



Use of Force

The Aurora Police Department's Use of Force policy provides guidelines on the reasonable use of force used by our officers while they are protecting the City of Aurora.

Our Use of Force policy is based off federal and state case law and best practices of law enforcement agencies across the nation. Each day, officers are involved in numerous and varied interactions with the community. We train each one of our police officers to have an understanding of, and true appreciation for, their authority and limitations. This is especially true with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties.

APD recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice.

THE REASONABLENESS OF FORCE

Aurora Police Department policy requires that officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the incident. Officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force that reasonably appears necessary in a particular situation, with limited information and in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving. No policy can realistically predict every possible situation an officer might encounter; officers are entrusted to use well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate use of force in each incident.

WHEN TO APPLY FORCE

APD's training is specifically developed to focus on de-escalation and we believe in using human influence and respect to produce a positive outcome. Despite a focus on de-escalation, officers are sometimes faced with situations of non-compliance. Officers may use any force which they reasonably believe to be necessary to effect an arrest and may use any force which they reasonably believe to be necessary to defend themselves or another person from bodily harm.

DUTY TO INTERCEDE

Any APD 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, intercede to prevent the use of reasonable force. Any employee who observes another employee use force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor.

USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM

APD officers receive extensive de-escalation training and are taught to only use the amount of force that is reasonably necessary in response to the perceived threat.

CHOKEHOLDS BANNED BY APD

APD policy does not permit any employee to apply direct pressure to the throat, windpipe or airway of a person with the intent to reduce or prevent the intake of air (chokehold), unless deadly force is authorized.

REPORTING USE OF FORCE

APD tracks use of force incidents using a software program called "Blue Team." We require officers to write use of force reports anytime force is used. It is not considered a use of force when a person allows themselves to be handcuffed, searched, escorted or restrained. Documentation is also required when an officer points their weapon at someone.

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300.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines on the reasonable use of force. While there is no way to specify the exact amount or type of reasonable force to be applied in any situation, every member of this Department is expected to use these guidelines to make such decisions in a professional, impartial and reasonable manner.

300.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Deadly force - Force reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of causing death or very serious injury.

Force - The application of physical techniques or tactics, chemical agents or weapons to another person. It is not a use of force when a person allows him/herself to be searched, escorted, handcuffed or restrained.

300.2 POLICY

The use of force by law enforcement personnel is a matter of critical concern, both to the public and to the law enforcement community. Officers are involved on a daily basis in numerous and varied interactions and, when warranted, may use reasonable force in carrying out their duties.

Officers must have an understanding of, and true appreciation for, their authority and limitations. This is especially true with respect to overcoming resistance while engaged in the performance of law enforcement duties.

The Department recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests.

300.2.1 DUTY TO INTERCEDE

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, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force. An officer who observes another employee use force that exceeds the degree of force permitted by law should promptly report these observations to a supervisor.

300.3 USE OF FORCE

Officers shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

The reasonableness of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene at the time of the incident. Any evaluation of reasonableness must allow for the fact that officers are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force that reasonably

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appears necessary in a particular situation, with limited information and in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving.

Given that no policy can realistically predict every possible situation an officer might encounter, officers are entrusted to use well-reasoned discretion in determining the appropriate use of force in each incident.

It is also recognized that circumstances may arise in which officers reasonably believe that it would be impractical or ineffective to use any of the tools, weapons or methods provided by the Department. Officers may find it more effective or reasonable to improvise their response to rapidly unfolding conditions that they are confronting. In such circumstances, the use of any improvised device or method must nonetheless be reasonable and utilized only to the degree that reasonably appears necessary to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

While the ultimate objective of every law enforcement encounter is to avoid or minimize injury, nothing in this policy requires an officer to retreat or be exposed to possible physical injury before applying reasonable force.

300.3.1 USE OF FORCE TO EFFECT AN ARREST

An officer may use any force which he/she reasonably believes to be necessary to effect an arrest and may use any force which he/she reasonably believes to be necessary to defend him/herself or another from bodily harm while making an arrest (720 ILCS 5/7-5).

300.3.2 FACTORS USED TO DETERMINE THE REASONABLENESS OF FORCE

When determining whether to apply force and evaluating whether an officer has used reasonable force, a number of factors should be taken into consideration, as time and circumstances permit.

