



Seattle Police Department Policy Manual



8.300 – Use of Force Tools

Original Effective Date: 04/24/2023

Revised Effective Date: 12/01/2023

Revised Effective Date: 09/01/2024

Revised Effective Date: 10/15/2025

This policy addresses the use and deployment of all force weapons and tools that are available to sworn employees. The following less lethal tools are governed by this policy:

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8.300-POL-1 Less-Lethal Considerations

Less-lethal tools are used to interrupt a subject’s threatening behavior so that sworn employees may take physical control of the subject with less risk of injury to the subject or sworn employee than posed by greater force applications. Less-lethal tools alone cannot be expected to render a subject harmless.

Backing sworn employees should be prepared to take immediate action to exploit the brief opportunity created by the less-lethal tool and take control of the subject if safe to do so.

For less-lethal considerations for crowd events, see manual section [14.090 – Crowd Control, Intervention, and Control](#).

1. Sworn Employees Will Only Carry and Use Tools That Have Been Approved by the Department and That the Sworn Employee has Been Properly Trained to Use

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Department training will include known risks of any tool to cause harm beyond the intended target.

The department will issue, and make reasonably available, less lethal tools for sworn employees' use.

Use of improvised tools may be permissible under exigent circumstances.

2. Uniformed Sworn Employees Are Required to Carry at Least One (1) Less-Lethal Tool

Uniformed sworn employees will carry at least one (1) of these items: OC, a Taser, and/or a baton. Uniformed sworn employees who have been issued a Taser will carry it.

3. Sergeants and Lieutenants Will Ensure That Each Sworn Employee in Their Command is Trained on the Tools They Carry

4. Sworn Employees Are Prohibited from Using Less-Lethal Tools as a Form of Punishment or for Retaliation

5. Sworn Employees Will Not Use Less-Lethal Tools to Prod or Jab Individuals, to Awaken Unconscious or Intoxicated Individuals, or to Prevent the Destruction of Evidence

Reasonable efforts to awaken or assess unconscious/unresponsive individuals without less-lethal tools, including trained pain stimuli, are considered a medical procedure, defined in manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#), and not force.

6. Sworn Employees Will Consider Risks to the Subject and Third Parties When Determining Whether to Deploy any Less-Lethal Tools

Sworn employees may only use less lethal force on subjects who are visibly pregnant, elderly, apparently pre-adolescent, or visibly frail when there is an exigency or an immediate threat to any person.

7. Use of Less-Lethal Tools on a Person in the Following Circumstances is Only Permitted in Situations Where There is an Imminent Risk of Death or Great Bodily Harm to Any Person:

- When the subject is in an elevated position where a fall is likely to cause substantial bodily harm or death.
- When the subject is in a location where the subject could drown.
- When the subject is operating a motor vehicle or motorcycle, and the engine is running or is on a bicycle or scooter in-motion.

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Exception: The vehicle has been temporarily immobilized (i.e., pinning).

8. The Application of Less-Lethal Tools on a Restrained Person is Generally Prohibited

Exception: Application is only allowed where reasonable, necessary, and proportional to protect a sworn employee or member of the public from imminent physical injury.

For subjects contained within a police vehicle, sworn employees handle the situation per manual section [8.200 – Using Force](#).

9. When Feasible, Sworn Employees Will Issue a Verbal Warning to the Subject and Fellow Sworn Employees Prior to the Use of Any Less-Lethal Tool

Prior to using any less-lethal tool, sworn employees will issue a verbal warning to the subject, other sworn employees, and other individuals present, that the tool will be used and will defer using the less-lethal tool a reasonable amount of time to allow the subject to comply with the warning.

When employing a team tactics approach, verbal warnings may come from any sworn employee involved in the incident.

Exception: A verbal warning is not required if giving the warning would compromise the safety of the sworn employee or others. In such circumstances, only the deploying sworn employee will document their reason for believing safety would have been compromised in their use of force statement.

10. Unintentional Discharges of Less-Lethal Tools Require Reporting and Documentation

For unintentional discharges of less-lethal tools, see 8.300-PRO-1 Reporting and Notification for Unintentional Discharge of Use of Force Tools.

8.300-POL-2 Use of Patrol Canines

This section applies to sworn employees who utilize patrol canines.

For deployment and search guidance, see manual section [16.300 – Canines](#).

