June 3, 2013

MENTAL ILLNESS CONTACTS

During reviews of UOF incidents, mental illness is often identified as being involved in some way. As a reminder, below are Section changes to the Manual as of September 2011:

260.15 MENTAL EVALUATION UNIT NOTIFICATIONS. Any incident commander, crisis negotiation team, or officer who is in charge of an attempted suicide, barricaded suspect, or hostage incident shall notify the Mental Evaluation Unit… for information regarding the involved person.

260.20 TAKING PERSONS WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS INTO CUSTODY. When the only reason for detention is the person's suspected mental illness, MEU shall be contacted prior to transporting an apparently mentally ill person to any health facility or hospital.

Exception: In those situations where the subject is injured and requires immediate medical treatment, MEU shall be contacted after the subject is transported to an appropriate medical facility. Officers who detain a person with a suspected mental illness that results in the subject being placed on an involuntary hold at a health facility or hospital shall:

When a person is taken into custody for a criminal offense and the person is suspected of having a mental illness, MEU shall be contacted prior to the person being booked. Officers shall also contact MEU if the person indicates that he/she has ever sought or obtained mental health treatment.

Here is a check list for MEU contacts.

Critical Incidents
The MEU should be contacted by the first responding unit at a critical incident, such as a possible barricade, jumper, or other crisis where the psychological status of a subject, witness, or other involved person may be in question. Be prepared to give the MEU Desk the following information if available:

[] Synopsis of situation.
[] Subject's information, if known
[] Number of involved persons.
[] Has Metropolitan Division been contacted? Are they responding
[] Command post location and telephone number, if available.
[] From what direction should the SMART/CAMP team

Taking the time to contact MEU, as well as talking to family members and others about the subjects mental health issues (when tactically feasible), can help you identify possible mental health issues and develop a plan that can include coordinating with MEU resources.