

	WYOMING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE GENERAL ORDER	Distribution	General Order Number
		ALL PERSONNEL	3.09
		Original Issue Date	Reissue/Effective Date
		11/05/2020	01/01/2023
Order Title: USE OF FORCE – GENERAL		Accreditation Standard: NY 2.2; 2.7; 6.1; 6.2; 8.1; 4.1; 18.1; 20.1; 20.5; 20.6; 21.1; 21.2; 25.1; 9.3; 32.3; 32.4; 33.1; 35.1; 40.1; 40.2	Section 3
		Section Title RULES OF CONDUCT	
Rescinds: Reviewed: 01/01/2023		Sheriff David P. Linder	

This General Order is for Office use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order 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.

I. PURPOSE

To establish Wyoming County Sheriff's Office guidelines and limitations concerning the appropriate and acceptable use of deadly and non-deadly force.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Wyoming County Sheriff's Office (“Office”) to provide clear procedures to sworn deputies regarding the use of force in the performance of their duties. The safety of innocent persons and deputies is of paramount importance.

The main responsibility of Sheriff's Office members is to protect the life and property of civilians. In compliance with applicable law, deputies shall use only the amount of force necessary and reasonable to accomplish lawful objectives and to control a situation, effect an arrest, overcome resistance to arrest, or defend themselves or others from harm. When force is necessary, the degree of force employed should be in direct relationship to the amount of resistance exerted, or the immediate threat to the deputies or others. There is a compelling public interest that deputies authorized to exercise the use of force do so in an objectively reasonable manner and in a way that does not violate the civil rights guaranteed by our Constitution and applicable law. Deputies who use excessive or unjustified force degrade the confidence of the community that they serve, undermine the legitimacy of a deputy's authority, and hinder the Office's ability to provide effective law enforcement services to the community.

Deputies who use excessive or unauthorized force shall be subject to discipline, possible criminal prosecution, and/or civil liability. The use of force is only authorized when it is objectively reasonable and for a lawful purpose. Accordingly, the Office will thoroughly review and/or

investigate all uses of force by deputies to assure compliance with all legal requirements and this policy.

**The Wyoming County Sheriff's Office does not authorize or teach
Chokeholds or similar restraints and forbids the use of them.**

- Chokehold is defined as any application of sustained pressure to the throat or windpipe of a person in a manner that may hinder breathing or reduce intake of air OR restricting the flow of blood to the brain by compressing the neck where the carotid arteries are located.

III. DEFINITIONS

Actively Resisting: When a subject makes physically evasive movements to interfere with a deputy's attempt to control that subject; including bracing, tensing, pulling away, actual or attempted flight, or pushing.

Authorized Weapons: Weapons that meet Office specifications and deputies are permitted to carry; and for which deputies successfully complete proficiency and safety training.

Critical Firearm Discharge: A discharge of a firearm by a Wyoming County Sheriff's Office deputy to the extent such discharges are authorized under this policy (See General Order, 3.07, *Firearms Policy*.) Range and training discharges, and discharges at animals are not included under this section.

Deadly Force: Any physical force that can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Deputies must understand that deadly physical force is an extreme measure and should only be used in accordance with the law and as stated in this policy and other policies governing the use of force.

De-escalation: A decrease in the severity of force used in an incident in direct response to a decrease in the level of resistance.

Conducted Energy Device : An incapacitating weapon primarily designed to disrupt a subject's nervous system by means of deploying high voltage, low power current of electrical energy sufficient to cause pain and/or uncontrolled muscle contractions to override an individual's voluntary motor response. This is an intermediate-range weapon and is classified as Non-deadly. The weapon should only be used when a deputy is met with a certain degree of resistance or aggression through either actions or words.

Exigent Circumstances: Those circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to believe that a particular action is necessary to prevent physical harm to an individual, the destruction of relevant evidence, the escape of a suspect, or some other consequence improperly frustrating legitimate law enforcement efforts.

