



The Aberdeen Police Department Policies & Procedures Manual Chapter Contents



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Chapter 20 Use of Force
Section 01 Force and Deadly Force

GO 21-014, 06/04/2021
Supersedes GO 20-029

A. Policy

1. Officers shall use reasonable force when force is used to accomplish lawful objectives. (4.1.1)
2. The use of excessive force, regardless of the provocation or action of the offender, shall result in certain and severe disciplinary action and may result in criminal prosecution.
3. The policies regarding use of force may not cover every situation.
 - a. At the discretion of the Chief of Police, any deviation from these policies will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
4. This policy is for Department use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding.

B. Definitions

1. **Force** – The amount of effort required by police to compel compliance by an unwilling subject.
2. **De-Escalation techniques** - actions used by officers, when safe and feasible without compromising law enforcement priorities, that seek to minimize the likelihood of the need to use force during an incident and increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance.
3. **Deadly force** – Physical force which is intended to cause death or grave injury, or which creates some specified degree of risk that a reasonable and prudent person would consider likely to cause death or grave injury.
4. **Less-Lethal force** – Physical force which is intended to be less likely to cause death or grave injury.
5. **Medical Aid (Appropriate Medical Aid)** – May include increased observation to detect obvious changes in condition; flushing chemical agents from the eyes; applying first aid; evaluation by paramedics; or for more serious or life threatening incidents, immediate aid by medical professionals.
6. **Neck Hold or Choke Hold** – Prohibited unless deadly force is authorized: (4.1.7) (4.1.6)
 - a. Carotid restraint hold;
 - b. Lateral vascular neck constraint; or
 - c. Hold with a knee or other object to a subject's neck; or
 - d. Any technique that would restrict the subject's ability to breathe.
7. **Physical Injury** – impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.
8. **Reasonable Force** -- only that force which is necessary to accomplish lawful objectives.
9. **Serious physical injury** – Physical injury that causes serious or permanent disfigurement, serious impairment of health or loss or protracted impairment of the function of any bodily organ or limb and that creates a reasonable risk of death.



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10. **Reasonable belief** – The facts or circumstances the officer knows, or should know, are such to cause an ordinary and prudent person to act or think in a similar way under similar circumstances. The proper application requires careful attention to the fact and circumstances of each case, including:
 - a. The severity of the crime at issue,
 - b. Whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others, and
 - c. Whether he is actively resisting arrest or attempting to evade arrest by flight.
11. **Physical Techniques** – Actions using body movement and strength to defend against or control a resisting subject.

C. De-Escalation (4.1.1)

1. Officers shall use de-escalation techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force when safe and feasible to do so based on the totality of the circumstances including:
 - a. Continually assessing the situation and modifying the use of force as circumstances change, consistent with officer safety; and
 - b. Stopping the use of force when it is no longer necessary;
2. Examples of de-escalation techniques include but are not limited to:
 - a. Using verbal skills and providing a warning prior to the use of force;
 - b. Determining whether the officer may be able to stabilize the situation through the:
 - 1) Use of time, distance, or positioning to isolate and contain a subject; and/or
 - 2) Request of additional personnel to respond or make use of specialized units or equipment and alternate resources including crisis intervention-team trained officers.
3. Officers may encounter a situation that requires immediate action where time does not allow for de-escalation techniques in this policy.
4. Officers may act to de-escalate an incident which may delay taking a subject into custody while keeping the public and officers safe.

