

Use of Force

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 lawful, professional, impartial, and reasonable manner (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452).

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 Conducted Energy Device policies.

300.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Bodily harm - Physical pain or injury.

Deadly force - Force reasonably anticipated and intended to create a substantial likelihood of causing death or great bodily harm.

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.

Great bodily harm - Bodily injury which creates a high probability of death, or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or which causes a permanent or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ or other serious bodily harm.

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 and the subject leading up to the use of force.

300.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this law enforcement agency to ensure officers respect the sanctity of human life when making decisions regarding use of force. Sworn law enforcement officers have been granted the extraordinary authority to use force when necessary to accomplish lawful ends. Officers shall treat everyone with dignity and without prejudice and use only the force that is objectively reasonable to effectively bring an incident under control, while protecting the safety of others and the officer.

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

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.

Officers should exercise special care when interacting with individuals with known physical, mental health, developmental, or intellectual disabilities as an individual's disability may affect the individual's ability to understand or comply with commands from peace officers.

The decision by an officer to use force or deadly force shall be evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable officer in the same situation, based on the totality of the circumstances known to or perceived by the officer at the time, rather than with the benefit of hindsight, and that the totality of the circumstances shall account for occasions when officers may be forced to make quick judgments about using such force.

This policy is to be reviewed annually and any questions or concerns should be addressed to the immediate supervisor for clarification.

This policy applies to all licensed peace officers and part-time peace officers engaged in the discharge of official duties.

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Use of physical force should be discontinued when resistance ceases or when the incident is under control.

Physical force shall not be used against individuals in restraints, except as objectively reasonable to prevent their escape or prevent imminent bodily injury to the individual, the officer, or another person. In these situations, only the amount of force necessary to control the situation shall be used.

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

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

Use of Force

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 this 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.

300.4 DUTY TO INTERCEDE AND REPORT

Regardless of tenure or rank, any officer present and observing another law enforcement officer or a member using force that is beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to physically or verbally do so, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452; Minn. Stat. § 626.8475).

Any officer who observes another law enforcement officer or a member use force that is beyond or potentially beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall report these observations to a supervisor as soon as feasible (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452; Minn. Stat. § 626.8475).

300.5 PERSPECTIVE

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 other law enforcement officers may have additional information regarding the threat posed by the subject.

300.6 ALTERNATIVE TACTICS - DE-ESCALATION

1. When circumstances reasonably permit, officers should use non-violent strategies and techniques to decrease the intensity of a situation, improve decision-making, improve communication, reduce the need for force, and increase voluntary compliance (e.g., summoning additional resources, formulating a plan, attempting verbal persuasion).
2. Whenever possible and when such delay will not compromise the safety of another or the officer and will not result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime, an officer shall allow an individual opportunity to submit to verbal commands before force is used.

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

Use of Force

300.7 USE OF FORCE OTHER THAN DEADLY FORCE

An officer may use reasonable force (Minn. Stat. § 609.06 and Minn. Stat. § 629.33):

- (a) In effecting a lawful arrest.
- (b) In the execution of a legal process.
- (c) In enforcing an order of the court.
- (d) In executing any other duty imposed by law.
- (e) In preventing the escape, or to retake following the escape, of a person lawfully held on a charge or conviction of a crime.
- (f) In restraining a person with a mental illness or a person with a developmental disability from self-injury or injury to another.
- (g) In self-defense or defense of another.

An officer who makes or attempts to make an arrest need not retreat or desist from his/her efforts by reason of resistance or threatened resistance of the person being arrested; nor shall such officer be deemed the aggressor or lose his/her right to self-defense by the use of reasonable force to effect the arrest or to prevent escape or to overcome resistance.

300.8 STATE RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF OTHER RESTRAINTS

Officers may not use any of the following restraints unless the use of deadly force is authorized (Minn. Stat. § 609.06; Minn. Stat. § 609.066):

- (a) A chokehold.
- (b) Tying all of an individual's limbs together behind the person's back to render the person immobile.
- (c) Securing an individual in any way that results in transporting the person face down in a vehicle.

300.9 USE OF FORCE TO SEIZE EVIDENCE

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 Golden Valley Police Department for this specific purpose.

300.10 USE OF DEADLY FORCE

An officer is authorized to use deadly force if an objectively reasonable officer would believe, based on the totality of the circumstances known to the officer at the time and without the benefit of hindsight, that such force is necessary. Use of deadly force is justified when one or both of the following apply:

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

Use of Force

- (a) To protect the officer or another from death or great bodily harm.
- (b) To effect the arrest or capture, or prevent the escape, of an individual whom the officer knows or has reasonable grounds to believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony and the officer reasonably believes that the person will cause death or great bodily harm to another person unless immediately apprehended.

