

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT MANUAL OF GENERAL ORDERS			
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USE OF FORCE: GENERAL GUIDELINES			

The purpose of this General Order is to establish basic guidelines pertaining to the use of force, including deadly force, and to provide procedures for the investigation and review of such incidents.

A. Preface – The value of human life is immeasurable in our society. Peace Officers have been delegated the awesome responsibility to protect life and property and apprehend criminal offenders. The apprehension of criminal offenders and protection of property must at all times be subservient to the protection of life. The officer’s responsibility for protecting life must include their own.

B. Definitions.

1. **DEADLY FORCE** – As used in this General Order is defined as that 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.
2. **USE OF FORCE** – The definition of use of force, as applied by this Department, will be when an officer uses hands-on physical force (beyond that of simply controlling a subject) to include; striking, tackling, pain compliance techniques (i.e. pressure points, wrist locks, arm bars) or similar acts or uses oleoresin capsicum spray, electronic or impact devices, firearms or other weapons. In addition, any action by the officer that results in an injury, or complaint of an injury by the arrestee, while the officer is in the process of making or assisting with a lawful arrest or detention will be investigated as a use of force.
3. **INJURIES OF PERSONS IN CUSTODY** – Shall be defined as any incident in which an injury is pre-existing, accidental or self-inflicted on a person in custody.
4. **OBJECTIVELY REASONABLE** – Shall mean, in the context of determining the appropriate level of force to use, that force which is reasonable in light of the known circumstances, including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the crime, the level of threat or resistance presented by the subject and the danger to the community.

C. Only that amount of force necessary which is objectively reasonable to effect a lawful arrest and/or overcome resistance to such arrest or other lawful purpose shall be used (Reference Use of Force Model in Section G)

D. Any officer present and observing another officer using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so safely, intercede to end and prevent the continued use of such excessive force. Additionally, officers have the duty to immediately notify an on-duty supervisor.

E. Department Standard.

This General Order is for departmental use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. The Department policy should not be construed as a creation of higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this directive will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.

F. Training

1. Annually, all Department members who are authorized to carry weapons (to include lethal, less lethal, electronic, chemical, or impact) will receive in-service training on the agency's use of force policies. This training may be conducted through an approved electronic policy or training management program.
2. Only those members who demonstrate proficiency in the use of an agency-authorized weapon will be approved to carry such weapon.
3. No member will be authorized to carry any weapon until provided with, and instructed in, all policies of this department pertaining to the use of force.
4. In-service training for weaponless control techniques will occur at least biennially. Refer to the weapon specific general orders for qualification and recertification requirements.

G. Use of Force Levels will be assigned by the Office of Professional Standards and are only applicable to workload distribution and in the administration of the Early Identification System, as described in General Order 16.03.

1. **Level 1 Use of Force** – Any use of force involving the use of physical or chemical force that results in no injury, complaint of injury, or minor injuries to include treatment in the field by rescue personnel.
2. **Level 2 Use of Force** – Any use of force involving the use the ERD, impact device, K9, or firearm and/or any force that results in serious injury to include major bleeding, broken bones, or any treatment at a medical facility.

G. The Use of Force Model

The Use of Force Model uses a circular shape with varying rings – this has symbolic importance. A circle has no end and no beginning. Once motion is started within those rings it can move seamlessly with fluidity as conditions during an officer's interaction with an individual(s) change.

1. Badge and Silver Ring

The badge represents a Police Officer and within the badge is the equation, "Distance + Cover = Time". This I.C.A.T. (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics) philosophy encourages the Police Officer to place themselves in an advantageous position during an

interaction(s). By doing so this may afford the officer time to gather, assess, and process information more accurately which can lead to a more appropriate decision and plan of action based on the circumstances of their interaction(s). The decision-making process is illustrated by the silver ring around the badge. A Police Officer should always be in a constant state of gathering information. Based on the information gathered, potential risks and threats are assessed. Based on those risks, options, resources, and plans are identified and acted upon.

2. Blue Ring

The blue ring, which encircles the badge and silver ring, is a representation of the types of individual(s) an officer may interact with. This ring illustrates three types of individuals; a cooperative, resistant, or assailant subject. Designated within the assailant area is “deadly force”. An important note: just as the Police Officer has the ability to react seamlessly, so too can an individual’s actions.

3. Multicolored Ring

The multicolored ring encircling the blue ring is a representation of the use of force options available to officers. Starting with green and moving through red, the colors on the graphic are a symbolic representation of the intensity of the interaction between an officer and an individual(s).

4. Exterior Multicolored Ring.

The exterior multicolored ring that encircles the entire use of force model is displaying the officer’s ability to de-escalate or escalate their reactions based on the subject’s actions, at any time, without impediment.

