



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 12/9/2025

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File #: 25-1371

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Sheriff

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**SUBJECT:**

Approval of Memoranda of Understanding Between the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office and the Cities of Arcata, Eureka and Fortuna and Cal Poly Humboldt for SWAT, Crisis Negotiations and Tactical Dispatch Services

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve and authorize the Chair of the Board, Mike Wilson, and Sheriff William Honsal to execute the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between the County of Humboldt, through the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office, and the Cities of Arcata, Eureka and Fortuna, and Cal Poly Humboldt establishing cooperative Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and Tactical Dispatch operational relationships (Attachments 1-4); and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return fully executed copies to the Sheriff's Office for distribution to participating partner agencies.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This action supports the following areas of your Board's Strategic Plan.

Area of Focus: Safe & Healthy Communities

Strategic Plan Category: 1001 -Support and sustain partnerships between public safety and partner agencies to enhance public safety in our communities

**DISCUSSION:**

The Humboldt County Sheriff's Office maintains a countywide Crisis Response Unit composed of the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT), the Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT) and Tactical Dispatch personnel. These components respond to critical incidents involving imminent threats to life, including hostage events, armed and barricaded suspects, active shooter situations, sniper threats, and other life-threatening emergencies.

Local law enforcement agencies in Humboldt County rely on shared resources and mutual aid to provide an effective tactical response capability. The Cities of Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna and Cal Poly Humboldt employ qualified personnel who can be trained, selected and assigned to serve as members of the Sheriff's Crisis Response Unit. Participation enhances regional capabilities, reduces duplication of specialized services and increases operational preparedness across jurisdictions.

The proposed MOUs formalize the operational framework, expectations, training requirements, call-out procedures, chain of command, liability provisions and termination processes governing the cooperative relationship between the Sheriff's Office and each law enforcement agency. The MOUs, attached for reference, outline the standards to which all four partner agreements conform. Each MOU ensures:

- Clear criteria for SWAT, CNT and Tactical Dispatch membership
- Oversight and command authority remains with the Sheriff's Office during missions and training
- Cities retain responsibility for salary, benefits, training costs and equipment for their personnel
- Policies, procedures and POST standards are uniformly applied to all team members
- Incident command responsibilities are defined under ICS for jurisdictional responses
- Indemnification and hold harmless provisions protect each participating agency based on where the incident occurs
- Either party may terminate the agreement with written notice

These MOUs continue a longstanding interagency partnership that enhances public safety and ensures a coordinated, effective tactical response capability throughout Humboldt County.

Approval of these agreements will allow for ongoing collaboration, maintain POST-compliant training standards, and ensure consistent, countywide availability of highly trained sworn and non-sworn personnel to respond to major critical incidents.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

City of Arcata, City of Eureka, City of Fortuna, CalPoly Humboldt

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Participating agencies are responsible for their own personnel costs and associated training and equipment, pursuant to the terms outlined in the MOUs.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

There is no impact to staffing for approval of these MOUs.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Arcata Police Department  
Eureka Police Department  
Fortuna Police Department  
CalPoly Humboldt University Police Department

**ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Your Board may choose to not approve the MOUs; however, this is not recommended. Local law enforcement agencies in Humboldt County rely on shared resources and mutual aid to provide an effective tactical response capability. The MOUs are critical to clearly outline responsibilities for this collaboration.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. MOU - City of Arcata SWAT/CNT/Tactical Dispatch
2. MOU - City of Eureka SWAT/CNT/Tactical Dispatch
3. MOU - City of Fortuna SWAT/CNT/Tactical Dispatch
4. MOU - CalPoly Humboldt SWAT/CNT/Tactical Dispatch

**PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:**

Meeting of: 2/6/18, 5/1/18, 5/28/19, 6/12/18  
File No.: 17-2921, 18-343, 19-711, 18-520