

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department

Expanded Course Outline

Building Searches

I. Introduction

A. Instructor Introduction

1. Employment history
2. Special certifications or training

B. Student Introduction

1. Self-introduction of students
2. Students will share their current knowledge of building searches

C. Course Objectives

1. The students will be provided refreshed information reference building search tactics
2. The students will understand the concepts and needs of intelligence gathering prior to making entry
3. The students will understand the need to be familiar with the equipment they will be using during the building search
4. The student will understand the legal aspects and requirements of entering a building to conduct a search

II. Equipment Considerations

A. Officer's uniform requirements

1. The officer must have a uniform that readily identifies him/herself as a law enforcement officer
2. The officer should wear the same duty belt they regularly wear on patrol

3. If a tactical vest is worn by the officer, it must be clearly marked as law enforcement with the department's information on it

B. Equipment for the officer to have prior to entering the building

1. The officer must have the necessary equipment at the time of the search
2. The officer must be familiar with the equipment and where it is placed on their vest or duty belt

C. Weapons used by the officer

1. The officer should use a department issued duty weapon
2. If the officer uses an alternate duty weapon, it must be approved by the department
3. The officer must use a department trained shotgun
4. The officer must use a department trained long rifle
5. The officer should avoid using weapons he/she is not familiar with
6. The officer should avoid using a weapon that would cause over penetration

D. Breaching tools used by the officer for a forced entry to the building

1. Ram or sledgehammer
2. Pick
3. Halogen Tool
4. Bolt cutters
5. Shield
6. Pole mirror/mirror
7. Video camera- if applicable or per department policy

III. Intelligence Gathering

A. Suspect information

1. Provide officers with the suspect's information
 - a. Full name

- b. Date of Birth
- c. Physical description

2. Know the suspect's past criminal history

- a. History of violence by the suspect
- b. History of weapons possessed by the suspect
- c. Any weapons that are owned by the suspect

3. Photograph of the suspect for identification during the search

B. Building information

1. Residential building

- a. Get a copy of the floorplan
- b. Determine who else may be in the residence
- c. Determine the entry/exit points of the location
- d. Other considerations
 - i. Stairs
 - ii. Basement
 - iii. Reinforced doors and windows
 - iv. Is it a single or multi-family residence?

2. Commercial building

- a. Get a copy of the layout
- b. Determine if there may be anyone else in the building
- c. Determine the entry/exit points of the location
- d. Other considerations
 - i. Other surrounding businesses and customers
 - ii. Stairs
 - iii. Basement
 - iv. Storage rooms
 - v. Multiple offices

3. Location of the suspect in the building
 - a. Is it confirmed that the suspect is inside the building?
 - b. Which room or part of the building is the suspect in?
 4. Weapons that might be located in the building
 - a. Are there any weapons in the building?
 - b. What kind of weapons are in the building?
 - c. Where in the building are the weapons located?
 - d. Are the weapons secured?
 5. Contraband that might be located inside the building
 - a. Is there other contraband items in the house?
 - b. Where is the contraband located?
 - c. What type of contraband is it?
 - d. Who has access to the contraband?
- C. Resources for intelligence gathering prior to the officers making entry
1. Confidential informants
 - a. Get as much information as possible from the informant
 - b. Try to confirm the information provided with another resource
 2. Go to the building location
 - a. Observe the location for activity
 - b. Get a description of the location to share with other officers
 - c. Attempt to determine if there are security doors or windows
 - d. Looking at the location will help determine the lay out

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1- While working in groups, the students will collaborate on intelligence gathering prior to conducting a building search. The students will consider the potential officer safety needs prior to conducting the search and provide methods to answer those questions. One student will present the results to the class.

IV. Entry Planning

A. Legal aspects of an entry to a building

1. Review Penal Code 844

- a. The legal right of officers to force entry to a building to affect an arrest
- b. The legal right of citizens to force entry to a building to affect an arrest

2. Review the 4th Amendment

- a. Covers the limits of the rights of the officers to search a building
- b. Provides protection to the suspect/citizen from unreasonable search
- c. Requires probable cause for the officer to search a building

3. Review any current or pending case laws affecting the officer's rights to search

B. Planning stage for the entry by officers

1. Should be done in a briefing with all involved officers prior to the search

2. The plan should include a raid plan

- a. The raid plan should address officer safety concerns
- b. The raid plan should address a tactical plan for the approach
- c. The raid plan should address the intended order of the entry team
- d. The raid plan should identify the nearest trauma center
- e. The raid plan should identify which radio channel will the event be on
- f. The raid plan should identify the suspect and location information

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2- While working in groups, the students will collaborate on creating a raid plan for a fictitious search warrant requiring forced entry to a building. The students will be provided with basic information on the reason for the warrant, basic suspect information, and an address to be searched. One student will present the raid plan to the class.

