

DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

	<i>Effective Date</i> November 30, 2004	<i>Number</i> GO04-4.27
<i>Subject</i> Responding to Suspicious Mail Items – Biological Threats		
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I. Policy

It is the policy of the Dalton Police Department to respond to incidents of suspicious ~~mail items~~ or other biological threats in the same manner as other hazardous materials.

II. Definitions

- A. *Biological weapon* – ~~Any microorganism, such as a bacteria or virus, used intentionally to inflict harm upon others.~~ A harmful biological agent (such as a pathogenic microorganism or a neurotoxin) used as a weapon to cause death or disease, usually on a large scale.
- B. *Bioterrorism* – The concept of threatening or intimidating, either through overt action or mere implication, an injury or attack through the use of biological weapons. This includes hoaxes calculated to instill fear.

III. Procedure

A. Assessment

1. The initial response will vary depending on the size and scope of the threat.
2. The responding Officers ~~should~~ shall not:
 - a. Move, touch, or open the item
 - b. Smell or taste the contents
 - c. Allow anyone to clean up, if spilled
3. ~~The first responder~~ Responding Officers ~~should~~ shall perform a scene survey to determine the risk to themselves and others prior to approaching the suspicious item.
4. Officers should consider the size of the item and assume an explosive device / secondary device is possibly present if the item is large enough to contain such a device.

RESTRICTED LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

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5. If it is determined an explosive device is present, policy GO12-6.3, All Hazards Plan, ~~will~~ shall be followed prior to dealing with the biological threat. The Incident Command System ~~will~~ shall be initiated by the first responding Officer.
6. An interview should be conducted with the person reporting the suspicious item to determine:
 - a. Who has had physical contact with the item and are any indications of a medical emergency being exhibited
 - b. Why the caller believes the item is suspicious
 - c. If there is a return address on the item
 - d. If the item has been opened
 - e. If there are foreign substances inside
 - f. If anyone has called with a threat or indicated such by leaving a note that the item contains a threat
- ~~7.g.~~ ~~Get~~ Request medical assistance for anyone determined to have had physical contact with the item. Keep victims away from non-contaminated individuals, when possible.
- ~~8.7.~~ Observe the item from a safe distance or by using binoculars to determine:
 - a. If a powdery substance is present on the item.
 - b. If ~~mail~~ the item is from an unexpected or unfamiliar source.
 - c. If ~~mail~~ the item is addressed to someone no longer working or residing at the address.
 - d. If ~~mail~~ the item has no return address or one that cannot be verified as legitimate.
 - e. If ~~mail~~ the item has obvious misspellings of common words.
 - f. If ~~mail~~ the item is of an unusual shape, size, or weight. (Weight verified by anyone handling the item prior to Officers' arrival)
 - g. If ~~mail~~ the item has an unusual amount of tape or string.
 - h. If ~~mail~~ the item is marked personal or confidential.
 - i. If ~~mail~~ the item has a strange odor or stain.

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- j. If ~~mail~~ the item has a postmark that does not match the return address.
 - k. If ~~mail~~ the item has excessive postage.
 - l. If ~~mail~~ the item is addressed in block print or is written / typed poorly.
 - m. If ~~mail~~ the item has protruding wires or aluminum foil.
 - n. If ~~mail~~ the item has a sound coming from it.
- ~~9.8.~~ If it can be determined that a threat does not exist or it is a hoax, a report ~~will~~ shall be prepared and the item taken into evidence for further investigation by local, state, or federal employees.
- ~~10.9.~~ The Federal Bureau of Investigation ~~will~~ shall be notified concerning all acts of terrorism.

This policy supersedes any previous policies issued.

BY ORDER OF

CHIEF OF POLICE

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