

**The Pennsylvania State University  
Police and Public Safety Department**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURAL ORDER**

SUBJECT			
5.65 Duty to Intervene			
CALEA REF.	1.2.10	EFFECTIVE DATE 10/13/20	REVISED DATE 6/12/25
PLEAC Ref:	1.8.4		
APPROVED BY Chief of Police and Public Safety, Wesley Sheets			ASSIGNED TO GROUP(s): 1

**I. PURPOSE**

To establish the Pennsylvania State University Police and Public Safety (UPPS) Department guidelines and expectations surrounding an employee's duty to intervene.

**II. POLICY**

This policy is intended to make clear an employee's duty to intervene. This duty is embodied in UPPS Mission, Vision, and Values, in the UPPS Code of Ethics, and in the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. UPPS officers will have a clear understanding of UPPS expectations pertaining to conduct and activities while on and off-duty. The safety of innocent persons and officers is of paramount importance. The use of excessive force, unwarranted physical force, or unlawful force by an employee is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Duty:** A moral or legal obligation; a responsibility.
- B. **Intervene:** To come between, whether verbally or physically, to prevent or alter a result or course of events and actions.
- C. **Officer:** Both police and public safety specialist.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

A. General

Any UPPS employee, within their scope of authority and training, present and observing another employee using force that is beyond that which is objectively reasonable force under the circumstances will, when in a position to do so safely, intervene to end and prevent the use of such excessive force. Additionally, UPPS employees, within their scope of authority and training, have the duty to intervene in all other situations where a UPPS employee is acting in violation of laws, orders, policies, or ethical conduct and immediately notify either their supervisor or District Commander. Failure to Intervene may subject an employee to disciplinary action (1.8.4).

1. Preventative Approach

- a. UPPS employees will take actions to prevent, whenever possible, unethical conduct or inappropriate behavior.
- b. UPPS employees will examine the circumstances surrounding the incident to determine the appropriate method of intervention.
- c. UPPS employees, acting within their scope of authority and training, may intervene verbally, physically, or both, depending on the circumstances.

2. Active Approach

- a. UPPS employees, acting within their scope of authority and training, will take an active approach to intervene to stop any unethical behavior or misconduct when such conduct is being committed by another employee.

- b. If verbal interventions are not sufficient to stop the act, the employee will take an active approach, within their scope of authority and training, to intervene between the UPPS employee and the other party involved.

B. Provide Medical Aid

1. Any time a person has visible injuries or claims to be injured due to force used against him/her by an employee, the employee must take appropriate actions (up to their ability) 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. Officers will 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 will be recorded in the police report, along with all relevant information. In addition, the officer 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 police report.

C. Reporting

1. UPPS Employee Responsibilities:
  - a. Notify their immediate supervisor if any excessive or unreasonable force is observed by employees of this department, or any other police department.
  - b. Submit a written report to their supervisor which documents the observed use of force, action or inaction inconsistent with UPPS policy, procedures or training that constituted criminal conduct or resulted in constitutional violation(s).
2. Supervisors Responsibility:
  - a. Supervisors will document all incidents involving intervention by following established reporting procedures outlined in Policy 5.2 Use of Force – General.
  - b. Supervisors will immediately report allegations of excessive or unreasonable force to their District Commander and/or the Chief of Police.

Updates:

- 9/28/23: Title changes made
- 5/13/24: Scope of authority and training language added
- 9/18/24: PLEAC Reference added, Section IV.C.b added