

Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual		Standard Operating Procedure
Effective Date: March 24, 2021		APD.SOP.3184 Threat Level Advisories and Responses
Applicable To: All Supervisors		Review Due: 2025
Approval Authority: Chief Rodney Bryant		
Signature: Signed by RB		Date Signed: 3/23/2021

Table of Content

1.	PURPOSE	1	4.2	Threat Level Advisories and Responses	3
			4.3	Other Responses (Regardless of Advisory or Risk)	5
2.	POLICY	1	5.	DEFINITIONS	8
3.	RESPONSIBILITIES	2	6.	CANCELLATIONS	9
4.	ACTION	2	7.	REFERENCES	9
4.1	Threat Level Determination	2	8.	SIGNIFICANT CHANGES	9

1. PURPOSE

To establish a flexible framework for the Atlanta Police Department to respond to changes in the threat advisory levels issued in accordance with The National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) governed by the federal and state governments.

To provide action items for the department to consider when responding to an unplanned special event or an emergency.

To facilitate the department's progress through the five phases of an unplanned incident, which are: preparation, rapid response, consequence management, investigation, assessment, and recovery to normal operations.

2. POLICY

APD shall provide necessary police services and adjust its response(s) according to the potential dangers of an unplanned special event or an emergency. The threat level advisories described in this written directive are consistent with the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) NTAS. This system is categorized into two threat levels: Elevated Threat Alert and Imminent Threat Alert, which are based on intelligence information and the potential impact that an unplanned special event or an emergency may have on a city. A Bulletin may also be issued describing current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism.

APD shall coordinate its response to an unplanned special event and/or emergency with local, state, and federal agencies to manage the unplanned event effectively and efficiently.

In accordance with useful, relevant, and credible information about threat levels: APD shall exercise prudent judgment when deploying its employees and logistical support.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Chief of Police shall determine the appropriate threat level advisory for the department based on a totality of circumstances. He/she shall determine the appropriate responses or action items at each level of the advisory.
- 3.2 The Command Staff member designated by the Chief of Police shall determine the appropriate threat level advisory for the department in their absence. He/she shall be responsible for coordinating responses and action items to be carried out within the department.
- 3.3 The Field Operations Division (FOD) Commander shall coordinate the responses and provisions of FOD during any particular threat level advisory. He/she shall provide coordination within the division and with other division commanders.
- 3.4 The Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Commander shall coordinate the responses and provisions of the CID during any particular threat level advisory. He/she shall provide coordination within the division and with other division commanders.
- 3.5 The Chief Administration Office (CAO) shall be responsible for coordinating logistical support during any particular threat level advisory. They shall coordinate the activities within the division and with other division commanders.
- 3.6 The FOD and Airport Section Commanders shall coordinate and maintain levels of preparedness in each of their respective commands in accordance with any particular threat level advisory. They shall ensure their command is equipped for a flexible response. They shall ensure that appropriate sworn employees are advised of all threat level advisory action items and the procedures associated with an event unusual occurrence. (APD.SOP.3180 Critical Incidents)
- 3.7 The Special Operations Section (SOS) Commander shall coordinate the response of special operations employees during any particular threat level advisory. He/she shall be prepared to coordinate a rapid field response to an unplanned special event or an emergency. The SOS Commander shall ensure that the Mobile Command Post (MCP) is operational and establish liaison with the first responders of other jurisdictions as well as State, Federal, and private agencies assisting in the response (GEMA, FEMA, American Red Cross, etc.).
- 3.8 The Training Section Commander shall coordinate and provide relevant training for sworn and non-sworn employees regarding their response to an unplanned special event or an emergency. He/she shall also coordinate multi-agency training exercises with other local and state jurisdictions in accordance with threat level response requirements.
- 3.9 The Personnel Unit commander shall oversee and update the department's employee database. The Communications Division shall have limited access to the database for the purpose of contacting and informing employees of a particular response or action required of them when a response to an unplanned special event or emergency is initiated by the department.