Force: Any physical strike or instrumental contact with a person; any intentional attempted physical strike or instrumental contact that does not take effect; or any significant physical contact that restricts the movement of a person. The term includes the discharge of a firearm or pointing a firearm at or in the direction of a human being, use of chemical spray, use of impact weapons, use of Conducted Energy Device (CED), chokeholds or hard hands, taking of a subject to the ground, or the deployment of a canine. The term does not include escorting or handcuffing a person with minimal or no resistance. Use of force is lawful if it is **objectively reasonable** under the circumstances to effect an arrest, or protect the deputy or other person.

Great Bodily Harm/Serious Physical Injury: Serious bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death, causes serious or permanent disfigurement, or results in long-term loss or impairment of the functioning of any bodily member or organ.

Hard Hand Control: Impact oriented techniques that include knee strikes, elbow strikes, punches, and kicks. Control strikes are used to subdue a subject and include strikes to pressure points such as: the common peroneal (side of the leg), radial nerve (top of the forearm), or brachial plexus origin (side of neck).

- Defensive strikes are used by deputies to protect themselves from attack and may include strikes to other areas of the body, including the abdomen or head. Techniques in this category include pressure point controls, stunning or striking actions delivered to a subject's body with the hand, fist, forearm, legs, or feet. These techniques target the major muscle groups and are delivered to create muscle cramping, thereby inhibiting muscle action and allowing the deputy to subdue the subject. In extreme cases of self-defense, the deputy may need to strike more fragile areas of the body where the potential for injury is greater. The use of neck restraints, chokeholds, or other similar weaponless control techniques, however, are prohibited unless the use of deadly force is authorized.

Harm: Injury inflicted upon a person, whether visible or not.

Imminent Threat: A deputy's or Correction Officer's reasonable perception of impending danger, death, or serious injury from any action or outcome that may occur during an encounter. A subject may pose an imminent or impending threat even if he or she is not pointing a weapon at the deputy but has, for example, a weapon within reach, is running for cover carrying a weapon, or running to a place where the deputy has reason to believe a weapon is available.

Impact Weapons: Office-approved tools that provide a method for gaining control of a subject when lethal force is not justified, but when empty-hand control techniques are not sufficient to effect control.

Level of Control: The amount of force that a deputy uses to gain control over a subject.

Level of Resistance: The amount of force used by a subject to resist compliance with the lawful order or action of a deputy.

Non-deadly: Any force used by a deputy that would not reasonably be expected to cause death.

Non-Verbal and Verbal Non-Compliance: When a subject expresses his/her intentions not to comply with a deputy's directive through verbal and non-verbal means. A deputy may encounter statements ranging from pleading to physical threats. Such statements may also include physical gestures, stances, and subconscious mannerisms.

Objectively Reasonable Force: The degree of force used in effecting an arrest, investigatory stop, or other seizure is evaluated by using an objective, reasonable police officer standard. The reasonableness of each particular use of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, based on the facts and circumstances known to and confronting the officer at the time. (See, [Graham v. Connor, 490 US 388 \(1989\)](#).) In determining the appropriate level of force to be used, officers shall evaluate each situation in light of the unique facts and circumstances of each case. Those factors include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the crime or suspected offense; the level of threat or resistance presented by the subject; the risk or apparent attempt by the subject to escape; and whether the subject was posing an imminent threat to officers or others.

Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray: An inflammatory agent that irritates the mucus membranes and eyes to cause tears and pain. It is an intermediate range weapon that is classified as being Non-deadly. It should only be used, however, when a deputy is met with a certain degree of resistance or aggression through either actions or words.

Passive Resistance: When a subject does not cooperate with a deputy's commands but does not take action to prevent being taken into custody. For example, a protestor who lies down in front of a doorway and must be carried away upon arrest.

Reasonable Belief: Facts or circumstances that would cause a reasonable, similarly-trained police officer to act or think in a similar manner, under similar circumstances.

Soft Hand Control: The use of physical strength and skill in defensive tactics to control arrestees who are reluctant to be taken into custody and offer some degree of physical resistance. Such techniques are not impact oriented and include pain compliance pressure points, takedowns, joint locks, and simply grabbing a subject. Touching or escort holds may be appropriate for use against levels of passive physical resistance.