D. Less-Lethal Force (4.1.4)

1. Physical Techniques
 - a. When physical force is necessary and justified, officers may use physical techniques.
 - b. Officers shall be trained to use only that force necessary to accomplish their lawful duties. (4.3.3b)
2. Less-Lethal Weapons
 - a. Officers shall not use less lethal weapons when lesser force will accomplish the task.
 - b. Authorized less lethal weapons include intermediate weapons and chemical agents. (See Weapons policy for approved weapons and chemical agents)



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- c. When physical force is necessary and justified, officers may use non-lethal issue weapons:
 - 1) To defend against violent attack when the use of firearms would not be appropriate or advisable;
 - 2) To overcome the violent resistance of a subject when making an arrest;
 - 3) To subdue or incapacitate a subject to prevent imminent physical harm to the officer or another person;
 - 4) To restrain or take a suspect into custody; and/or
 - 5) To bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control.
3. Officers shall document their use, except in training situations, of physical techniques and less-lethal weapons on the Incident Report and on the Use of Force Report form.

E. Use of Less Lethal Weapons (4.1.4)

1. ASP Expandable Baton
 - a. May be deployed in these circumstances including, but not limited to:
 - 1) Subject who is violently resisting arrest;
 - 2) Subject is actively fighting or injuring another officer or citizen; or
 - 3) Lesser force would not complete an arrest or stop an active assault.
 - b. Would not normally be deployed under these circumstances:
 - 1) Against a handgun or other firearm;
 - 2) Against a knife; or
 - 3) Against a person already handcuffed.
2. Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray
 - a. May be deployed in these circumstances including, but not limited to:
 - 1) When necessary to defend the officer or others; or
 - 2) To prevent the commission of a crime.
 - b. After deploying the Spray, officers shall: (4.1.5)
 - 1) Make every effort to relieve the subject's discomfort after exposure.
 - a) Provide contaminated subjects with fresh air and water.
 - b) Provide all subjects a short decontamination period prior to transport, only when practical.
 - 2) Request emergency medical assistance when an exposed person:
 - a) Stops breathing or shows any signs of breathing distress or impairment;
 - b) Hyperventilates;
 - c) Loses consciousness;
 - d) Suddenly becomes incoherent; or
 - e) Turns pale.



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3. TASER

- a. The TASER may be deployed in these circumstances, including but not limited to:
 - 1) The subject is displaying active resistance or aggression;
 - 2) Lesser force options have been ineffective; or
 - 3) The subject poses a threat from a distance and closing the distance places an officer at risk of injury.
- b. Officers must consider secondary injuries when deploying the TASER.
- c. After deploying the TASER: (4.1.5)
 - 1) Officers may remove the ECD darts (probes) from the subject after the subject is restrained.
 - 2) The deploying officer shall have transported to a medical facility for examination following exposure to an ECD any person who:
 - a) Still has probes in the skin due to the officer's having difficulty removing the probes (owing to probe or barb separation);
 - b) Requests medical attention—officers shall ask persons if they desire medical attention;
 - c) Is hit in a sensitive area (e.g., face, head, female breasts, male groin);
 - d) Does not appear to recover properly after being hit;
 - e) Has been energized more than three times;
 - f) Has had more than one ECD effectively used against him or her in any given incident;
 - g) Has been subjected to a continuous energy cycle of 15 seconds or more; or
 - h) Has exhibited signs of extreme uncontrolled agitation or hyperactivity prior to ECD exposure.

F. Deadly Force – Permitted (4.1.2)

1. An officer may use deadly force or a lethal weapon only when the officer reasonably believes that the action is:
 - a. In defense of human life, including the officer's own life; or
 - b. In defense of any person in imminent danger of serious, life threatening physical injury.
2. An officer may not use deadly force or a lethal weapon unless the officer reasonably believes that no type or amount of lesser force or less lethal weapon will accomplish the objectives of 1.a. and 1.b. of this Section.

G. Firearms Use (Other than Deadly Force) – Permitted

1. A police employee of the Department may discharge a firearm:
 - a. To kill a dangerous animal that is jeopardizing the safety of the public or the police employee;
 - b. To kill an injured animal to relieve its suffering;



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- c. To give an alarm or to call assistance when no other means is available and such action will not endanger or threaten the public; or
- d. When used in practice on a firing range.

