

Use of Force

300.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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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.

In addition to those methods, techniques, and tools set forth below, the guidelines for the reasonable application of force contained in this policy shall apply to all policies addressing the potential use of force, including but not limited to the Control Devices and Techniques and Conducted Energy Device policies.

300.1.1 DEFINITIONS

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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.

Feasible - Reasonably capable of being done or carried out under the circumstances to successfully achieve the arrest or lawful objective without increasing risk to the officer or another person.

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.

Imminent - Ready to take place; impending. Note that imminent does not mean immediate or instantaneous.

Totality of the circumstances - All facts and circumstances known to the officer at the time, taken as a whole, including the conduct of the [officer_deputy] and the subject leading up to the use of force.

300.2 POLICY

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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.

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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 AND REPORT

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Any officer present and observing another law enforcement officer or a member 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.

Any officer who observes another law enforcement officer or a member use force that is potentially beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances should report these observations to a supervisor as soon as feasible.

When observing or reporting force used by a law enforcement officer, each officer should take into account the totality of the circumstances and the possibility that the other law enforcement officers may have additional information regarding the threat posed by the subject.

300.2.2 NON-DEADLY FORCE APPLICATIONS

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Any application of force that is not reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of death or very serious injury shall be considered non-deadly force. Each officer is provided with equipment, training and skills to assist in the apprehension and control of suspects as well as protection of officers and the public. Non-deadly force applications may include but are not limited to leg restraints and control devices, described in Policy Manual §§ 303.

An officer's discharge of a firearm using ammunition designed to disable or control without creating the likelihood of death or great bodily harm are not considered deadly force when used in making an arrest (720 ILCS 5/7-8).

300.2.3 PAIN COMPLIANCE TECHNIQUES

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Pain compliance techniques may be very effective in controlling a passive or actively resisting individual. Officers may only apply those pain compliance techniques for which the officer has received departmentally approved training and only when the officer reasonably believes that the use of such a technique appears necessary to further a legitimate law enforcement purpose. Officers utilizing any pain compliance technique should consider the totality of the circumstance including, but not limited to:

- (a) The potential for injury to the officer(s) or others if the technique is not used.
- (b) The potential risk of serious injury to the individual being controlled.
- (c) The degree to which the pain compliance technique may be controlled in application according to the level of resistance.
- (d) The nature of the offense involved.

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- (e) The level of resistance of the individual(s) involved.
- (f) The need for prompt resolution of the situation.
- (g) If time permits (e.g., passive demonstrators), other reasonable alternatives.

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

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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 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

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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

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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:

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- (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) The individual's mental state or capacity.
- (g) Proximity of weapons or dangerous improvised devices.
- (h) The degree to which the subject has been effectively restrained and his/her ability to resist despite being restrained.
- (i) The availability of other options and their possible effectiveness.
- (j) Seriousness of the suspected offense or reason for contact with the individual.
- (k) Training and experience of the officer.
- (l) Potential for injury to officers, suspects and others.
- (m) Whether the person appears to be resisting, attempting to evade arrest by flight or is attacking the officer.
- (n) The risk and reasonably foreseeable consequences of escape.
- (o) The apparent need for immediate control of the subject or a prompt resolution of the situation.
- (p) Whether the conduct of the individual being confronted no longer reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to the officer or others.
- (q) Prior contacts with the subject or awareness of any propensity for violence.
- (r) Any other exigent circumstances.

300.3.3 USE OF FORCE TO SEIZE EVIDENCE

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In general, officers may use reasonable force to lawfully seize evidence and to prevent the destruction of evidence. However, officers are discouraged from using force solely to prevent a person from swallowing evidence or contraband. In the instance when force is used, officers should not intentionally use any technique that restricts blood flow to the head, restricts respiration or which creates a reasonable likelihood that blood flow to the head or respiration would be restricted. Officers are encouraged to use techniques and methods taught by the Swansea Police Department for this specific purpose.

300.4 DEADLY FORCE APPLICATIONS

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When reasonable, the officer shall, prior to the use of deadly force, make efforts to identify him/herself as a peace officer and to warn that deadly force may be used, unless the officer has objectively reasonable grounds to believe the person is aware of those facts.

Use of deadly force is justified in the following circumstances involving imminent threat or imminent risk:

- (a) An officer may use deadly force to protect him/herself or others from what he/she reasonably believes is 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 individual has committed, or intends to commit, a felony 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 individual 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 that the individual has a weapon or is attempting to access one and intends to use it against the officer or another person. An imminent danger may also exist if the individual is capable of causing serious bodily injury or death without a weapon, and the officer believes the individual intends to do so.

300.4.1 SHOOTING AT OR FROM MOVING VEHICLES

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Shots fired at or from a moving vehicle involve additional considerations and risks, and are rarely effective.

When feasible, officers should take reasonable steps to 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 imminent 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, CAROTID CONTROL HOLD, AND RESPIRATORY RESTRAINTS

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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).

A carotid control hold is a technique designed to control an individual by temporarily restricting blood flow through the application of pressure to the side of the neck and, unlike a chokehold,

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does not restrict the airway. The proper application of the carotid control hold may be effective in restraining a violent or combative individual. However, due to the potential for injury, the use of the carotid control hold is limited to those circumstances where deadly force is authorized and is subject to the following:

A. At all times during the application of the carotid control hold, the response of the individual should be monitored. The carotid control hold should be discontinued when circumstances indicate that the application no longer reasonably appears necessary.