Verbal Commands: The use of advice, persuasion, warnings, and or clear directions prior to resorting to actual physical force. In an arrest situation, deputies shall, when feasible, give the arrestee simple directions with which the arrestee is encouraged to comply. Verbal commands are the most desirable method of dealing with an arrest situation.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. General

1. Deputies shall use advisements, warnings, verbal persuasion, and verbal instructions when possible before resorting to force.
2. Force shall be de-escalated immediately as resistance decreases.
3. When feasible based on the circumstances, deputies will use disengagements; area containment; surveillance; waiting on a subject; summoning reinforcements; and/or calling in specialized units, in order to reduce the need for force and thereby increase deputy, suspect and civilian safety.
4. Deputies shall allow individuals time to submit to arrest before force is used, wherever possible.

B. Duty to Intervene

1. Any officer present and observing another officer using force that he/she reasonably believes to be clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force, if and when the officer has a realistic opportunity to prevent harm.

C. Retaliatory Force

1. Members are prohibited from using force against persons engaged in First Amendment protected activities or to punish persons for fleeing, resisting arrest or assaulting a member, or for any other reason

D. De-Escalation Techniques

1. De-Escalation Techniques are actions taken by members that are designed to eliminate the need to use force in order to resolve any event or situation. De-Escalation Techniques include: talking to a person using a tone of voice and language that is not aggressive or confrontational; creating space or placing barriers between the member and the person; waiting the person out when circumstances permit; permitting a person to move about when safe; permitting a person the opportunity to make statements or ask questions; slowing down the pace of an incident; tactical repositioning and requesting additional resources. The guiding principles for de-escalation are patience, flexibility, and the desire to resolve each situation peacefully.

E. Use of Force Authorization and Limitations

Sheriff's Office deputies are authorized to use only the amount of force necessary to accomplish lawful objectives. Force may be used:

1. To effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom the deputy reasonably believes has committed an offense.
2. To defend the deputy or others from the use, or imminent use, of physical force.
3. To take persons into protective custody when authorized by law, such as persons who are a danger to themselves or others, persons incapacitated by alcohol, and/or runaway children.
4. To prevent someone from committing suicide or inflicting serious physical injury upon themselves.
5. To assist a licensed physician or psychologist in providing necessary medical treatment.
6. To control a situation, and to overcome passive or active resistance to a lawful order.
7. To neutralize an unlawful assault and defend themselves or others from harm.

The authorized use of physical force ends when resistance ceases and/or the deputy has accomplished the purpose necessitating the use of force. Justification for the use of force is limited to the facts known or perceived by the deputy at the time such force is used, including levels of resistance, suspect's behavioral cues, the number of deputies and/or offenders present, and the availability of other options.

Force shall never be used to subject a person to torture and/or other cruel or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

All sworn personnel shall receive in-service training on all Office use of force policies.

F. Verbal Warning

When tactically feasible, a deputy will identify him/herself as a deputy and issue verbal commands and warnings prior to the use of force. When feasible, a deputy will allow the subject an opportunity to comply with the deputy's verbal commands. A verbal warning is not required in circumstances where the deputy has to make a split-second decision, or if the deputy reasonably believes that issuing the warning would place the safety of the deputy or others in jeopardy.

G. Use of Deadly Force in Defense of Human Life

A deputy is justified in using deadly physical force only when he or she reasonably believes such force is necessary to:

1. Defend the deputy, or a third person, from the imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.
2. Effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom they reasonably believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical injury; AND the deputy reasonably believes this person still poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the deputy or other persons. Where feasible, the deputy should give warning of the intent to use deadly physical force.

See, [Tennessee v. Garner, 471 U.S.1, 85 \(1985\)](#): The United States Supreme Court ruled that the use of deadly force to prevent the escape of a suspected felon violates the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable seizure if used against an apparently unarmed, non-violent suspect (the case involved a burglary suspect). The Supreme Court further stated that deadly force may be used against an offender who has attempted or committed an offense involving the infliction or threatened infliction of great bodily harm. Deadly force may not be used against an unarmed, non-violent, property crime offender. The United States Supreme Court decision went on to state that when an officer is justified in the use of deadly force he will, if feasible, first give a verbal warning. (Example: "Sheriff's Office, Halt").

