

Policy 309 Conducted Energy Devices

309.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the issuance and use of the conducted energy device (CED).

309.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy):

Conducted energy device - A portable device that fires darts/electrodes that transmit an electrical charge or current intended to temporarily immobilize a person.

309.2 POLICY

The CED is used in an attempt to control a violent or potentially violent individual. The appropriate use of such a device may result in fewer serious injuries to officers and suspects.

309.3 ISSUANCE AND CARRYING CEDS

Only members who have successfully completed department-approved training and have demonstrated satisfactory skill and proficiency may be issued and may carry the CED.

An officer that is issued a CED is expected to carry it as an option to be considered when deadly force is not justified (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy).

The department CED instructor should keep a log of issued CEDs and the serial numbers of cartridges/magazines issued to members.

CEDs are issued for use during a member's current assignment. Those leaving a particular assignment may be required to return the device to the department inventory.

Officers shall only use the CED and cartridges/magazines that have been issued by the Department. Cartridges/magazines should not be used after the manufacturer's expiration date.

Uniformed officers who have been issued the CED shall wear the device in an approved holster.

An officer shall carry a CED in a holster on the support side of the body, and in all but extreme circumstances, shall draw, exhibit, and use the device with the support (i.e., non-handgun firing) hand (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy).

- a. All CEDs shall be clearly distinguishable to differentiate them from the duty weapon and any other device.
- b. For single-shot devices, whenever practicable, officers should carry an additional cartridge on their person when carrying the CED.

- c. Officers should not hold a firearm and the CED at the same time.

Non-uniformed officers may secure the CED in a concealed, secure location in the driver's compartment of their vehicles.

309.3.1 USER RESPONSIBILITIES

Officers shall be responsible for ensuring that the issued CED is properly maintained and in good working order. This includes a function test and battery life monitoring, as required by the manufacturer, and should be completed prior to the beginning of the officer's shift.

CEDs that are damaged or inoperative, or cartridges/magazines that are expired or damaged, shall be returned to the Firearms Coordinator for disposition. Officers shall submit documentation stating the reason for the return and how the CED or cartridge/magazine was damaged or became inoperative, if known.

309.4 VERBAL AND VISUAL WARNINGS

A verbal warning of the intended use of the CED should precede its application, unless it would otherwise endanger the safety of officers or when it is not practicable due to the circumstances. The purpose of the warning is to:

- a. Provide the individual with a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply.
- b. Provide other officers and individuals with a warning that the CED may be deployed.

If, after a verbal warning, an individual fails to voluntarily comply with an officer's lawful orders and it appears both reasonable and feasible under the circumstances, the officer may, but is not required to, activate any warning on the device, which may include display of the electrical arc, an audible warning, or the laser in a further attempt to gain compliance prior to the application of the CED. The laser should not be intentionally directed into anyone's eyes.

The fact that a verbal or other warning was given or the reasons it was not given shall be documented by the officer deploying the CED in the related report.

309.5 USE OF THE CED

The CED has limitations and restrictions requiring consideration before its use. The CED should only be used when its operator can safely deploy the device within its operational range. Although the CED may be effective in controlling most individuals, officers should be aware that the device may not achieve the intended results and be prepared with other options.

If sufficient personnel are available and can be safely assigned, an officer designated as lethal cover for any officer deploying a CED may be considered for officer safety.

309.5.1 APPLICATION OF THE CED

The CED may be used when the circumstances reasonably perceived by the officer at the time indicate that such application reasonably appears necessary to control a person who:

- a. Is violent or is physically resisting.
- b. Has demonstrated, by words or action, an intention to be violent or to physically resist, and reasonably appears to present the potential to harm officers, themselves, or others.

Mere flight from a pursuing officer, without additional circumstances or factors, is not good cause for the use of the CED to apprehend an individual.

The CED shall not be used to psychologically torment, to elicit statements, or to punish any individual.