B. Any individual who has had the carotid control hold applied, regardless of whether he/she was rendered unconscious, shall be properly examined by paramedics or other qualified medical personnel and should be monitored until such examination occurs.

C. The officer shall inform any person receiving custody, or any person placed in a position of providing care, that the individual has been subjected to the carotid control hold and whether the individual lost consciousness as a result.

D. Any officer attempting or applying the carotid control hold shall promptly notify a supervisor of the use or attempted use of such hold.

E. The use or attempted use of the carotid control hold shall be thoroughly documented by the officer in any related reports.

300.5 REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE

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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. See the Report Preparation Policy for additional circumstances that may require documentation.

300.5.1 NOTIFICATION TO SUPERVISORS

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

- (a) The application caused a visible injury.
- (b) The application would lead a reasonable officer to conclude that the individual may have experienced more than momentary discomfort.
- (c) The individual subjected to the force complained of injury or continuing pain.
- (d) The individual indicates intent to pursue litigation.

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- (e) Any application of the TASER™ or control device.
- (f) Any application of a restraint device other than handcuffs, shackles or belly chains.
- (g) The individual subjected to the force was rendered unconscious.
- (h) An individual was struck or kicked.
- (i) An individual alleges any of the above has occurred.

300.6 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Best Practice

Once it is reasonably safe to do so, medical assistance shall be obtained for any person who exhibits signs of physical distress, has sustained visible injury, expresses a complaint of injury or continuing pain, or was rendered unconscious. Any individual exhibiting signs of physical distress after an encounter should be continuously monitored until the individual can be medically assessed. Individuals should not be placed on their stomachs for an extended period, as this could impair their ability to breathe (720 ILCS 5/7-15).

Based upon the officer's initial assessment of the nature and extent of the individual's injuries, medical assistance may consist of examination by an emergency medical services provider or medical personnel at a hospital or jail. 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).

Individuals who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond their physical characteristics, and imperviousness to pain, 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.

See the Medical Aid and Response Policy for additional guidelines.

300.7 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Best Practice **MODIFIED**

A supervisor should respond to a reported application of force resulting in visible injury, if reasonably available. When a supervisor is able to respond to an incident in which there has been a reported application of force, the supervisor is expected to:

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- (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.
- (c) When possible, separately obtain a recorded interview with the individual upon whom force was applied. If this interview is conducted without the individual 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 a property or other report.
 - 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.
 - 1. These photographs should be retained until all potential for civil litigation has expired.
- (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 individual 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 noncompliance or if for any reason further investigation may be appropriate.
- (i) The on duty Supervisor will complete the Swansea Police Department Supervisor's Use of Force Form. If a Supervisor is not on duty then the Officer in Charge will complete the form and forward the form to their supervisor when they return to duty. If a Supervisor is the officer who used force then they will complete their own form and submit it to the Deputy Chief of Police.
- (j) The Deputy Chief of police will review the use of force and send his/her recommendation in writing to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will review the use of force and document his/her recommendation in writing. The use of force form will be provided to the Swansea Police Department training officer and returned to the Chief of Police to file.

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.

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[See attachment: Supervisors Use of Force Form.pdf](#)

300.7.1 OFFICER IN CHARGE RESPONSIBILITY

Best Practice

The Officer In Charge 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

Best Practice

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

Subject to available resources, officers should receive periodic training on:

- (a) Guidelines regarding vulnerable populations, including but not limited to children, elderly, pregnant persons, and individuals with physical, mental, or intellectual disabilities.
- (b) De-escalation tactics, including alternatives to force.

300.8.1 ADDITIONAL TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Best Practice

At a minimum, officers shall receive training every calendar year in the use of force.

Attachments

Supervisors Use of Force Form.pdf



Swansea Police Department
Supervisor's Use of Force Form



Incident Date: [Click here to enter text.](#) **Incident Time:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Incident Number: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Suspect's Name: [Click here to enter text.](#) **DOB:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Sex: [Click here to enter text.](#) **Height:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **Weight:** [Click here to enter text.](#) **Build:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Location of Occurrence: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Officer(s) Involved: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Other Officer(s) at the scene (did not use force): [Click here to enter text.](#)

Type of Force Used: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Evidence of Injury to Suspect: Yes No (Due to Officer's Use of Force)

Cuts Bruises Swelling Bleeding Torn Clothing Other [Click here to enter text.](#)

Suspect Treated: Yes No N/A

Medical Treatment Conducted by: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Officer Injured: Yes No **Officer's Name:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Officer Medical Treatment Conducted by: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Supervisor's Name On Scene: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Witnesses Located: Yes No **Witnesses Interviewed:** Yes No



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Supervisor's Use of Force Form



Witnesses Provide Video Statement: Yes No If No, Why? [Click here to enter text.](#)

Crime Scene Notified: Yes No N/A

Use of Force Determination by Supervisor: Justified Investigation to Continue

Brief Reason for Use of Force: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Supervisor Completing Form: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reviewed for Compliance with Use of Force Policy:

Yes No Undetermined

Signature of Supervisor Completing Form: _____

Signature of Deputy Chief of Police: _____

Signature of Chief of Police: _____

Chief of Police Recommendations for any Corrective Action/Training Deficiency: _____

Signature of Training Officer: _____