4. ACTION

4.1 Threat Level Determination

- 4.1.1 The Chief of Police or their designee shall determine the threat level that the department shall operate under at any given time.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



- 4.1.2 This decision shall be based on intelligence gathered from the DHS, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), and any other credible source. The department's threat level status may be different from the federal and/or regional status depending on intelligence.
- 4.1.3 Underlying factors of the threat advisory levels:
1. Any response must be flexible in order to meet the need of the moment and reduce the likelihood of additional negative consequences.
 2. The response must be consistent with any standard operating procedure performed during daily responses to minor unplanned emergencies.
 3. Prudent judgment must be used when deploying limited resources.
- 4.1.4 This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of potential responses, options, and action items available to the Chief of Police, Command Staff, all sworn, and non-sworn employees when responding to an emergency or the threat of an emergency.
- 4.1.5 If information is provided that a specific threat or type of threat is credible, the department shall provide increased security at the threat location. Other Atlanta metropolitan law enforcement agencies, as well as federal and state authorities shall be notified.
- 4.1.6 The appropriate responses, action items, or options for each unplanned special event or emergency shall vary with each occurrence. The actions taken by the department at the scene of an unplanned special event, or an emergency shall be based on the priorities outlined in APD.SOP.3180 Critical Incidents:
1. Make the scene safe for first responders.
 2. Render first aid and facilitate medical services.
 3. Establish inner and outer perimeters.
 4. Assist with the evacuation of vehicles and pedestrians.
 5. Control ingress and egress at the area of operations.
 6. Identify an on-scene commander to direct operations.
 7. Establish a command post and staging area in a safe location.
 8. Deploy employees and equipment to support consequence management; and
 9. Begin the dissemination of accurate information in an effort to control the spread of misinformation and the public's perception of the incident.

4.2 Threat Level Advisories and Responses

The NTAS are categorized into two threat levels: Elevated Threat Alert and Imminent Threat Alert. The Department shall take the following general actions, at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee, in response to each threat level as follows:



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



4.2.1 Elevated Threat Alert

1. Modify normal operations on an “as needed” basis.
2. Reissue information on high-risk facilities to all police supervisors in FOD and CID.
3. Limit access in critical areas of government facilities.
4. Formally notify all police employees.
5. Test systems and equipment in Mobile Command Posts on a monthly basis.

4.2.2 Imminent Threat Alert

In addition to the recommendations from an Elevated Threat Alert:

1. Formally notify all sworn employees via radio communications, email, memos, and roll calls.
2. Disseminate information on high-risk facilities to all members of the command staff.
3. Zone commanders shall order directed patrols at select high-risk facilities.
4. A daily intelligence briefing report shall be issued by CID / Intelligence Unit / Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) to the Chief of Police, and Deputy Chiefs.
5. The Chief of Police may issue a public statement regarding the current advisory.
6. Modify normal operations on an “as needed” basis.
 - a. Conduct one evacuation drill on a quarterly basis at the unit level, at all police facilities.
 - b. Avoid concentration of employees and equipment in one area.
 - c. All police vehicles shall be topped off with fuel during each shift.
7. Heighten the level of access control procedures at all police facilities.
8. No unescorted visitors shall be allowed in police facilities.
 - a. Unescorted visitors shall be challenged as to the nature of their business when inside a police facility.
9. All sworn and civilian employees must be in uniform or wear a police-issued identification card.
 - a. Supervisors must ensure compliance to this directive.
10. Limit access in critical areas of City of Atlanta government facilities to essential employees.
 - a. Each City of Atlanta department shall be responsible for their access control procedures.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



- b. A breach in a City of Atlanta department's access control procedures shall be reported to the communications 911 center. A police officer shall be dispatched to investigate.