309.5.2 SPECIAL DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The use of the CED on certain individuals should generally be avoided unless the totality of the circumstances indicates that other available options reasonably appear ineffective or would present a greater danger to the officer, the subject, or others, and the officer reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the potential risk of using the device. This includes (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy):

- a. Individuals who are known to be pregnant.
- b. Elderly individuals or obvious juveniles.
- c. Individuals with obviously low body mass.
- d. Individuals who are handcuffed or otherwise restrained.
- e. In any environment where an officer knows or has reason to believe that a potentially flammable, volatile, or explosive material is present that might be ignited by an open spark, including but not limited to OC spray with a volatile propellant, gasoline, natural gas, or propane.
- f. Individuals who are situated on an elevated surface (e.g., a ledge, scaffold, near a precipice) unless reasonable efforts have been made to prevent or minimize a fall-related injury (e.g., deploying a safety net).
- g. Individuals known to be located in water.
- h. Operators in physical control of vehicles in motion, including automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, bicycles, and scooters unless deadly force is justified.

The primary use of a CED is not as a pain compliance tool. Drive-stun mode should only be used when necessary to complete the incapacitation circuit where only one probe has attached to the person, where both probes attached in close proximity, or when no other alternatives to deadly force are available and appropriate (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy).

309.5.3 TARGETING CONSIDERATIONS

Recognizing that the dynamics of a situation and movement of the subject may affect target placement of probes, when practicable, officers should attempt to target the back, lower center mass, and upper legs of the subject, and avoid intentionally targeting the head, neck, chest, or

genitals. If circumstances result in one or more probes inadvertently striking an area outside of the preferred target zones, the individual should be closely monitored until examined by paramedics or other medical personnel.

309.5.4 MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS OF THE CED

Officers shall apply the CED for only one standard cycle of five seconds or less and then evaluate the situation before applying any subsequent cycles (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy). Once an officer has successfully deployed two probes on the subject, the officer shall continually assess the subject to determine if additional probe deployments or cycles reasonably appear necessary. Additional factors officers may consider include but are not limited to:

- a. Whether it is reasonable to believe that the need to control the individual outweighs the potentially increased risk posed by multiple applications.
- b. Whether the probes are making proper contact.
- c. Whether the individual has the ability and has been given a reasonable opportunity to comply.
- d. Whether verbal commands or other options or tactics may be more effective.

Multiple applications of the CED increase the risk of serious bodily injury or death. Officers should not intentionally deploy multiple CEDs at the same person, unless the first deployed CED clearly fails. An officer shall consider other options if the officer has used a CED three times against a person and the person continues to be a threat, as the CED may not be effective against that person (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy).

Given that on certain devices (e.g., TASER 10™) each trigger pull deploys a single probe, the officer must pull the trigger twice to deploy two probes to create the possibility of neuro-muscular incapacitation.

309.5.5 ACTIONS FOLLOWING DEPLOYMENTS

Officers should take appropriate actions to control and restrain the individual as soon as reasonably practicable to minimize the need for longer or multiple exposures to the CED. As soon as practicable, officers shall notify a supervisor any time the CED has been discharged. If needed for evidentiary purposes, the expended cartridge, along with any probes and wire, should be submitted into evidence (including confetti tags, when equipped on the device). The evidence packaging should be marked "Biohazard" if the probes penetrated the subject's skin.

309.5.6 DANGEROUS ANIMALS

The CED may be deployed against an animal if the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety.

309.5.7 OFF-DUTY CONSIDERATIONS

Officers are not authorized to carry department CEDs while off-duty.

Officers shall ensure that CEDs are secured while in their homes, vehicles, or any other area under their control, in a manner that will keep the device inaccessible to others.

309.6 DOCUMENTATION

Officers shall clearly articulate and document the justification for each individual application of the CED in the related arrest/crime reports and the CED report forms (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy). Photographs should be taken of any obvious probe impact or drive-stun application sites and attached to the CED report form. Notification shall also be made to a supervisor in compliance with the Use of Force Policy. Unintentional discharges, pointing the device at a person, audible warning, laser activation, and arcing the device, other than for testing purposes, will also be documented on the report form. Data downloads from the CED after use on a subject should be done as soon as practicable using a department-approved process to preserve the data.

309.6.1 REPORTS

The officer should include the following in the arrest/crime report:

- a. Identification of all personnel firing CEDs
- b. Identification of all witnesses
- c. Medical care provided to the subject
- d. Observations of the subject's physical and physiological actions
- e. Any known or suspected drug use, intoxication, or other medical problems

309.7 MEDICAL TREATMENT

At the earliest safe opportunity at a scene controlled by law enforcement, officers trained in probe removal and handling shall remove CED probes, unless probes are in a sensitive area, such as the head, breast, or groin. Probes in sensitive areas shall be removed by an emergency medical technician (EMT), paramedic, or other health care professional (Washington State Office of the Attorney General Model Use of Force Policy). Used CED probes shall be treated as a sharps biohazard, similar to a used hypodermic needle, and handled appropriately. Universal precautions should be taken.

