call for additional resources as needed.
- Establish direct contact with law enforcement.
- Assume any threatening statements or behavior to be dangerous and act accordingly.
- Units will stage any time an incident involves violence which might be dangerous to personnel.
- After arrival at the scene, if the scenario reveals potential violence, hazardous materials, or other threats, retreat to a safe staging area if possible.
- Turn off vehicle lights or use only four-way flashers in staging, if possible.
- Do not enter scene until it is declared secure by law enforcement.

If threatened: All personnel should retreat to the vehicle and leave the scene promptly; notify dispatch of the situation. If potential physical harm is imminent, defend yourself in any way possible, attempting to use only enough force to eliminate the threat to yourself and other people.

Do not assume the incident scene to be secure merely because police are present.