H. Firearms Use Outside of Maryland

1. The authority of a police employee of the Department to use a firearm during fresh pursuit outside of Maryland is identical to the authority to use a firearm within Maryland.
2. The use of deadly force during fresh pursuit outside of Maryland must be justified to authorities within the foreign jurisdiction.
3. Justification will be based upon the employee's strict adherence to Aberdeen Police Department policy.

I. Firearm Use – Prohibited

1. An officer shall not discharge a firearm:
 - a. As a warning; (4.1.3)
 - b. At or from a moving vehicle except:
 - (1) as a measure of self-defense or defense of another when the suspect is using potentially deadly force other than the vehicle;
 - (2) when a vehicle is driven in a manner deliberately intended to kill or severely injure a police employee or citizen who is on foot; or
 - c. In any attempt to apprehend a misdemeanor.

J. Officer's Responsibilities After Using Force

1. The officer involved shall:
 - d. Ensure the scene is safe;
 - e. Check subject for injuries: (4.1.5)
 - (1) Offer appropriate medical aid to any injured parties;
 - (2) Call medical assistance if necessary;
 - f. Notify immediate supervisor; and
 - g. Complete a Use of Force Report (see Chapter on Reporting Use of Force) and other required documents.
4. After using deadly force, the officer involved shall not discuss the incident with anyone other than:
 - a. The supervisor;
 - b. The investigators assigned to conduct the criminal or administrative investigation; and
 - c. Selected legal counsel.
5. The officer involved shall remain at the scene of the incident pending the arrival of a supervisor.



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K. Supervisor's Responsibilities in Deadly Force Situations

1. The supervisor may remove the officer involved in the incident to a more appropriate location if the supervisor determines such relocation is in the best interest of the officer, affected citizens, or to facilitate the completion of the investigation of the incident.
2. The supervisor shall notify the chain of command.
3. The supervisor shall leave weapons, magazines, spent casings, and other potential items of evidence in place and secure the scene.
4. Upon arrival at the scene, the supervisor shall ensure:
 - a. Protection of the scene and all evidence;
 - b. Assignment of necessary personnel;
 - c. Separation of witnesses, including officers; and
 - d. Notification of the officer's family, if appropriate.
5. The supervisor shall not:
 - a. Handle weapons and magazines, spent casings, and other potential items of evidence;
 - b. Clear live rounds from chamber; or
 - c. Count rounds in remaining magazines.
6. The supervisor shall remain in charge of the scene until relieved by a superior, specialized unit, or authorized officers.

L. Administrative Leave (See Chapter 20.04, Section E)

1. The Chief of Police or designee shall remove from enforcement duty assignment and place on administrative leave any employee whose action(s) or use of force in an official capacity resulted in death or serious physical injury: (4.2.3)
 - a. Pending the results of an administrative review by the Chief of Police; and
 - b. Pending a determination by the appropriate psychological services as to duty status.
2. Command Staff shall:
 - a. Afford the officer involved all rights as provided by law; and
 - b. Ensure that the officer involved is allowed to obtain legal representation.



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Chapter 20 Use of Force
Section 02 Reporting and Investigating Use of Force

GO 20-021, 09/24/2020
Supersedes GO 19-019

A. Policy

1. Whenever an officer is involved in a use of force incident, the incident will be thoroughly documented, administratively reviewed, and investigated.

B. Use of Force Reporting

1. The officer shall complete and submit a Benchmark Program Use of Force Report whenever the officer:
 - a. Discharges a Department firearm, for other than training or to kill an injured animal; (4.2.1a)
 - b. Takes any action that results in injury or death of another person; (4.2.1b)
 - c. Takes any action that results in injury to himself/herself;
 - d. Applies force through the use of lethal or less-lethal weapons; or (4.2.1c)
 - e. Applies physical force; (4.2.1d)
 - f. Uses a TASER laser sight or Arc; (4.2.1c) or
 - g. Points a firearm at another person. (4.2.1c)
2. If the officer is injured, incapacitated or otherwise unable to prepare a detailed report, the specific facts and circumstances surrounding the incident shall be summarized by the supervisor from facts obtained verbally from the officer and/or witnesses.
 - a. The injured officer shall, when capable, submit the required detailed report or sign a transcript of verbal information.