H. Deadly Force Restrictions

1. Warning Shots Prohibited

Deputies are prohibited from discharging their firearms as a means of warning or frightening a person.

2. Shooting at or from Moving Vehicles

Deputies are prohibited from discharging their firearms at or from a moving vehicle, motorcycle, or bicycle (collectively, "moving vehicle") unless deputies reasonably believe deadly force is necessary to defend the deputy or a third person from the use, or imminent use, of deadly force. For purposes of this policy, deputies will not discharge their firearms at moving vehicles except under extreme circumstances. Such discharges will be rigorously scrutinized. Deputies shall, as a rule, avoid tactics that could place them in a position where a vehicle could be used against them. When confronted with an oncoming, moving vehicle, deputies must attempt to move out of its path, when possible, and should generally avoid placing themselves in situations where the use of deadly force is more likely.

3. Risk to Innocent Bystanders

When deputies are about to discharge their firearms they should be aware of their field of fire, including the backdrop, so as to avoid creating an unnecessary, substantial risk of harm to innocent persons. Deputies are prohibited from discharging their firearms when, based on the totality of the circumstances, discharging a firearm would constitute a greater risk to innocent human life than the subject's actions. (*i.e. discharging a firearm into a crowd, or shooting into a building or through a wall, where the subject is not clearly identified and it is unknown if there are other occupants present.*)

4. Pointing Weapons

Deputies are prohibited from drawing and pointing their firearms at or in the direction of a person, absent an objectively reasonable determination that the situation may escalate to the point where deadly force would be authorized under this policy. When it is determined that the use of deadly force is not necessary, deputies shall, as soon as practicable, secure or holster their firearms. It is the rule of this Office that drawing a firearm and pointing it at a target is considered a use of force and must be documented as such.

5. Use of Firearm to Destroy Animals

Deputies may use deadly force against an animal that represents a threat to the deputy or to public safety. Whenever possible, deputies should seek the permission of their supervisor prior to using deadly force against a dangerous animal.

Deadly force may also be used as a humanitarian measure, where an animal is seriously injured, and humaneness demands its immediate removal from further suffering. Deputies should seek the authorization of their supervisor and, whenever practical, authorization from the animal's owner.

6. Use of Office Weapons for Training and Other Purposes

Deputies may discharge their firearms for the purpose of practice, firearms training, when on the range or other established shooting ranges, or when authorized by the Sheriff to participate in law enforcement competition events.

7. Use of Firearms While Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs

Deputies shall not carry or use any firearms or weapons while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or any other medical condition that might interfere with their judgment or proficiency.

8. Security, Storage, and Safe Handling of Firearms

Deputies shall be trained in accordance with Office guidelines and shall obey all safety rules when handling any firearm or any other weapon. No person other than Wyoming County Sheriff's Office members shall be permitted access to any Office-owned firearm, with the exception of: police officers from other jurisdictions in the official performance of their duty; for repair or maintenance as approved by the Office; or other circumstances with the express permission of the Sheriff.

Deputies will secure and store firearms, both on and off duty, in such a way as to ensure that no unauthorized person will have access to or gain control over the firearm. All Office firearms kept at home must be secured in a safe place inaccessible to family members, especially children.

Whenever a deputy is in the Office and removes his/her handgun or other weapon, the item must not be left in the open and must be secured so that it is not readily accessible to civilians, suspects, victims, or witnesses.

I. Use of Non-deadly Force

Deputies shall only use weapons and control techniques that are issued and/or approved for use by the Office. The use of Non-deadly force shall be limited to defensive and control purposes. Deputies shall use only the reasonable amount of force necessary to overcome resistance or accomplish the law enforcement task. The use of Non-deadly force shall conform to applicable Office Standards of Conduct, policies, procedures, and training. Deputies shall not carry any Non-deadly weapons, or employ any Non-deadly techniques, prior to successfully completing the relevant Office-approved training for each weapon or technique.