1. Definitions

The following terms apply to this policy and are defined in manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#):

Canine Apprehension

Canine Bite

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Canine Bite Ratio	Containment
Canine Deployment	Direct Apprehension
Canine Handler or Canine Officer	Evidence Search
Canine Search	Off-Lead
Canine Team	On-Lead
Canine Use of Force	Surrender
Confirmation Track	Tracking Search
Contained Search	Unintentional Canine Bite or Injury

2. The Prompt and Proper Utilization of a Trained Canine Team Can Be a Valuable Resource in Law Enforcement

When properly used with strict handler control, a canine team increases the degree of safety to persons within a contained search area, enhances individual sworn employee safety, increases the likelihood of subject apprehension, and may reduce the amount of time necessary to conduct a search.

Canines are also an effective less lethal tool to overcome potential violent resistance and to reduce injuries to all parties involved.

At the same time, handlers will make all reasonable efforts to avoid unnecessary, and unnecessarily injurious, bites.

All canine uses of force will be objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional.

3. A Canine Team is Viewed as a Single Officer Unit and Will Perform Under that Premise When Making Decisions Regarding Contact of Subjects

The use of a canine may be reasonable to provide additional safety for sworn employees when needed. A canine handler may use a canine for officer safety.

The canine will not be used solely for intimidation or coercion.

4. Canine Officers May Use Direct Apprehension to Physically Apprehend a Subject

Direct apprehension will be used only when the canine officer has probable cause that the subject has committed one of the crimes listed in [16.300-POL-1\(3\)](#), or there is a valid arrest warrant for the subject for one of the crimes listed in [16.300-POL-1\(3\)](#), and:

- The canine officer reasonably believes that the subject poses an imminent threat of harm to the officers or others; or
- The subject is trying to escape, such as by immediate flight from a crime against person(s) with aggravating factors (e.g., crime involved a firearm or the subject

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is reasonably believed to be in possession of a firearm or other potentially deadly weapon, etc.).

Exception: Canine handlers may deploy their canine to protect sworn employees or the public when a subject causes an imminent threat of harm to any person.

5. Canines Will Not Be Used to Apprehend Subjects Perceived to Be Juveniles Except for the Crimes Listed in [16.300-POL-1\(3\)](#)

In the case of known or possible juvenile subjects, special consideration will be given to the subject's age and propensity for violence, and officers will explore alternatives to the deployment of a canine.

6. Canine Deployment Announcements for Direct Apprehension

Prior to deploying a canine for a direct apprehension, a verbal announcement will be made to generate compliance, when feasible.

When a verbal announcement is not made, the infeasibility factors must be clearly articulated in the canine handler's statement or report.

The announcement will include the officer's authority (police canine), a request for the subject to surrender, and the consequence for not surrendering (i.e., the police canine may bite the subject).

Exception: A verbal announcement is not required if giving the warning would compromise the safety of the canine officer or others. In such circumstances, the canine officer will document their reason(s) for believing their safety would have been compromised in their use of force statement and or canine deployment record.

7. When Feasible, Canine Handlers Will Attempt Alternative Tactics Prior to a Direct Apprehension

When the location of a subject in hiding has been determined, handlers will not command the canine to do a direct apprehension if alternative tactics are available, safe, and feasible.

Such alternatives may include:

- Identifying as a police officer,
- Ordering the subject to come out of hiding and warning that a police dog will be released, and they may be bitten if they do not voluntarily comply, and
- Then waiting a reasonable amount of time for them to comply, or

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- Using a lower level of force.

8. When Safe and Feasible, Canine Handlers Will Make All Reasonable Efforts to Keep the Police Canine in Sight

Canine handlers will remain within a working distance of their police dog to ensure they can read their canine's body language and that the police canine obeys verbal commands.

9. Releasing the Bite

Should a bite occur, the handler will, as rapidly as possible, determine if the subject is armed and call off the canine at the "first possible moment" the canine can be safely released.

The handler should consider the perceived threat or actual resistance presented by the subject and consider the response of an average person to a canine bite when making the decision to release the canine.

10. After a Canine Use of Force or Unintentional Canine Bite or Injury, Canine Handlers and Sworn Employees Will Render Appropriate Medical Aid Within Their Training as Soon as Reasonably Possible

(See manual section [8.200-POL #8](#))

11. The Canine Will Be Secured as Soon as it Becomes Safe and Feasible

At a minimum, the canine will be secured once the subject has been apprehended and no longer reasonably presents a threat, or risk of escape.

Exception: Canines may remain unsecured if there are additional outstanding subjects, the canine is needed to conduct an evidentiary confirmation track or find evidence, or the canine presence assists in the protection of sworn employees or others.

12. Whenever a Canine is Deployed, Whether Force is Used or Not, the Canine Handler Will Document the Deployment

Canine deployment records are maintained by the Canine Unit.