C. Administrative Review (4.2.2)

1. The Use of Force Report shall be administratively reviewed, signed, and submitted through the designated chain of command to the Chief of Police.
2. Each officer in the chain of command shall:
 - a. Study the circumstances of the incident that prompted the use of force;
 - b. Determine (yes or no) whether any of the following should be addressed:
 - 1) Policy;
 - 2) Training;
 - 3) Equipment; or
 - 4) Disciplinary Issues;
 - c. Write any comments or recommendations;
 - d. Sign and date the report; and
 - e. Submit the report to the next officer in the chain of command.
3. The Chief of Police shall:
 - a. Review the report and recommendations;
 - b. Study the circumstances of the incident that prompted the use of force;
 - c. Determine (yes or no) whether any of the following should be addressed:



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- 1) Policy;
- 2) Training;
- 3) Equipment; or
- 4) Disciplinary Issues;
- d. Write any appropriate comments or recommendations;
- e. Assign a manager or supervisor to address the recommendations, if any;
- f. Sign and date the report;
- g. Forward a copy of the report to the investigating officer;
- h. Submit the completed and reviewed report to the Administrative Supervisor who shall maintain all Use of Force Reports; and
- i. Appoint the appropriate officer:
 - 1) To investigate the circumstances of the incident that prompted the use of deadly force; and
 - 2) Report the findings to the Chief of Police.

D. Annual Analysis (4.2.4)

1. The Deputy Chief annually shall conduct an analysis of use of force reports, activities, policies and practices, and report findings to the Chief of Police. The analysis should identify:
 - a. Date and time of incidents; (4.2.4a)
 - b. Types of encounters resulting in use of force; (4.2.4b)
 - c. Trends or patterns related to race, age, and gender of subjects involved; (4.2.4c)
 - d. Trends or patterns resulting in injury to any person including employees; (4.2.4d) and
 - e. Impact of findings on policies, practices, equipment, and training.



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Chapter 20 Use of Force
Section 03 Weapons Qualifications

GO 19-050 09/19/2019
Supersedes GO 18-096

A. Policy

1. All sworn officers shall qualify with all Department-Approved weapons, issued and non-issued, prior to use.
2. Retired officers of the Department who meet LEOSA eligibility criteria of *18 USC §926C(c)* may qualify, upon request, with personal weapons, after approval by the Chief of Police. (See *Policy 06.10 Firing Range*)
3. The firearms instructor shall maintain records of training and proficiency. (4.3.3b)

B. Proficiency with Weapons (4.3.2)

1. Only Department officers demonstrating proficiency in the use of Department-Approved weapons will be approved to carry and use such weapons.
2. Lethal Weapons
 - a. Officers are required to successfully complete firearms training proficiency requirements:
 - 1) Handguns – Daylight Annually, Low-light Annually;
 - 2) Rifles – Semi-Annually; and
 - 3) Shotguns – Annually.
3. Less Lethal Weapons
 - a. Officers who are issued less lethal weapons are required to successfully complete training proficiency requirements:
 - 1) TASER – Annually;
 - 2) Expandable Baton – Every two years;
 - 3) Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray – Every two years; and
 - 4) Less Lethal Shotguns – Annually.
4. During the training, officers shall:
 - a. Demonstrate the ability to achieve minimum efficiency scores;
 - b. Demonstrate knowledge of weapons laws and Department Use of Force policies; and
 - c. Demonstrate safe handling techniques for all Department weapons.
5. A certified firearms instructor shall supervise all training and qualification tests. (4.3.3a)
6. Officers authorized to carry lethal and less lethal weapons shall be issued copies of and be instructed in the Department Use of Force Policies before being authorized to carry a weapon. (4.3.4)
7. Any officer who is unable to demonstrate acceptable proficiency with less lethal weapons or personally-owned weapons shall not carry the weapon(s) until remedial training can be completed and acceptable proficiency can be demonstrated. (4.3.3c)



