



# GENERAL ORDER

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**Chapter:** Operations

**Section:** 403.3

**Subject:** Use of Force

**Topic:** Impact Weapons

**Accreditation:** A.05.01, A.05.02, A.05.04, A.06.01

**Revised:**

**Reaffirmed:**

**Enacted:** 06/09/2016

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**Review:** 07/30/2017

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy and procedures governing the use of impact weapons by sworn members of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office. Therefore, the intent of this General Order is to provide guidelines governing the use of force by sworn members of the agency and to prohibit the imprudent use of such force so that loss of life or serious bodily harm can be held to a minimum or hopefully, eliminated.

## II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office that sworn personnel shall attend and successfully complete all applicable training. The deployment of impact weapons by sworn personnel shall be done in accordance with General Order 403.1. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the deputy to ensure that he/she deploys the impact weapon within the standards of *Graham v. Conner*.

In the course of their duties, deputies may find it necessary to use force to overcome resistance, protect property and defend themselves or another person. In any encounter where the use of force becomes necessary, only reasonable force will be used. Under no circumstances will the force used be greater than necessary to achieve lawful objectives and to conduct lawful public safety activities.

Deputies have an affirmative duty to act if they observe another deputy using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances, and shall safely intercede to prevent the use of excessive force. Deputies shall promptly report the incident to a supervisor.

## III. PROCEDURE

- A. Sworn personnel shall attend an approved training course prior to carrying or deploying an impact weapon. The training course must be approved by the LCSO Training Supervisor.
- B. Sworn personnel shall only carry and deploy the impact weapon that is issued by the LCSO. The LCSO Training Supervisor shall maintain the list of approved impact weapons.

- C. The impact weapon shall be worn on either the duty belt or external vest carrier in a specifically designed holster.
- D. It is the responsibility of the deputy to routinely check the impact weapon to ensure that it is in operating condition. If it is found not to be operating properly the deputy shall immediately return it to the Quartermaster for replacement.
- E. The impact weapon may only be deployed when there is an exigent and immediate safety risk that is reasonably likely to be cured by the use of the impact weapon.
  - 1. Refusal to obey commands alone does not constitute active resistance, even when that resistance includes physically preventing the manipulation of the subject's body.
  - 2. Erratic behavior and mental illness alone also do not necessarily create a safety risk.
- F. Deputies should give warnings when feasible before application.
- G. The impact weapon shall be deployed in accordance with the training protocols established by the LCSO and General Order 403.1.
- H. Whenever possible, intentional strikes to the subject's head, kidneys or groin shall be avoided except in situations when deadly force is justified.
- I. Once the impact weapon is deployed, the deputy shall ensure the individual receives any necessary medical treatment, on scene, if tactically practical. A supervisor shall be notified of the deployment of the impact weapon and respond to the scene.
- J. Once the individual is transported to the ADC the deputy shall inform the intake supervisor that the individual has been struck with an impact weapon. The ADC staff shall notify the ADC medical staff for further monitoring.

#### IV. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

- A. As soon as practical after the suspect's arrest, medical assistance shall be summoned. This requirement applies in all cases where someone has been struck with an impact weapon regardless of whether there is an actual, perceived, or alleged injury.
- B. In most cases, transport of the suspect to a medical facility will not be necessary. However, transport becomes mandatory in any case where:
  - 1. The individual requests transport or medical personnel recommend transport

2. The individual was struck in the head, throat, chest/breast, kidneys or groin
  3. The individual is discovered to be pregnant or suffering from a heart condition
  4. The individual complains of (or appears to be suffering from) chest pains, irregular heartbeat, difficulty breathing, and/or diminished consciousness
  5. The individual has sustained a secondary injury that cannot be adequately treated by medical personnel at the scene
  6. The individual exhibits behavior and physical signs of possible "excited delirium"
- C. If the suspect is transported to a hospital or other medical facility, the deputy who maintains custody at that facility shall obtain a written medical release upon the suspect's discharge, if available, provided the suspect remains in custody following discharge.

V. REPORTING

- A. Any deputies witnessing or involved in the incident shall submit an IBR or supplemental incident report thoroughly documenting the events.
- B. In all cases where there is a use of force, regardless of injury or complaint of injury, the supervisor shall complete a full and thorough investigation of the incident and document the investigation on the Administrative Investigation Inquiry Use of Force form.
1. Refer to General Order 302 for further direction on completing Administrative Investigation Inquiries.
  2. Any deployment of an impact weapon that results in serious injury or requires hospitalization shall be reported to the Internal Affairs section, which shall conduct the investigation.
  3. If a death occurs, it shall be investigated in accordance with General Order 403.12.
- C. The impact area shall be photographed and any other evidence shall be documented appropriately.
1. Typical evidence related to uses of force may include, but are not limited to: video (in-car and/or body cameras), witness statements, incident reports and/or supplemental incident reports, related physical evidence, etc.

- D. The on-scene supervisor shall notify the chain of command of the deployment of Impact Weapons in all cases that result in death, serious injury or requires hospitalization.
  
- E. Copies of all documents shall be forwarded to the Internal Affairs section.