13. A Canine Use of Force Will Be Reported, Investigated, and Reviewed Consistent with Policies [8.400](#) and [8.500](#)

Each canine bite or injury will be separately documented in the use of force report.

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The handler will document, in their use of force report, the duration and reason for the duration of the canine's bite on the subject.

(See manual sections [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#) and [8.500 – Reviewing Use of Force](#) for guidance)

14. An Unintentional Canine Bite or Injury is Not a Use of Force, but it Will Be Reported Separately per Manual Section [16.300-PRO-1 Unintentional Canine Bite or Injury](#)

In the event of an unintentional canine bite or injury, canine handlers will follow unintentional injury procedures, not use of force reporting procedures. A supervisor will screen the incident with FIT.

8.300-POL-3 Taser 10

This section applies to sworn employees carrying a Taser 10.

A Taser (also known as a Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW)) in probe deployment is designed to stimulate a portion of the nervous system with sufficient pulsed electrical energy to bring about controlled muscle contractions which override an individual's voluntary motor function.

1. The Education & Training Section (ETS) Manages the Taser Program

2. ETS Will Certify Operators Annually

Only sworn employees who are trained and currently certified are allowed to use Tasers.

3. Uniformed Sworn Employees Who Have Been Certified to Carry a Taser and Have Been Issued One Must Carry It During Their Shift

Sworn employees must carry their Taser in an approved holster on their support side.

4. Sworn Employees May Deploy a Taser in the Following Circumstances:

- When a subject presents an immediate threat of harm to any person; or
- When public safety interests dictate that a subject needs to be taken into custody and the level of resistance presented by the subject is:
 - (1) Likely to cause injury to the sworn employee or subject, and
 - (2) If hands-on control tactics or other force options would be likely to cause greater injury to the subject than the use of the Taser.

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In the above circumstances, the force must be objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional.

When a Taser is used against a subject, it will be for one standard discharge cycle of five seconds or less. One standard cycle is considered two probes making contact to achieve Neuromuscular Incapacitation (NMI) (see manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#)).

After the one standard cycle, the sworn employee using the Taser must reassess the situation using only the minimum number of standard discharge cycles necessary to place the subject in custody.

Sworn employees will consider that if they have used a Taser for three consecutive standard cycles against a subject, but the subject continues to actively resist or aggress, the Taser may not be effective; the sworn employee will reassess and consider other options and proceed with a reasonable and feasible option.

Sworn employees will not intentionally deploy multiple Tasers at the same subject, unless the first deployed device does not appear effective.

5. Caution Will Be Used in Any Environment Where a Sworn Employee Knows That a Potentially Flammable, Volatile, or Explosive Material is Present, and the Use of the Taser Is Likely to Ignite Those Substances

Sworn employees aware of environmental hazards will alert fellow sworn employees as soon as possible.

6. Tasers Should Not Be Used on A Person Who Is Fleeing the Scene, Absent Other Factors

7. Using the Warning Alert, Creating an Audible Sound and Visual Strobe Display When Conducting a Verbal Warning, is not Reportable Force

8. The Chest, Head, Neck, and Genitals Are Not Preferred Targets and Should Not Be Intentionally Targeted

The chest may be an option if no other reasonable target is available due to the subject's position. Extra care must be taken when making this decision.

9. A Minimum of Two Individually Fired Probes are Required to Make a Connection

The initial single probe deployment and a second probe deployment count as one single Type II use of force. If the subject complies before the second probe is deployed, the single probe deployment is still considered a Type II use of force.

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The second probe should be deployed as quickly and as accurately as possible to achieve NMI.

Additional probes may be deployed if one of the initial probes fails, until a circuit is completed.

Each additional probe deployment or each additional standard cycle is a separate use of force and must be articulated under the same use-of-force report entry.

Per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#), sworn employees are required to report the use of a Taser, regardless of whether the use of the Taser was an effective application.

10. Sworn Employees Will Summon Medical Aid at the Earliest Safe Opportunity Whenever a Subject Has Sustained a Taser Application

Sworn employees will not remove Taser probes and barbs that are embedded in flesh.

Taser probes and barbs that are embedded in flesh will only be removed by fire department personnel, healthcare professionals, or police department EMTs absent exigent circumstances. Probes embedded in clothing may be removed by a sworn employee.

Sworn employees will collect and submit into evidence all primary components of the Taser cartridge: probes, wires, and cartridge.