11. Activate the Joint Operations Center (JOC), if necessary.
12. Notify all sworn and civilian employees to pack and have ready essential equipment for easy access during an emergency.
13. Establish operational communication with federal, state, and other local law enforcement agencies to ensure a coordinated public safety response.
14. Coordinate and implement security measures in conjunction with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.
15. Establish a liaison with the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) through the Atlanta Public Schools Office of Safety & Security.

4.3 Other Responses (Regardless of Advisory or Risk)

In recognition of the fact that the Department's response to an unplanned special event or emergency cannot be scripted in advance, the following list of responses or actions items is provided as an aid in the decision-making process. The Chief of Police or his/her designee may utilize any of the following at his/her discretion.

4.3.1 Increase Employees Availability

A response to an unplanned special event or an emergency may require an increased number of police employees not typically available during the course of normal operations. Consequently, the following options may be used to increase the availability of police employees to respond and provide police services. These options allow for a tailored or time-phased deployment of police employees. This is important because during an emergency the police department must continue to provide police services and manage the crisis.

1. A volunteer call for sworn employees to work an off day for overtime/compensatory time.
2. A temporary redeployment of on-duty sworn employees.
3. Extend the hours of the current shift of sworn employees.
4. Cancel all personal leave time.
5. Cancel one off day.
6. Cancel both off days.
7. Establish minimal service levels as described in APD.SOP.3180 "Critical Incidents;"
8. Cancel all check points, community meetings, special details, and all other activities not related to the emergency.
9. Request assistance from other police agencies.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



10. Request the Georgia National Guard.
11. Request Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
12. Request state and local agencies, such as Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency (AFCEMA).
13. Transition to twelve-hour shifts.
14. Cancel all extra jobs.
15. All plainclothes Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and Field Operations Division (FOD) investigators to uniform.
16. All plainclothes Chief Administrative Office (CAO), Community Services Division (CSD), Contingency Operations Division (COD), Professional Development Division (PDD), and Office of the Chief of Police sworn employees to uniform.
17. Eliminate all non-essential functions (training, administrative staff, etc.) and deploy sworn employees in uniform.
18. Activate the officers in the Atlanta Reserve Police Program.
19. Recall all essential off-duty employees.

4.3.2 Department Readiness

The following options may be used in response to an unplanned special event, an emergency, or a change in the threat level advisory. The individual options should be implemented on an “as needed” basis and at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his/her designee. These options allow for a tailored response so the Department is able to maximize its use of limited resources. In addition, it allows the Department to prepare for a potential disruption in the normal development of daily events.

1. Activate the Joint Operations Center (JOC) or Mobile Command Post.
2. Utilize civilian employees to staff JOC or Mobile Command Post.
3. Establish communications with the Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency, Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA), or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
4. Stage a group of sworn employees in anticipation of deployment (a react force).
5. Positioning of riot control equipment and appropriate transportation prior to deployment.
6. Positioning of vehicles for rapid deployment of operational plan prior to deployment.
7. Create and pre-position police emergency response teams.
8. Increase uniform police presence at select police and City facilities.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



9. Establish telephone lists.
10. Update and check telephone lists on a routine basis.
11. Rehearse call-in procedures.
12. Fill-up fuel tanks of all city vehicles.
13. Partner sworn employees in city vehicles (two officers per car).
14. Put radio battery truck in service to provide fully charged batteries to deployed employees.
15. Deploy street barricades (procure additional barricades from the Public Works Department, if necessary).
16. Utilize recruit employees for barricade deployment and other logistical tasks.
17. Hold all priority 3 and 4 calls for service.
18. Impose a curfew.
19. Order the closure of all non-essential police facilities.
20. Request the closure of all non-essential City government facilities.
21. Recommend the closure of all non-essential private sector facilities. (If it is a public safety issue, then the on-scene commander may order a closure.).
22. Coordinate with the city vehicle maintenance facility to expedite the importance of service and maintenance of vehicles in a timely manner. This may require a re-scheduling of city vehicle maintenance facility employees.
23. Prepare egress (outbound) routes for vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the event of a large-scale evacuation from a high-occupancy facility or a geographic area within the city.
24. Create a traffic plan for a large-scale evacuation of the city. Coordinate the traffic plan with the affected state agencies and adjacent local jurisdictions.
25. Establish communications with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies with concurrent jurisdiction.
26. Establish communications with local law enforcement agencies without concurrent jurisdiction.
27. Review and revise the Department's response plans based on the best information available.
28. Conduct a tabletop exercise, a command post exercise, or a field test exercise as part of the Department's preparations. The exercises could be inter-departmental or in association with other jurisdictions.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