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C. Personally-Owned Weapons

1. Officers shall qualify annually with all approved secondary and off-duty weapons, even if the make and model are identical to the primary weapon.
2. The ammunition used for personally owned weapons must be supplied by the employee, and approved by the Certified Firearms Instructor for the initial proficiency demonstration and annual qualification tests.
3. Re-qualification is not required if the sworn officer is issued a weapon of identical make and model because the weapon with which the officer qualified is being repaired, replaced, or required for an internal investigation.
4. Officers shall fire the approved training program and pass an approved qualification test with a score of at least 70%.

D. Lethal Weapons Retraining Requirements (4.3.3c)

1. If a sworn officer fails to pass the qualification test with his or her primary weapon, the firearms instructor shall report this to the Chief of Police.
2. If a sworn officer demonstrates poor performance with his or her primary weapon during a training session, the firearms instructor shall report such fact to the Chief of Police.
 - a. The sworn officer shall be scheduled for remedial firearms training to be completed within fifteen (15) days of the sworn officer's last training session.
3. At the conclusion of the remedial training, the sworn officer shall be given the approved qualification test.
4. If, following remedial training, the sworn officer passes the Department-Approved firearms qualification test, no further training shall be required for that period.
5. The sworn officer shall be permitted to use the weapon for training purposes while under the supervision of the firearms instructor.
6. A sworn officer's failure to qualify and/or poor performance shall be documented by the firearms instructor on a Form 37.
 - a. One copy shall be immediately forwarded to the sworn officer's supervisor. The original shall be maintained by the firearms instructor.
 - b. When the sworn officer successfully completes the remedial training, the firearms instructor shall indicate it on the original form and immediately forward it to the sworn officer's supervisor.
 - c. The supervisor shall take the appropriate action concerning the sworn officer and forward the original report to the Chief of Police to be placed in the sworn officer's personnel file.
7. Upon notification of a sworn officer's failure to pass the qualification test following any remedial training, the Chief of Police shall:
 - a. Immediately reassign the sworn officer to non-enforcement duty in civilian dress;
 - b. Immediately schedule the sworn officer for additional remedial firearms training;
 - c. Immediately prohibit the sworn officer's use of Departmental vehicles;



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- d. Immediately prohibit the sworn officer from wearing or utilizing the weapon for which he failed to qualify; and
 - e. Maintain the sworn officer in this status until notification by the firearms instructor of a qualifying score.
8. Continued inability to qualify will be regarded as the failure to meet necessary requirements and may lead to dismissal.



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GO 21-011, 06/03/2021

Section 04 Officer-Involved Shootings & Serious Uses of Force

Supersedes GO 20-024

A. Policy

1. Officer-involved shootings, whether on- or off-duty, and police action deaths shall be investigated to determine whether officer actions conform to the law and this Department's policy, procedures, and training.

B. Definitions

1. Companion Officer – An officer assigned to another officer to provide emotional support and assistance following a critical incident, such as an officer-involved shooting.
2. Critical Incident – An incident that is unusual, violent, and involves perceived threat to, or actual loss of, human life. It is a significant emotional event that may cause extreme psychological distress.
3. In-Custody Death – Death of an individual while in custody or during attempts to effect custody.
4. Officer-Involved Shooting – A discharge of service weapon by an officer during a hostile encounter, or an accidental discharge, while on- or off-duty, regardless of injuries to suspects, officers, or third parties.
5. Serious Use of Force – Any use of force that results, or is reasonably likely to result, in death, permanent or substantial injury, loss of any body part or function, or permanent disfigurement.
 - a. Includes situations, resulting from police use of force, when a person is admitted to a medical facility for treatment.