11. Sworn Employees Will Monitor All Subjects Who Have Sustained a Taser Application While They Are in Police Custody

12. Tasers May Be Used to Stop a Dangerous Animal

Tasers used to stop a dangerous animal are not a use of force but will be documented in an incident report. The sworn employee's supervisor will provide details of the incident in a department memo to the captain of the training unit.

13. ETS Will Conduct Taser Inspections on an Annual Basis to Ensure That All Tasers Have Current Firmware and Perform Any Necessary Maintenance or Repairs

Sworn employees will perform a function test at the start of their shift, to determine the Taser's functionality and battery capacity. If the battery is low, sworn employees will exchange the battery for a fully charged battery from the battery docks. This will be done at a minimum of once a month unless the Taser has been deployed, which will require a battery exchange to obtain Taser deployment data.

Sworn employees will notify their chain of command up to the level of watch commander or lieutenant about any operational concerns about their Taser.

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14. Sworn Employees Deciding to No Longer Carry Their Taser Will Notify Their Chain of Command and Return Their Taser to the Quartermaster or Stationmaster

Sworn employees will notify their direct supervisor that they have decided to no longer carry a Taser and will specify which less-lethal tool they will deploy with.

Additionally, sworn employees will notify their chain of command and the department Taser coordinator, via email, prior to deployment without their Taser.

8.300-POL-4 Impact Weapons

(See manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#) for the definition of Impact Weapon)

This section applies to all sworn employees for the use of department-approved impact weapons and improvised impact weapons.

Using a bicycle to forcefully strike a subject is a reportable use of force governed by this policy and manual section [8.500-POL-6](#).

1. Education & Training Section (ETS) Will Train Sworn Employees on Department-Approved Impact Weapons Every Two (2) Years

Sworn employees will be trained to use department-approved impact weapons before being authorized to carry these weapons.

2. Sworn Employees Will Not Use Impact Weapons on Subjects Who Are Restrained and Under Control, or Complying with Police Direction

3. An Intentional Hard Strike to the Head, Neck, Face, Throat, Spine, Groin, or Kidneys with Any Impact Weapon is Prohibited Unless Deadly Force is Justified

All strikes to the head, neck, face, throat, spine, groin, or kidneys must be screened with FIT, even if they were mistaken or unintentional.

4. Sworn Employees Will Not Use Improvised Weapons, Such as Flashlights, as Impact Weapons, Except in Exigent Circumstances

The use of improvised weapons, such as flashlights, may present a greater risk of injury than batons.

Use of another object in place of the baton, including flashlights, is prohibited unless there is an immediate need to strike, and a sworn employee is precluded from using or cannot feasibly use other less lethal options such as the Taser, baton, or OC spray.

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The failure to carry a baton, in and of itself, does not justify the regular use of a flashlight as an impact weapon. Routine reliance on improvised weapons as an impact weapon is prohibited.

5. Sworn Employees Must Justify Each Separate Impact Weapon Application in Their Use-of-Force Report

Sworn employees are required to report each use of an impact weapon, regardless of whether a subject is struck.

8.300-POL-5 Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray

This section applies to all sworn employees for the use of OC spray.

OC spray is an inflammatory agent that causes an intense burning sensation of the skin, eyes, and mucous membranes. Exposure may result in closing, tearing, and swelling of the eyes, as well as choking, gagging, and gasping for breath.

OC spray may reduce or eliminate the need for substantial physical force to make an arrest or gain custody. It may reduce the potential for injuries to sworn employees and subjects.

1. Education & Training Section (ETS) Will Train Sworn Employees in the Use of OC Spray Every Two (2) Years

The OC spray policy and training will incorporate the evolving guidance contained within the SPD Post-Basic Law Enforcement Academy course on less-lethal force as well as guidance from the medical community.

2. Sworn Employees Will Only Use Department-Issued or Approved OC Spray

Sworn employees will periodically check the manufacturer's date on their issued OC Spray container, and if beyond five (5) years, exchange for a new container from the stationmaster or quartermaster.

3. Sworn Employees Will Use OC Spray, Only When Such Force is Objectively Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportional

(See manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#) for definition and explanation of “objectively reasonable,” “necessary,” and “proportional” force)

(See manual section [14.090 – Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control](#) for additional OC deployment during crowd events)

4. OC Spray May Be Used Against a Dangerous Animal to Deter an Attack or to Prevent Injury to Persons Present

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OC spray used to stop a dangerous animal is not a use of force. The use of OC spray against a dangerous animal will be reported per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

5. Sworn Employees Must Justify Each Separate Application of OC Spray

After the initial application of OC spray, each subsequent spray must also be reasonable, and the sworn employee will reevaluate the situation accordingly.