1. Authorization to Use Non-deadly Force

Deputies are authorized to use Office-approved, Non-deadly force techniques and authorized weapons to:

- a. Prevent the escape from custody, or to effect a lawful arrest, of a person whom the deputy reasonably believes has committed an offense; or
- b. Protect or defend the deputy or others from what he/she reasonably believes to be active resistance while effecting or attempting to effect an arrest, or while preventing or attempting to prevent an escape.

NOTE: Nothing in this policy is intended to discourage officers from using a higher level of force whenever such force is necessary and objectively reasonable under the circumstances.

2. Non-Deadly Force Restrictions

The following tactics of non-deadly force may be permitted in circumstances only when deadly force is authorized by this policy:

- b. Any strike with an impact weapon or object to a person's head or neck; and/or
- c. Any use of flashlights, radios, or any other items not issued or trained specifically as defensive weapons.

In limited circumstances when a confrontation escalates suddenly and unpredictably, however, a deputy may use any means or device at hand such as a flashlight, radio, and other issued equipment, to defend themselves, another person, or to bring a situation under control. This decision should be based on the circumstances surrounding the deputy at the time, if the deputy determines it was reasonably necessary to do so, as long as the level of defensive action is objectively reasonable given the existing circumstances.

- d. Force shall not be used against persons in handcuffs, except as objectively reasonable to prevent imminent bodily harm to the deputy or another person or persons, to prevent attempted escape, or, as objectively reasonable, where physical removal is necessary to overcome passive resistance.

3. Impact Weapons

Authorized impact weapons may be used only when a deputy is confronted with actual or imminent active aggression against him/herself or another person. (Refer to Policy 3.04 for specifics regarding the authorized use of an Impact Weapon.)

The use of a baton or similar instrument to strike a blow to a subject's arms or legs will be considered use of Non-deadly force. The use of any such items to intentionally strike a subject's head or neck is prohibited except where deadly force is authorized by this policy.

4. Oleoresin Capsicum (OC Spray)

Authorized OC spray is an alternative to physical control techniques and the use of other intermediate weapons. As with any other use of force, however, OC spray must not be used indiscriminately or without justification. Deputies must be able to articulate the reason(s) the subject was sprayed with OC spray.

OC spray shall be utilized as issued and authorized to prevent injury to the subject(s), deputies and others. (Refer to Policy 3.03 for specifics regarding the authorized use of an OC spray.)

5. Electronic Control Weapon

An Conducted Energy Device (i.e., TASER®) is authorized for use when other Non-deadly options have been ineffective, or when it reasonably appears that such options will be ineffective in subduing the subject. Conducted Energy Device's shall only be used in situations where the subject is actively resisting or attempting to avoid arrest by escape and poses an imminent threat to the safety of him/herself, another person, or the deputy. (Refer to Policy 3.02 for specifics regarding the authorized use of an electronic control device.)

G. Training and Qualifications

In addition to training required for firearms qualification (Refer to the Firearms Policy 3.07), deputies shall receive Office authorized training designed to simulate actual situations and conditions and, as otherwise necessary, to enhance deputies' discretion and judgment in using deadly and non-deadly force in accordance with this policy and New York State Penal Law Article 35.

1. All training, including remedial training, will be documented.
2. All deputies shall, at least annually, receive in-service training for all lethal weapons and training in the Office's Use of Force Policy and related case law updates. All deputies qualified in the use of impact weapons, OC spray, **Conducted Energy Device**, and control techniques shall, at least every two years, re-qualify on such weapons or techniques under the instruction of a certified instructor.
3. Training and proficiency results for any authorized weapon will be documented in the training files. Deputies must demonstrate proficiency with weapons in compliance with New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Municipal Police Training Council requirements.
4. All deputies who fail to demonstrate the required proficiency with Office issued weapons shall receive remedial training. Remedial instruction for Office issued firearms shall follow the Office's Firearms Policy. (See Firearms Policy 3.07)
5. A deputy failing to demonstrate proficiency with a weapon shall not return to duty with that weapon until such time as proficiency is demonstrated and documented.
6. Only deputies demonstrating proficiency in the use of Office authorized weapons shall be approved to carry such weapons. (See Firearms Policy 3.07)

H. Provide Medical Aid

1. Any time a person has visible injuries or complains of being injured as a result

of force used against him/her by a deputy, the deputy must take appropriate actions to provide medical care for the injured person. This includes providing first aid, requesting emergency medical services, and/or arranging for other transportation to a hospital or emergency medical facility.