These factors include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Immediacy and severity of the threat to officers or others.
- (b) The conduct of the individual being confronted, as reasonably perceived by the officer at the time.
- (c) Officer/subject factors (age, size, relative strength, skill level, injuries sustained, level of exhaustion or fatigue, the number of officers available vs. subjects).
- (d) The effects of drugs or alcohol.
- (e) Subject's mental state or capacity.
- (f) Proximity of weapons or dangerous improvised devices.
- (g) The degree to which the subject has been effectively restrained and his/her ability to resist despite being restrained.
- (h) The availability of other options and their possible effectiveness.
- (i) Seriousness of the suspected offense or reason for contact with the individual.
- (j) Training and experience of the officer.

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- (k) Potential for injury to officers, suspects and others.
- (l) Whether the person appears to be resisting, attempting to evade arrest by flight or is attacking the officer.
- (m) The risk and reasonably foreseeable consequences of escape.
- (n) The apparent need for immediate control of the subject or a prompt resolution of the situation.
- (o) Whether the conduct of the individual being confronted no longer reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to the officer or others.
- (p) Prior contacts with the subject or awareness of any propensity for violence.
- (q) Any other exigent circumstances.

300.3.3 CONTROL COMPLIANCE TECHNIQUES

Control compliance techniques may be effective in controlling a physically or actively resisting individual. Officers may only apply those control compliance techniques for which they have successfully completed Department-approved training. Officers utilizing any control compliance technique should consider:

- (a) The degree to which the application of the technique may be controlled given the level of resistance.
- (b) Whether the person can comply with the direction or orders of the officer.
- (c) Whether the person has been given sufficient opportunity to comply.

The application of any control compliance technique shall be discontinued once the officer determines that compliance has been achieved.

300.3.4 CAROTID CONTROL HOLD

Absent situations where the use of deadly force would otherwise be justified, the use of the carotid control hold is not allowed by employees.

300.3.5 USE OF FORCE TO SEIZE EVIDENCE

In general, officers may use reasonable force to lawfully seize evidence and to prevent the destruction of evidence not located in a person's mouth. However, officers are prohibited from using force solely to prevent a person from swallowing evidence or contraband.

300.4 DEADLY FORCE APPLICATIONS

Use of deadly force is justified in the following circumstances:

- (a) An officer may use deadly force to protect him/herself or others from what he/she reasonably believes would be an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.
- (b) An officer may use deadly force to stop a fleeing subject when the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has committed, or intends to commit, a felony

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involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious bodily injury or death, and the officer reasonably believes that there is an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death to any other person if the subject is not immediately apprehended. Under such circumstances, a verbal warning should precede the use of deadly force, where feasible.

Imminent does not mean immediate or instantaneous. An imminent danger may exist even if the suspect is not at that very moment pointing a weapon at someone. For example, an imminent danger may exist if an officer reasonably believes any of the following:

1. The person has a weapon or is attempting to access one and it is reasonable to believe the person intends to use it against the officer or another.
2. The person is capable of causing serious bodily injury or death without a weapon and it is reasonable to believe the person intends to do so.

300.4.1 SHOOTING AT OR FROM MOVING VEHICLES

Shots fired at or from a moving vehicle are rarely effective. Officers should move out of the path of an approaching vehicle instead of discharging their firearm at the vehicle or any of its occupants. An officer should only discharge a firearm at a moving vehicle or its occupants when the officer reasonably believes there are no other reasonable means available to avert the threat of the vehicle, or if deadly force other than the vehicle is directed at the officer or others.

Officers should not shoot at any part of a vehicle in an attempt to disable the vehicle.

300.4.2 CHOKEHOLDS

A member shall not apply direct pressure to the throat, windpipe or airway of a person with the intent to reduce or prevent the intake of air (chokehold) unless deadly force is justified (720 ILCS 5/7-5.5). A member shall not use a chokehold or any lesser contact with the throat or neck area of another in order to prevent the destruction of evidence by ingestion (720 ILCS 5/7-5.5).

300.5 REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE

Any use of force by a member of this Department shall be documented promptly, completely and accurately in an appropriate report, depending on the nature of the incident. The officer should articulate the factors perceived and why he/she believed the use of force was reasonable under the circumstances. To collect data for purposes of training, resource allocation, analysis and related purposes, the Department may require the completion of additional report forms, as specified in Department policy, procedure or law.