6. Where Multiple Persons are Present, Sworn Employees Will Direct OC Only Towards the Person(s) Posing a Specific Threat of Harm to the Sworn Employee or Others or Engaging in Acts of Violence or Significant Property Destruction

Sworn employees deploying OC will attempt to avoid or minimize incidental exposure to non-involved persons.

7. OC Spray Use Is Discouraged in Enclosed and Highly Populated Spaces

OC spray is generally not appropriate in an enclosed, highly populated space where there is a likelihood of impacting uninvolved persons, except where OC spray is the only available and appropriate force option.

Sworn employees deploying OC in these situations will attempt to avoid or minimize incidental exposure to non-involved persons.

8. Sworn Employees are Required to Report the Use of OC Spray, Regardless of the Effect, as Well as the Decontamination Procedures That Followed

The use of OC spray will be reported per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

9. Sworn Employees Will Assist Exposed Subjects with Decontamination and Medical Aid, As Soon as Reasonably Possible

If the subject was exposed in a confined space, sworn employees will remove the subject as soon as feasible from the contaminated area and expose the individual to fresh air.

Sworn employees will request medical response or assistance for subjects exposed to OC spray when requested by the subject, when the subject complains of continued effects after having been decontaminated, or the subject indicates that they have a pre-existing condition (such as asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, or heart ailment) that may be aggravated by OC spray.

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Sworn employees will not detain individuals who were not the intended subject of an OC spray deployment from leaving the area or from seeking other medical attention, unless they are the subject of a law enforcement investigation.

Sworn employees will monitor exposed subjects for changes in their condition while in police custody and request medical evaluation as needed or as requested.

10. The Department Will Maintain Written Documentation of the Number of OC Spray Canisters Annually Distributed to Each Employee

8.300-POL-6 Vehicle-Related Tactics

Vehicle-related tactics encompass a variety of ways in which sworn employees use police vehicles and include vehicle-related tactics. Intentional contact between vehicles and the deployment of stationary tire deflation devices may not result in a use of force, depending on the circumstances.

Vehicle-related tactics are the intentional contact between vehicles that result in a reportable use of force. Vehicle-related tactics are used to stop, disable, or prevent a suspect vehicle from moving or fleeing the scene.

The intentional use of a police vehicle to contact another vehicle when utilizing a vehicle-related tactic, as listed below in this policy, is not a collision and not reported as a collision.

- The intentional contact between vehicles will be documented in the Mark43 narrative and in the use of force statement, where appropriate, not on a Police Traffic Collision Report (PTCR).

Movement of a car for traffic purposes, such as assisting or pushing a stalled vehicle, is not a vehicle-related tactic or use of force and is not covered by this policy.

1. The Definitions for Vehicle-Related Tactics Related to this Policy Can Be Found in Manual Section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#)

Stationary Tire Deflation Device	Roadblock
Stop Sticks	PIT (Pursuit Intervention Technique)
Vehicle Pinning	Ramming

2. Sworn Employees Will Consider Secondary Risks to the Subject and Other Persons When Determining Whether to Deploy Vehicle-Related Tactics

Secondary risks to pedestrians and other vehicles include, but are not limited to, the dangers presented by a spun-out vehicle and loose tires on the road, as well as air bag deployment.

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3. Considerations for Using Vehicle-Related Tactics

Before using any vehicle-related tactic, sworn employees will consider the following:

- Reasonable suspicion for detaining the vehicle and its occupant(s) must be clearly articulable before using any vehicle tactic.
- When using any vehicle-related tactic, consider the safety risk to sworn employees, the public, and the occupants of the vehicle.
- When feasible, sworn employees should take time to formulate a plan before using a vehicle-related tactic.
- When feasible, sworn employees should attempt to gain supervisory approval before utilizing Vehicle Pinning, a PIT Maneuver, or Ramming.

4. Using a Police Vehicle for Blocking

Blocking is when a sworn employee uses a police vehicle to block the path of travel of a stationary vehicle, where there is no contact between the police vehicle and the stationary vehicle.

Blocking may be used when sworn employees believe it is a reasonable tactic. In addition to the considerations above, sworn employees should give special attention to the effect on time, distance, and shielding that blocking a vehicle can have on a situation as well as trained team tactics (such as high-risk vehicle stops) that may be more appropriate than just using a police vehicle to block a stationary vehicle.

Blocking is de minimis force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

5. Vehicle-Related Tactics

a. Stationary Tire Deflation Devices

Stationary tire deflation devices are used to safely immobilize a stationary vehicle to avoid flight.