2. Deputies shall be trained in proper treatment procedures for persons exposed to chemical sprays and the effects of other less-lethal force. If the person is offered and/or refuses treatment, this refusal shall be recorded in the report, along with all relevant information. In addition, the deputy will also notify their supervisor as soon as practical. If warranted, the supervisor will arrange to have photographs taken of the person's injuries and those photographs will be attached to the report.

I. Use of Force Reporting

The Office shall establish a use of force reporting system that allows for the effective review and analysis of all Office use of force incidents. The reporting system shall be designed to help identify trends, improve training and deputy safety, and provide timely and accurate information to the Office. Employees shall complete the appropriate Office *Use of Force Report Form* whenever they use force against a subject above un-resisted handcuffing. This includes the discharge of a firearm or any action that results in or is alleged to have resulted in, injury to or the death of another person. This requirement shall not apply when a deputy simply draws or transports any weapon while on scene.

1. Deputy's Responsibilities:

- a. When a deputy finds it necessary to use force to affect an arrest, or for any other law enforcement purpose, whether on duty or off-duty, that deputy shall:
 - 1) Notify a Supervisor of the incident as soon as circumstances allow.
 - 2) Complete a *Use of Force Report Form*, which shall list all other employees involved in or witnessing the incident.

All Use of Force Reports must be completed and forwarded to the Shift Supervisor, or designee, as soon as practical after the incident. Sergeants will be held responsible to see that this form is completed prior to the Deputy leaving their tour of duty. However, when special circumstances exist, such as those incidents resulting in the death or serious injury of a person, the Sheriff may grant an extension, on a case-by-case basis, and assign an alternate date and time for use of force reports to be completed and submitted.

NEW YORK STATE USE OF FORCE REPORTING

REPORTING ALERT: DEFINING USE OF FORCE REPORTING INCIDENTS

Beginning December 1, 2020, all police departments and sheriffs' offices and the New York State Police must submit use of force incidents that occur on or after November 1, 2020, through a new Use of Force Reporting Interface accessible through the [eJustice New York Integrated Justice Portal \(IJ Portal\)](#).

Police departments and sheriffs' offices must use the existing data collection tool to report use of force incidents occurring prior to November 1, 2020. Agencies will have until **December 15, 2020** to submit new or update incidents that they have already reported. The existing data collection tool will be discontinued as of that date.

Agencies are expected to submit use of force incidents to the state Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) no later than 30 days after a month ends (i.e. January data no later than the end of February).

Use of Force Data Reporting Requirements

As a reminder, state law (Executive Law 837-t) requires the chief of every police department, each county sheriff, and the superintendent of state police to report to DCJS any instance in which a police officer or a peace officer (Criminal Procedure Law 1.20.34 and 2.10) uses force.

The following Use of Force incidents must be reported:

Display a chemical agent - To point a chemical agent at a person or persons.

Use/Deploy a chemical agent - The operation of the chemical agent against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.

Brandishes a firearm - To point a firearm at a person or persons.

Uses/Discharges a firearm - To discharge a firearm at or in the direction of a person or persons.

Brandishes an electronic control weapon - To point an electronic control weapon at a person or persons.

Uses/Deploys electronic control weapon - The operation of an electronic control weapon against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.

Brandishes an impact weapon - To point an impact weapon at a person or persons.

Uses/deploys an impact weapon - The operation of an impact weapon against a person or persons in a manner capable of causing physical injury as defined in Penal Law Article 10.

Uses a chokehold or other similar restraint - Any application of sustained pressure to the throat or windpipe of a person in a manner that may hinder breathing or reduce intake of air.

Conduct which results in the death or serious bodily injury of another person - Serious bodily injury includes bodily injury that creates or causes:

- a substantial risk of death; or
- unconsciousness; or
- serious and protracted disfigurement; or
- protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

Please contact DCJS at useofforce@dcjs.ny.gov for more information and/or questions about the use of force reporting process.