C. Duty to Intervene (1.2.10)

1. Employees shall intervene within their scope of authority and training and shall promptly notify to a supervisor if they:
 - a. Observe another Department employee or public safety associate engage in any unreasonable use of force; or
 - b. Becomes aware of any violation of Department policy, state/provincial or federal law, or local ordinance.
2. When in a position to do so, officers shall intervene when they know or have reason to know, that another officer is about to use, or is using, unnecessary force.
3. Officers shall promptly report to a supervisor any use of unnecessary force and the officers' efforts to intervene.

D. Investigative Process

1. Two separate, simultaneous investigations of officer-involved shootings and other police action deaths shall be conducted.
 - a. Criminal Investigation (11.3.4a)
 - 1) The lead homicide investigator shall manage the criminal investigation unless the Chief of Police requests the assistance of another investigative authority.
 - 2) Upon completion of the criminal investigation, the findings, indicating whether officer actions conformed to the law, shall be submitted to the Chief of Police.



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- 3) The Chief of Police shall have the findings forwarded to the State's Attorney's office, or other appropriate prosecuting agency. (11.3.4c)
- b. Administrative Investigation (11.3.4b)
 - 1) The Internal affairs investigator will manage the administrative investigation unless the Chief of Police requests the assistance of another investigative authority.
 - 2) This investigation shall determine whether violations of Department policy and procedures or training have occurred.
 - 3) Upon completion of the administrative investigation, the findings, indicating whether disciplinary action or modifications to policy and procedures or training should be recommended, shall be submitted to the Chief of Police.

E. Public Information (11.3.4d)

1. The Public Information Officer will have a written public information plan that includes all involved organizations.

F. Administrative Leave (4.2.3)

1. The Chief of Police or designee shall place on mandatory administrative leave with pay any officers who discharged their weapon *as defined in this policy*.
2. The Chief of Police or designee shall direct the Sr. Administrative Specialist to publish a Personnel Order.
 - a. The date and time of the administrative leave order shall be documented on a Personnel Order.
3. When the involved officer is directed to return to duty, the Sr. Administrative Specialist shall be notified to publish another Personnel Order.
 - a. The date and time the involved officer returns to duty shall be documented on a Personnel Order

G. Involved Officer Responsibilities

1. An Officer involved in a shooting incident shall, to the degree reasonably possible, take initial steps to protect his/her own safety and the public's safety, and to preserve evidence.
2. Each involved officer shall complete a Use of Force Report and submit the report to his/her supervisor.
3. The involved officers, facilitated by the Department, shall make themselves available to meet with the Department's designated qualified mental health provider as soon as practicable.

H. Supervisor Responsibilities

1. The Supervisor shall prepare and submit an overall report, with each officer's Use of Force Report, to Command Staff for Administrative Review, and for use in investigations of the incident.

I. Incident Command Responsibilities

1. The ranking officer at the scene shall serve as incident commander (IC) and brief superior officers of investigation status when turning over IC responsibility.



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2. The IC shall assign responsibility for completion of tasks as appropriate and in the order considered necessary.