A stationary tire deflation device is a small tire deflation device designed to be placed under the tire of a stationary vehicle to avoid flight.

Sworn employees trained to use stationary tire deflation devices may only use the device when:

- The vehicle is stationary, and

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- The sworn employee has reason to believe that the subject driving, or potentially driving, the vehicle has committed, is about to commit, or is in the process of committing a crime; or for community safety purposes.

The use of a stationary tire deflation device resulting in no physical contact or deflation of tires is de minimis and not a reportable use of force.

Using a stationary tire deflation device in compliance with department training, that results with confirmed contact and deflation of tires is a Type 1 use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

b. Stop Sticks

Stop sticks are used to immobilize a vehicle by deflating tire(s).

Stop sticks are a device containing hollow spikes, which penetrate tires, thereby slowing a vehicle by deflating the tire(s).

Sworn employees certified to use stop sticks may only use the device:

- As an option for a stationary vehicle when a stationary tire deflation device is immediately unavailable, or
- As a planned pursuit ending option where supervisor approval has been given, and
 - The sworn employee has given the deployment location over the radio to other units, and
 - The primary pursuing sworn employees have acknowledged the stop stick plan to deploy.

(See manual section [13.031 – Vehicle Follow, Eluding, and Pursuits](#))

Stop Stick deployment without tire deflation is a Type I use of force. Stop Stick deployment with tire deflation is a Type II use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

c. Vehicle Pinning

Vehicle pinning is a trained tactic when a sworn employee uses a police vehicle, or vehicles, to keep a stationary vehicle in a specified position and from leaving the scene, where there is constant forward pressure (not ramming) applied by the police vehicle(s) to the stationary vehicle, and there are no gaps between the vehicles.

Vehicle pinning is prohibited for sworn employees unless those sworn employees have previously been trained in the tactic.

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- The practical application of vehicle pinning training goes beyond a classroom setting and includes performing the learned maneuvers in a real-world setting in a controlled environment with an instructor present, and where the training has been added to the sworn employee's training record.

Sworn employees trained to use a vehicle pinning tactic may only use the tactic to:

- Prevent the suspect vehicle from fleeing so it's not a risk to the public, or
- Prevent the subject from using the vehicle as a weapon against sworn employees or other community members, or
- Control the suspect vehicle when it is temporarily immobilized.

Vehicle pinning, when done in compliance with department training, is a Type I use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

d. Roadblocks

Roadblocks are the intentional positioning of a police vehicle to block a roadway with the intent of stopping a fleeing or eluding vehicle. Roadblocks are considered a use of force. The classification of force depends on the totality of the circumstances.

Sworn employees blocking roadways for normal traffic control purposes, such as a street closure at an event, are not considered roadblocks.

Sworn Employees trained to use a roadblock tactic may only use the tactic when:

- Necessary to protect against an immediate threat of serious physical injury or death to the sworn employee or another person, and
- The safety to use the maneuver can be reasonably predicted, and
- Approval by a lieutenant or above has been granted prior to deployment.
 - Approval will be based on the severity of the crime and potential harm to occupants of the vehicle and the public.

Roadblocks, when done in compliance with department training, are de minimis force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

e. Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT)

PIT maneuvers are a forced rotational stop of another vehicle used to reduce the risks in bringing a pursuit to a conclusion. PIT is only authorized for sworn employees who have been trained to use a PIT maneuver.

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Sworn employees trained to use a PIT maneuver may only use a PIT vehicle-related tactic when:

- The suspect vehicle poses a public safety threat because of observed extreme and unsafe driving behavior, or
- There is reasonable belief that the suspect vehicle poses an immediate threat of death or serious physical injury to another.

Sworn employees will not use the PIT maneuver on motorcycles.

The PIT maneuver, when done in compliance with department-approved training, is a Type II use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

- Using a PIT maneuver will be screened with FIT.

f. Ramming

Ramming a vehicle is the intentional use of a patrol vehicle to strike a suspect vehicle for the purpose of interrupting or incapacitating the suspect vehicle.

Sworn employees are only permitted to ram another vehicle in exigent circumstances, and when:

- All other reasonable means to stop the vehicle have failed, and
- Sworn employees believe the subject poses an imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to another.

Vehicle ramming is a Type II use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

- Using a ramming vehicle technique will be screened with FIT.

6. Vehicle-Related Tactics May Be Considered Deadly Force, Depending on the Situation

Vehicle-related tactics that cause or are reasonably likely to cause great bodily harm, substantial bodily harm, loss of consciousness, or death are considered a Type III use of force (see manual sections [8.200-POL #5](#) and [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#)).