V. Gaining Entry

A. Point of entry by the officers

1. The officers should have only one point of entry
 - a. Prevents confusion between the officers
 - b. Allows for better control of the scene by the entry team
 - c. Prevents a friendly fire incident from occurring
2. The officers should have a secondary point of entry selected
 - a. Entry may not be successful through the primary entry point
 - b. The door/window could be fortified, preventing entry
 - c. The initial entry point may be determined to be unsafe
 - d. All involved officers should be aware of the second entry location
 - e. All involved officers should be aware if the secondary entry is utilized
3. The entry team
 - a. The entry team should be decided prior to approaching the building
 - b. Each officer in the entry team should have a position assignment
 - c. One person on the entry team should be assigned to knock/notice
 - d. One person on the entry team should be assigned to the pick
 - e. One person on the entry team should be assigned to the ram

B. Consider a ruse for the officer to gain entry

1. The officer is allowed to trick the suspect into leaving the building
2. Using a ruse can prevent causing the officers from forcing entry to the building
3. Using a ruse will often surprise the suspect into complying with the officers

LEARNING ACTIVITY #3- While working in groups, the students will collaborate on a believable ruse to get a suspect to leave the building willingly. The students will determine which ruse to use, and create a plan to implement that plan convincingly and safely. One student will give a presentation on the ruse and the group's plan of action.

VI. Movement and Clearing

A. Staging area

1. If possible, officers should stage prior to approaching the building
2. Officers should be assigned their entry order prior to the approach
3. Staging area should be near the building, but out of sight

B. Stick

1. The officers form up in a line, this is called a stick
2. Each position in the stick has a specific function
3. The stick is a fluid concept, the officers must be prepared to be at any position in the stick during the search

C. Entry

1. The first officer to enter a room moves from the known to the unknown
2. The second officer to enter a room follows the first
3. The last officer in the stick with post up in the hallway, or at a junction providing multiple unknown threats to the other officers
4. As the officers enter the room, they should flood the room from all angles to identify a threat

D. Examine the room for potential threats to the officers

1. The officers entering the room need to “run the walls”
 - a. The first officer will chose a direction and move along the wall during the search
 - b. The second officer will go the opposite direction of the first and move along the wall during the search
2. There should be a minimum of two officers to a room

E. Officer threat assessment to specific areas of a building

1. Hallways
2. Stairs
3. Open doors
4. Closed doors

F. Officer responsibility for room coverage

1. Each officer has a responsibility to clear a section of the room
2. The entire team has to trust their partners to cover their segment of the room

G. Types of movement

1. Dynamic entry

- a. Also called stealth probe or contact entry
- b. Dynamic movement is quick and controlled
- c. It is intended to allow the officers to overwhelm and control a location
- d. Officers should not move faster than they can accurately shoot

2. Stealth entry

- a. Also called covert entry
- b. Slow and deliberate movement by the officers
- c. Movement should be quiet
- d. Officers should use cover and concealment as needed
- e. This entry is time consuming and often physically exhausting

LEARNING ACTIVITY #4- The students will respond to a pre-set location on the academy grounds. They will be placed in groups of 4-6 students and go through a building search scenario. The scenario will be held in a building that allows for multiple rooms. The students will be outfitted with a stress vest. The students will be provided with a scenario and perform a building search using the tactics and techniques taught in the class. A successful outcome will result in the students completing the search with no significant officer safety or tactical errors.

All weapons: guns, knives, batons, OC, Tasers, etc SHALL be removed from the duty belt and secured away from the classroom and the scenario. All students SHALL be inspected by one of the two instructors prior to participating in the activity for any concealed weapons: guns, knives, etc. The inspection SHALL be conducted outside of the scenario location and all students SHALL respond directly to the scenario location to prevent additional weapons from being introduced into the scenario. All students will be provided with a training gun. The training gun SHALL be solid molded plastic or rubber material in a solid color such as blue or red. These training guns are replicas of regular weapons to use in place of actual weapons. The second instructor will be used to assist to ensure a proper ratio of student to instructor to ensure no weapons are introduced into the learning activity.

Additional considerations: During the scenario, “stress vests” will be used. The vest provides a shock to the student when he/she is “shot” during the scenario. The vests will be used to illustrate to the student when they do not properly enter or cover a room which would have caused them, or a partner, to be exposed to a threat that student should have seen. One of the instructors for the course will determine when the vest will be activated. Both of the instructors have used the vest several times in SWAT training, both as an instructor and as a student. The vests have been used in Use of Force training in the past, are currently used by SWAT for training, and are maintained by the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department Range staff. Students will have the option to “opt out” of wearing the stress vest during the final learning activity without penalty.

VII. Conclusion

A. Demonstration

1. Learning activity result

a. Students incorporated techniques for building search which increased officer safety practices during the search

b. Students demonstrated knowledge through problem solving activities which resulted in better planning prior to conducting a building search

2. Student ability

a. The student completed a building search scenario safely

b. The student had improved confidence in conducting a building search

B. Evaluation

1. Students will complete an evaluation on the class and instructor

2. Students will be provided with feed-back reference their performance during the building search activity