In both scenarios, the use of deadly force is only authorized provided that the threat (Minn. Stat. § 609.066):

- Can be articulated with specificity.
- Is reasonably likely to occur absent action by the officer.
- Must be addressed through the use of deadly force without unreasonable delay.

An officer shall not use deadly force against a person based on the danger the person poses to self if an objectively reasonable officer would believe, based on the totality of the circumstances known to the officer at the time and without the benefit of hindsight, that the person does not pose a threat of death or great bodily harm to the peace officer or to another.

Where feasible, the officer shall identify themselves as a law enforcement officer and warn of his or her intent to use deadly force.

In cases where deadly force is authorized, and when practicable, less than lethal measures must be considered first by the officer.

When an incident occurs in which an officer uses deadly force, whether by firearm or other means, both an administrative and a criminal investigation of the incident will be initiated. The officer will be required to undergo both alcohol and drug testing as soon as practicable after the incident. Use of deadly force, whether or not it results in death or great bodily harm to another, is considered a critical incident, and is subject to the provisions of policy.

An officer who has discharged a firearm (either on or off duty), killing or injuring a human being, shall surrender the firearm when directed to do so, including any remaining live rounds. This should be done in a nonpublic setting and the officer will be issued a replacement firearm as soon as practicable. An officer who discharged a personally owned firearm in such a situation will be issued a department owned firearm if a personally owned replacement is not readily available, refer to the Firearms policy.

300.11 REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE

Any use of force by a member of this department shall be documented prior to the end of shift (unless an extension is granted by a supervisor), completely, and accurately in an appropriate report, depending on the nature of the incident to include GVPD Use of Force report in addition to the original report. The officer should articulate the factors perceived and why he/she believed the use of force was reasonable under the circumstances.

300.11.1 NOTIFICATIONS TO SUPERVISORS

Supervisory notification shall be made as soon as practicable following any application of force.

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

Use of Force

300.11.2 ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

An officer reporting a use of force by another law enforcement officer or member pursuant to this policy shall also make the report in writing to the Chief of Police within 24 hours (Minn. Stat. § 626.8475).

300.12 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once the scene is safe and as soon as practical, an officer shall provide appropriate medical care consistent with his or her training to any individual who has visible injuries, complains of being injured, or requests medical attention. This may include providing first aid, requesting emergency medical services, and/or arranging for transportation to an emergency medical facility.

See the Medical Aid and Response Policy for additional guidelines.

300.13 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A supervisor or officer-in-charge should respond to a reported use of force, if reasonably available, to assess the situation and assist in any follow up required.

All uses of other than deadly force will be initially reviewed by the on-duty shift supervisor before the conclusion of their next scheduled shift. The Use of Force and/or Training sergeant will complete a review of the incident within 30 days of its occurrence. If the UoF/training sergeant was personally involved in the incident, the review will be conducted by a Commander. If the review determines there are possible policy violations, an internal investigation will be conducted. If the review determines there was exceptional or valorous conduct on the part of an officer or citizen, the findings will be forwarded to the awards committee.

300.13.1 ASSISTANT CHIEF OF PATROL RESPONSIBILITY

The Assistant Chief of Patrol 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.

300.14 TRAINING

Officers shall receive training on this policy, including the learning objectives as provided by the Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding at least annually (Minn. Stat. § 626.8452, Subd. 3).

Subject to available resources, officers should receive periodic training on guidelines regarding vulnerable populations, including but not limited to children, elderly, pregnant persons, and individuals with physical, mental, or intellectual disabilities.

In addition, training shall be provided on a regular and periodic basis and designed to:

- (a) Provide techniques for the use of and reinforce the importance of de-escalation
- (b) Simulate actual shooting situations and conditions; and
- (c) Enhance officers' discretion and judgment in using other than deadly force in accordance with this policy.

Golden Valley Police Department

Policy Manual

Use of Force

300.15 USE OF FORCE ANALYSIS

At least annually, the Department's Assistant Chiefs shall collectively 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.
- (b) Training needs recommendations.
- (c) Equipment needs recommendations.
- (d) Policy revision recommendations.

300.16 POLICY REVIEW

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee should annually review and update this policy to reflect developing practices and procedures.