7. Vehicle-Related Tactics that are Reportable Uses of Force will be Reported Per Manual Section [8.400](#)

Using a police vehicle for containment is not reported as a use of force.

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8. See 8.300-POL-14 for Guidance on Discharging a Firearm at or From a Moving Vehicle

8.300-POL-7 Specialty Unit Weaponry

This section applies to all sworn employees who use weaponry in specialty units.

1. The Special Operations Bureau Assistant Chief Oversees all Specialty Unit Weaponry

2. Specialty Units That Utilize Unique Weaponry Will Maintain Unit Manuals and Training Records Which Contain an Inventory and Specific Guidance for Each Weapon

Per manual section [12.070 – Department Publications](#), unit manuals have the force of department policy.

A weapon that is part of the specialty unit weaponry does not exempt it from the policy requirements of this manual. The same principles stated in manual sections [8.000 – Use of Force Principles](#) and [8.200 – Using Force](#) apply.

3. The Education and Training Section (ETS) Will Maintain Specialty Unit Training Records

Specialty units will submit their training records to ETS when completed.

4. Specialty Unit Weaponry Deployments are Reportable Uses of Force

See manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

8.300-POL-8 Hobble Restraint

This section applies to all sworn employees who utilize a hobble restraint.

A hobble restraint is a strap designed to restrain an assaultive subject's feet.

1. Sworn Employees May Use the Hobble Restraint to Control Assaultive Subjects

Once the hobble restraint is applied, sworn employees will place the subject in either in an upright seated position, or on their side and not face down, including during transport.

The hobble restraint will not be connected to handcuffs or other restraints (i.e., "hog tie").

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2. Sworn Employees Must Closely Monitor Subjects Who Have Been Placed in the Hobble Restraint

Sworn employees will take immediate action, if necessary, to protect the subject's health and safety.

3. Utilizing a Hobble Restraint will be Reported and Documented

Use of a hobble restraint resulting in pain or minor injury is reported as Type I use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

8.300-POL-9 Spit Socks

This section applies to all sworn employees who utilize spit socks.

Spit socks are woven mesh devices that may be placed over a subject's head and face with the intent to prevent or reduce the transmission of infectious disease through saliva, mucous, and blood.

(See manual sections [11.010-POL-22 The Use of the Spit Sock Hood Requires Special Application, Reporting, and Screening](#) and [11.010-PRO-2 Application of a Spit Sock Hood](#))

1. Only Sworn Employees Who Have Completed Department-Approved Training on the Application of a Spit Sock are Authorized to Use One

A sworn employee may apply a spit sock when lawfully restraining or attempting to restrain an individual that the sworn employee has reasonable articulable belief may spit or bite.

Sworn employees applying spit socks must ensure that the spit sock is fastened properly according to the manufacturer's instructions to allow for adequate ventilation so that the restrained person can breathe normally.

2. Sworn Employees Will Only Use Department-Issued Spit Socks

3. Prior to Application of a Spit Sock, Sworn Employees Warn the Subject of the Spit Sock Application

Prior to the application of a spit sock, a sworn employee will warn the subject and provide a reasonable time for the subject to comply with the sworn employee's commands.

(See manual section [11.010-PRO-2 Application of the Spit Sock Hood](#))

4. Spit Socks Are Restricted Under Certain Circumstances

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Spit socks are restricted under the following circumstances:

- Persons who have been sprayed with OC spray will be decontaminated so their breathing is not distressed prior to application of the spit sock (see 8.300-POL-5 OC Spray).
- Application of a spit sock may provoke an elevated level of distress. Sworn employees will provide verbal reassurance and dynamically assess the situation to remove the spit sock as soon as feasible.

5. Spit Socks Are Prohibited Under Certain Circumstances

Spit socks are prohibited under the following circumstances:

- On a subject who is actively vomiting, or

Note: If a subject vomits while wearing a spit sock, the sworn employee will immediately remove and discard the spit sock.

- On a subject who states they have a medical condition that affects their breathing, or a subject who demonstrates symptoms of labored or distressed breathing.

6. Sworn Employees Will Monitor a Subject Who Has a Spit Sock Applied

If applied, the sworn employee will remove the spit sock as soon as the threat of spitting or biting has ended, or the sworn employee observes that the spit sock is no longer necessary.

Sworn employees will monitor the subject until the spit sock is removed. In the event of an emergency, a spit sock will be removed immediately.