All persons who have been struck by CED probes, who have been subjected to the electric discharge of the device, or who sustained direct exposure of the laser to the eyes shall be medically assessed prior to booking. Additionally, any such individual who falls under any of the following categories should, as soon as practicable, be examined by paramedics or other qualified medical personnel:

- a. The person is suspected of being under the influence of controlled substances and/or alcohol.
- b. The person may be pregnant.
- c. The person reasonably appears to be in need of medical attention.
- d. The CED probes are lodged in a sensitive area (e.g., groin, female breast, head, face, neck).
- e. The person requests medical treatment.

Any individual exhibiting signs of distress or who is exposed to multiple or prolonged applications shall be transported to a medical facility for examination or medically evaluated prior to booking. If any individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal should be witnessed by another officer and/or medical personnel and shall be fully documented in related reports. If an audio/video recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included, if possible.

The transporting officer shall inform any person providing medical care or receiving custody that the individual has been subjected to the application of the CED (see the Medical Aid and Response Policy).

309.8 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

When possible, supervisors should respond to calls when they reasonably believe there is a likelihood the CED may be used. A supervisor should respond to all incidents where the CED was activated.

A supervisor should review each incident where a person has been exposed to a CED. The device's internal logs should be downloaded by a supervisor or Firearms Coordinator and saved with the related arrest/crime report. The supervisor should arrange for photographs of probe sites to be taken and witnesses to be interviewed.

309.9 TRAINING

Personnel who are authorized to carry the CED shall be permitted to do so only after successfully completing the initial department-approved training and demonstrating satisfactory skill and proficiency. Any personnel who have not carried the CED as a part of their assignments for a period of six months or more shall be recertified by a qualified CED instructor prior to again carrying or using the device.

Proficiency training for personnel who have been issued CEDs shall occur every 2 years. A reassessment of an officer's knowledge and/or practical skills may be required at any time, if deemed appropriate, by the department CED instructor. All training and proficiency for CEDs will be documented in the officer's training files.

Command staff, supervisors, and investigators should receive CED training as appropriate for the investigations they conduct and review.

Officers who do not carry CEDs should receive training that is sufficient to familiarize them with the device and with working with officers who use the device.

The Special Services Sergeant is responsible for ensuring that all members who carry CEDs have received initial and annual proficiency training. Periodic audits should be used for verification.

Application of CEDs during training could result in injuries and should not be mandatory for certification.

The Special Services Sergeant shall ensure the following objectives are included in training:

- a. A review of this policy.
- b. A review of the Use of Force Policy.
- c. Performing weak-hand draws or cross-draws until proficient to reduce the possibility of unintentionally drawing and firing a firearm.
- d. Dominant hand draws for members who carry the device other than officers.
- e. Target area considerations, to include techniques or options to reduce the unintentional application of probes to the head, neck, chest, and groin.
- f. Scenario-based training, including virtual reality training when available.
- g. Handcuffing a subject during the application of the CED and transitioning to other force options.
- h. De-escalation techniques.
- i. Restraint techniques that do not impair respiration following the application of the CED.
- j. Proper use of cover and concealment during deployment of the CED for purposes of officer safety.
- k. Proper tactics and techniques related to multiple applications of CEDs.

309.10 NON CERTIFICATION OR NON QUALIFICATION

If any member is unable to attend CED training or qualification for any reason, including injury, illness, duty status or scheduling conflict, he/she shall submit a memorandum to their immediate supervisor prior to the end of the required training/qualification period. Members who fail to meet minimum standards for CED training or fail to qualify after three attempts shall be provided remedial training, and may be subject to the following requirements:

- a. Additional training may be scheduled to assist the member in demonstrating CED proficiency.
- b. Additional individual instruction with a certified CED instructor to practice weapon manipulation and skills.

Members who are unable to qualify shall re-qualify as soon as practicable. This shall not exceed 30 calendar days from the original training date. Members who are still unable to qualify after remedial training and an additional three attempts will be removed from a field assignment and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Members must exhibit proficiency and qualify with the CED prior to being returned to regular duty.