29. Conduct periodic test of any dormant system that shall support emergency operations in advance of the time of deployment.
30. Obtain information or intelligence on the size, movement, motivation, intent, membership, and leadership of the group(s) involved in the unplanned special event or the emergency.
31. Direct the Communications Section to dedicate a radio frequency or talk group to those working at the scene of the incident.
32. Establish liaison with Fire and EMS first responders at the scene of the incident.

4.3.3 Employee's Readiness

There shall be an impact on the employees of the department when responding to an unplanned special event or an emergency. In order to minimize this impact, there are a few things that police employees can consider in preparation for an unplanned change in their work schedule.

1. Food Rations.
2. Fluid Rations.
3. Flashlight.
4. Winter Jacket, Hat, and Gloves.
5. Rain Gear.
6. Change of Clothes.
7. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
8. Employees should check readiness of all department-issued equipment and prepare it for immediate access.
9. Anticipate and plan for the impact on your personal life. For example, childcare, education classes, automobile maintenance, the maintaining of residence, social commitments, and family events.

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Atlanta Police and Fire Emergency Joint Operations Center (JOC): The central location for personnel and other agencies that shall formulate and coordinate policy for the provisions of services during an Elevated or Imminent Threat Alert as categorized by the NTAS. The JOC is located in the Atlanta Public Safety Headquarters, 226 Peachtree Street, SW.
- 5.2 Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Operations Center (EOC): The central location for city and county personnel and other agencies that shall formulate and coordinate policy for the provisions of services during an Elevated or Imminent Threat Alert as categorized by the NTAS. The JOC is located in the Atlanta Public Safety Headquarters, located at 130 Peachtree Street, SW. and is under the control of the Bureau of Emergency Management Services.



Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual
APD.SOP.3184
Threat Level Advisories and Responses



- 5.3 Command post exercise: a field exercise participated in by command, staff, and communication personnel only.
- 5.4 Field test exercise: a highly coordinated and well-planned exercise conducted by police department units for training purposes.
- 5.5 Tabletop exercise: The practice and/or systematic training of a Departmental plan of action in order to simulate what could occur and what is expected of employees during an unplanned special event or an emergency.
- 5.6 Threat level response system: An alert stage used to define the severity of a homeland security threat, level of police resources assigned, and the command-and-control functions required. A Threat Level is also the method by which the Department escalates or de-escalates its response to a threat and/or act of terrorism.
- 5.7 Unplanned special event: An event that occurs without prior warning or planning and has a major effect on city functions and quality of life for citizens. Such events can include but are not limited to an unexpected high volume of attendees to a music venue, sports event, or college activity; that results in interference with traffic or businesses.
- 5.8 Unusual occurrence: A situation, generally of an emergency nature, not usually encountered by the department. Such occurrences include, but are not limited to civil disorders, tornadoes, floods, major fires, earthquakes, explosions, or major accidents.
6. CANCELLATIONS
- APD.SOP.3184 "Threat Level Advisories and Responses", effective July 1, 2017
7. REFERENCES
- APD.SOP.3180 "Critical Incidents"
- United States Department of Homeland Security Advisory System
8. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES
- 8.1 All references to APD.SOP.3180 Unusual Occurrences updated to APD.SOP.3180 Critical Incidents.
- 8.2 Section 4.2.2(15) amended to remove reference to School Detectives Unit.
- 8.3 Section 4.3.1(16) amended to include additional divisions.