J. Tasks Assigned by Incident Commander

1. Identify any remaining threats and take necessary action.
2. Determine the physical condition of officers, suspects, and third parties.
3. Provide emergency first aid if necessary.
4. Ensure that emergency medical assistance has been summoned.
5. Ensure that a brief public safety statement is collected individually from the involved officer(s), covering only information necessary to focus initial police response and to direct the preliminary investigation, including:
 - a. Type of force used;
 - b. Direction and approximate number of shots fired by officers and suspects;
 - c. Location of injured persons;
 - d. Description of at-large suspects and their direction of travel, time elapses since the suspects were last seen, and any suspect weapons;
 - e. Description and location of any known victims or witnesses;
 - f. Description and location of any known evidence; and
 - g. Any other information necessary to ensure officer and public safety and to assist with the apprehension of at-large suspects.
6. Ensure the adequacy of the inner perimeter.
7. Direct that an outer perimeter be established to prevent all from entering except those who have a specific function to perform.
8. Ensure the names of all those who enter the perimeter are recorded.
9. Locate and secure—or secure in place—the officer's weapon(s) and mark expended ammunition casings.
10. Physically check the firearms and other weapons of all officers who were present during the incident for evidence of a discharge.
11. Secure as evidence all weapons that were fired.
12. Locate and secure in place weapons, ammunition, and expended cartridges used by the suspect.
13. Collect information available about the suspect from anyone at the scene.
14. Ensure that all potential witnesses have been identified and separated and ask that they remain on hand to provide a statement.
15. If witnesses wish to leave, obtain their contact information for future communications.
16. Locate and secure as evidence any clothing or other personal items that may have been discarded or removed from suspects or officers by medical personnel.



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17. Determine and mark the position(s) of the officers and the suspects at the time of the shooting.
18. Separate and removed all involved officers from the immediate scene.
19. Ensure that a companion officer is assigned to each involved officer.
20. Direct all involved officers not to discuss any aspects of the shooting among themselves or with others with the exception of their attorney, a qualified mental health professional, or authorized investigative personnel.
21. If an officer is transported to the hospital, ensure that the companion officer accompanies or meets him/her there.
22. Establish a command post when it appears that an extended on-site investigation will be necessary.
23. Appoint an officer to serve as a Recorder, with responsibility for writing a chronological record of activities at the scene, including all persons present and those who have been at the scene and actions taken by police, EMTs, and other personnel, and to record all other activities as appropriate.
24. If equipment is available, ensure that video recordings are made of the entire crime scene and those present, including witnesses and bystanders.
 - a. Determine if video recording were made by in-car cameras, electronic control weapons, surveillance cameras, or other electronic communications devices, and secure them as evidence as soon as reasonably possible.
25. Ensure that media staging area is established beyond the outer perimeter and that it is appropriately staffed.
26. Place officers who discharged their weapons on mandatory leave with pay.
27. Replace primary service firearms by a similar firearm as soon as reasonably possible.

K. Companion Officer

1. The companion officer shall provide all reasonable support to the involved officer and act as liaison between the officer and the hospital.
2. Notification of family
 - a. If the involved officer is incapable of calling, the companion officer shall notify or ensure that another Department employee notifies the involved officer's immediate family as soon as possible and in person, whenever reasonably possible.
 - b. The family shall be provided with basic information on the status of the officer and when and where family will be able to see the officer.
3. The companion officer shall arrange for family transportation to the hospital or other location as required.
4. In the case of serious injury or death, notification shall be conducted according to the Death Notification Policy.

L. In-Custody Death Investigation

1. Detectives shall gather information and take appropriate actions.



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2. Detectives shall gather information noted by the police communications specialist (PCO) including:
 - a. Background noises during the call;
 - b. Information provided by the reporting party that may be related to the subject's behavior;
 - c. Use of drugs or alcohol;
 - d. Previous law enforcement encounters;
 - e. Presence of weapons; and
 - f. Mental health concerns.
3. Detectives shall gather officer observations of the subject's behavior in the course of making the arrest, for example, whether the person was:
 - a. Calm or emotionally charged;
 - b. Rational or confused;
 - c. Able to communicate or difficult to engage in conversation;
 - d. Experiencing hallucinations or delusions;
 - e. Perspiring heavily;
 - f. Wearing inappropriate clothing or in a state of undress;
 - g. Exhibiting a high tolerance for pain; or
 - h. Engaging in a protracted physical encounter with officers.
4. Detectives shall interview persons to gather such information as:
 - a. Whether family or friends indicate that the subject had been drinking heavily, using drugs, or both;
 - b. Whether the subject had been involved with the police on prior occasions;
 - c. Any other relevant information provided;
 - d. Whether the subject was threatening anyone or in possession of a weapon; and
 - e. Whether the subject was visibly injured in any way when the police arrived and what, if any, injuries were sustained prior to death.
5. Detectives shall gather information about measures the officer(s) took to gain control and custody, such as:
 - a. Attempting to calmly "talk the person down;"
 - b. Maintaining distance;
 - c. Reducing noise by turning off sirens;
 - d. Reassuring the subject;
 - e. Buying time;
 - f. Asking simple questions to determine the subject's level of coherence;
 - g. Attempting to deescalate the situation or other actions; and