Accessing the Use of Force Reporting Interface

The Use of Force Reporting Interface is accessible through the [IJ Portal](#), a secure site that requires a username and password to access. All new requests for IJ Portal accounts must be coordinated through an agency's designated Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC). TACs can use the "Feedback" link in the IJ Portal or email portalhelpdesk@ejusticeny.gov with any questions about access.

Instructions for accessing the Interface and submitting monthly Use of Force incidents are attached and available on the DCJS website:

<https://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/crimnet/ojsa/crimereporting/use-of-force.htm>

2. Shift Supervisor's Responsibilities

- a. When a use of force incident occurs, the Sergeant of OIC, or designee, has the primary responsibility to make certain that all necessary Use of Force Report Forms are properly completed, reviewed for accuracy, and submitted as required by deputies under their command. The Supervisor will sign the report and forward it to the Patrol Captain for the Criminal Division or Jail Administrator for the Jail Division.
- b. If the use of force involves a deputy who did not report to a Patrol Supervisor at that time, the deputy's OIC shall review and sign the Supervisory portion of the report. Supervisors involved in a use of force incident will forward the [Use of Force Report Form](#) to the next level of command not involved in the incident.
- c. When an on-duty or off-duty employee has been involved in a use of force incident, which has resulted in death or serious injury to any person, the Shift Sergeant or OIC will immediately report the incident to the Sheriff, via the chain of command. This also includes those cases where any firearm is accidentally or purposefully discharged

which results in injury or death to any person.

- In conjunction with [New York State Executive Order 147](#), the Attorney General is required to investigate, and if warranted, prosecute certain matters involving the death of an unarmed civilian, whether or not in custody, caused by a law enforcement deputy. The Attorney General may also investigate and prosecute in such instances where there is significant question as to whether the civilian was armed and dangerous at the time of his or her death. The Sheriff, or designee, shall be responsible for notification to the District Attorney and coordinating notification to the Attorney General's Office.

3. Office of the Sheriff

- a. The Patrol Captain or Jail Administrator will review the [Use of Force Report Form](#) to determine:
 - 1) Whether the action was consistent with policy and procedure;
 - 2) Whether the action warrants further administrative review/investigation; and
 - 3) Recommendations on equipment upgrades, training, and/or policy issues, if applicable.
- b. The Undersheriff may confer with Office instructors/trainers who specialize in the field of force used, as needed. The Sheriff will be informed about any incident that may not be consistent with policy and procedure or indicates the action warrants further administrative review/investigation.
- c. In all cases where a deputy's action is determined to be a violation of this General Order but *not* a violation of state law, this distinction shall be made clear in all public discussion of such incidents and in any disciplinary action which may result.
- d. The Patrol Captain and Jail Administrator will conduct an annual analysis of all "Use of Force" incidents and provide a comprehensive report to the Sheriff.

J. Maintenance and Accountability for Weapons:

1. The Patrol Captain will maintain a list of all approved weapons and ammunition that will be made available to all employees. The armorer will also maintain inventory reports for all weapons authorized by the agency and update inventories annually.
2. All weapons will be inspected by a qualified armorer or weapons instructor for proper functionality prior to issuance to a deputy. Only weapons and

ammunition authorized by the agency may be used by agency personnel in the performance of law enforcement duties.

3. At each training session for lethal or less lethal weapons, the armorer or instructor will conduct an inspection of all weapons assigned to each deputy present and confirm that:
 - a. The weapons are properly assigned to the deputy carrying the weapon;
 - b. That the weapons (lethal and less-lethal) are in working order; and
 - c. That inventory records accurately reflect weapons assigned to individual deputies.
4. The procedures listed above will also apply to any weapons authorized by the agency for off-duty carry.
5. Whenever an Office weapon is found to be unsafe or not functioning properly, it will be immediately turned in by the deputy and the deputy will be issued a replacement. The Patrol Captain will maintain an inventory of replacement firearms and assure such firearms are available for issuance when needed.