300.5.1 NOTIFICATION TO SUPERVISORS

Supervisory notification shall be made as soon as practicable following the application of force in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) The application caused an injury requiring medical care.
- (b) The individual subjected to the force complained of injury or continuing pain.

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- (c) Whenever a canine bite occurs.
- (d) Any application of the TASER device or control device.
- (e) Any application of a restraint device other than handcuffs, shackles or belly chains.
- (f) The individual subjected to the force was rendered unconscious.
- (g) An individual alleges any of the above has occurred.

300.6 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to booking or release, medical assistance shall be obtained for any person who exhibits signs of physical distress, who has sustained an injury requiring medical care, expresses a complaint of injury or continuing pain, or who was rendered unconscious. Any individual exhibiting signs of physical distress after an encounter should be continuously monitored until he/she can be medically assessed.

Based upon the officer's or court detention technician's initial assessment of the nature and extent of the subject's injuries, medical assistance may consist of examination by fire personnel, paramedics or hospital staff. If any such individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal shall be fully documented in related reports and, whenever practicable, should be witnessed by another officer and/or medical personnel. If a recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included in the recording, if possible.

The on-scene supervisor or, if the on-scene supervisor is not available, the primary handling officer shall ensure that any person providing medical care or receiving custody of a person following any use of force is informed that the person was subjected to force. This notification shall include a description of the force used and any other circumstances the officer reasonably believes would be potential safety or medical risks to the subject (e.g., prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration).

Persons who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond their physical characteristics and imperviousness to pain (sometimes called "excited delirium"), or who require a protracted physical encounter with multiple officers to be brought under control, may be at an increased risk of sudden death. Calls involving these persons should be considered medical emergencies. Officers who reasonably suspect a medical emergency should request medical assistance as soon as practicable and have medical personnel stage away if appropriate.

300.7 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

When a supervisor is able to respond to an incident in which there has been a reported application of force, and the supervisor deems appropriate, the supervisor is expected to:

- (a) Obtain the basic facts from the involved officers. Absent an allegation of misconduct or excessive force, this will be considered a routine contact in the normal course of duties.
- (b) Ensure that any injured parties are examined and treated.

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- (c) When possible, separately obtain a recorded interview with the subject upon whom force was applied. If this interview is conducted without the person having voluntarily waived his/her *Miranda* rights, the following shall apply:
 - 1. The content of the interview should not be summarized or included in any related criminal charges.
 - 2. The fact that a recorded interview was conducted should be documented in the appropriate report/system.
 - 3. The recording of the interview should be distinctly marked for retention until all potential for civil litigation has expired.
- (d) Once any initial medical assessment has been completed or first aid has been rendered, ensure that photographs have been taken of any areas involving visible injury or complaint of pain, as well as overall photographs of uninjured areas. These photographs should be retained until all potential for civil litigation has expired. Additionally, the supervisor shall ensure that an applicable authorization of release of medical records is completed and signed by the injured person.
- (e) Identify any witnesses not already included in related reports.
- (f) Review and approve all related reports.
- (g) Determine if there is any indication that the subject may pursue civil litigation.
 - 1. If there is an indication of potential civil litigation, the supervisor should complete and route a notification of a potential claim through the appropriate channels.
- (h) Evaluate the circumstances surrounding the incident and initiate an administrative investigation if there is a question of policy non-compliance or if for any reason further investigation may be appropriate.

In the event that a supervisor is unable to respond to the scene of an incident involving the reported application of force, the supervisor is still expected to complete as many of the above items as circumstances permit.

300.7.1 DIVISIONAL LIEUTENANT RESPONSIBILITY

The Divisional Lieutenant shall review each use of force by any personnel within his/her command to ensure compliance with this policy and to address any training issues.

300.8 TRAINING

Officers will receive periodic training on this policy and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

300.9 USE OF FORCE ANALYSIS

At least annually, the OPS Lieutenant should prepare an analysis report on use of force incidents. The report should be submitted to the Chief of Police. The report should not contain the names of officers, suspects or case numbers, and should include:

- (a) The identification of any trends in the use of force by members.

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- (b) Training needs recommendations.
- (c) Equipment needs recommendations.
- (d) Policy revision recommendations.