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Chapter 20 Use of Force

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Section 04 Officer-Involved Shootings & Serious Uses of Force

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h. Directing others at the scene to move away.

6. Detectives shall gather information about:

- a. Whether custody was required;
- b. The length of time it took to gain control of the subject;
- c. Whether there was a protracted struggle, or the subject was subdued quickly;
- d. The means used to restrain the subject;
- e. When in custody, where and how the individual was situated (e.g., placed face down on the ground, in a seated position, in a police vehicle sitting or lying down);
- f. The physical reactions of the subject once arrested;
 - 1) For example, if he/she became calm or continued to struggle and act physically and verbally combative;
- g. Whether EMS was called, and at what point during the confrontation;
- h. Whether the subject's condition (such as breathing and consciousness) was monitored after arrest;
 - 1) Whether the subject became unresponsive;
 - 2) Who was present at the time; and
 - 3) What steps were taken by the officer(s);
- i. When death was pronounced and by whom; and
- j. The results of the autopsy.

M. Serious Injury

1. Detectives shall gather information and take appropriate actions:
 - a. Conduct and behavior of the subject being confronted as perceived by the officer at the time of the incident;
 - b. Relative age, size, strength, and physical ability of the officer to the subject;
 - c. Experience of the officer;
 - d. Number of officers present;
 - e. Potential influence of alcohol or drugs;
 - f. Subject's proximity to weapons;
 - g. Weapons used or threatened to be used by the subject;
 - h. Force options available to the officer;
 - i. Potential for injury to the public, officer, or subject;
 - j. Risk of escape;
 - k. Degree of subject resistance;
 - l. Use of restraints;
 - m. Other exigent circumstances;



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- n. The nature and severity of the injuries; and
- o. Whether the injuries were consistent with the use of force described by the officer(s).

2. Detective's Responsibilities

- a. Detectives shall receive a briefing from the IC, including:
 - 1) details of the incident as available;
 - 2) a summary of all actions completed or in progress; and
 - 3) a walk-through of the incident scene.
- b. Detectives shall ensure that all items of potential evidentiary value are identified and properly collected.
- c. Detectives shall obtain audio-taped preliminary statements for suspects and witnesses.
- d. Detectives shall ensure that efforts are underway to collect and compile information on the suspect(s).
- e. Detectives shall consult with the coroner or medical examiner at the scene and at, or subsequent to, the autopsy.
- f. Detectives shall compile information as available:
 - 1) Entrance and exit wounds;
 - 2) Estimates of shooter's positions;
 - 3) The presence of alcohol or controlled substances in the suspect's body; and
 - 4) Any other facts that may be relevant.
- g. Detectives shall canvas the immediate area for potential witnesses who have not come forth and obtain their information and statements.
- h. Detectives shall obtain search warrants for any vehicles, containers, homes, or vehicles as determined necessary.
- i. Detectives shall tape record interviews, when possible, with EMTs, Fire Department Personnel, and First Responding Officers, regarding conditions at the shooting scene when they arrived, any action that may have been taken to move or otherwise alter persons or objects of potential evidentiary value.
- j. Detectives shall develop a summary of preliminary information and submit it the Chief of Police.

N. Training

- 1. The Department shall provide process training for Department employees who are responsible for management of incidents involving use of force and other police actions that result in death or serious bodily injury. (11.3.4e)
- 2. The Department shall provide awareness training for all Department personnel potentially impacted by such incidents. (11.3.4f)