After application of a spit sock, and when safe and feasible, sworn employees will move the subject into a seated or side recovery position.

Sworn employees will assist a subject wearing a spit sock who is being escorted due to the potential for impaired or distorted vision.

7. Spit Socks Will be Discarded After Each Use

8. A Spit Sock Application Will be Reported and Documented

A spit sock application will be documented as a Type I use of force per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#).

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8.300-POL-10 Blast Balls

This policy applies to all sworn employees who utilize blast balls for crowd control and dispersal tactics. Blast balls are only authorized for use during crowd events.

See manual section [14.090 – Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control](#).

1. Only Sworn Employees Who Have Completed Department Blast Ball Training are Permitted to Deploy Blast Balls

2. Sworn Employees Will Only Use Department-Issued Blast Balls

3. Sworn Employees May Only Use Blast Balls During Crowd Events

See manual section [14.090 – Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control](#).

8.300-POL-11 40mm Less Lethal (LL) Launcher

This section applies to all sworn employees who carry 40mm LL launchers.

40mm LL Launchers fire less-lethal ammunition designed to stun, temporarily incapacitate, or cause temporary discomfort to a subject without penetrating a subject's body.

40mm LL Launchers are designed to temporarily interrupt the behavior of a dangerous subject, so that sworn employees can take enforcement action with less danger of injury or death to themselves and others. The extended standoff distance that the 40mm LL Launcher provides may decrease sworn employees' exposure and may provide additional time to bring the situation to a safe resolution.

1. The Education and Training Section (ETS) Manages the 40mm LL Launcher Program

ETS maintains the 40mm LL Launcher operator's manual.

2. The Firearms Training Squad (FTS) Will Maintain Inventory Records for 40mm LL Launchers

3. ETS Trains 40mm LL Launcher Operators Annually

Exception: SWAT officers receive annual specialized unit training. The SWAT commander will forward training rosters to ETS within seven days of completion.

Only sworn employees who have been trained by the Seattle Police Department are allowed to use the 40mm LL Launcher.

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Sworn employees may only use 40mm LL Impact Munitions (LLIM) in a manner consistent with the Seattle Police Use of Force Policy and training provided by the department.

4. The Firearms Training Section (FTS) Will Inspect 40mm LL Launchers on an Annual Basis to Ensure That All Are Operable and Perform any Necessary Maintenance or Repairs

Exception: SWAT officers will inspect the 40mm LL Launchers assigned to their unit on an annual basis.

5. Only Munitions Purchased, Authorized, and Issued by the Seattle Police Department May Be Used by Sworn Employees

Sworn employees deploying 40mm LL Launchers are responsible for ensuring the proper munitions are loaded. Sworn employees will inspect each 40mm LLIM round prior to loading it into the launcher to ensure munitions adhere with this policy.

6. Sworn Employees Who Have Been Trained and Issued a 40mm LL Launcher Will Deploy with It During Their Shift

Sworn employees deploying with a 40mm LL Launcher will deploy with a primary less lethal device in accordance with 8.300-POL-1(2).

7. Sworn Employees Deciding to Withdraw from the 40mm LL Launcher Program Will Notify their Chain of Command and Return the 40mm LL Launcher to the Range Armorer as Soon as Practicable

Sworn employees will notify a supervisor, in person, that they have decided to no longer carry their 40mm LL Launcher.

Additionally, sworn employees will document the decision to not carry a 40mm LL Launcher any longer by emailing their chain of command and the department 40mm LL Launcher coordinator prior to deployment without their assigned launcher.

8. If the 40mm LL Launcher Requires Inspection and/or Repairs, the Sworn Employee Will Notify their Supervisor and take the 40mm LL Launcher Out of Service

Sworn employees will email their supervisor, the 40mm LL Launcher coordinator, and the 40mm LL Launcher armorer prior to deployment without their 40mm LL Launcher.

9. Sworn Employees Will Only Use a 40mm LL Launcher When Objectively Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportional (See Manual Section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#))

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Sworn employees may use a 40mm LL Launcher in the following circumstances:

- When a subject poses an imminent threat of harm to any person; or
- When public safety interests dictate that a subject needs to be taken into custody and the level of resistance presented by the subject is:
 - Likely to cause injury to the sworn employee; or
 - If hands-on control tactics or other force options would be likely to cause greater injury to the subject than the use of the 40mm LLIM.

Sworn employees will consider department training regarding deployment distances and target areas. Each situation must be evaluated on the totality of the circumstances at the time of the deployment.

10. Sworn Employees Will Consider the Risk of the 40mm LLIM Round Causing Serious Harm When Determining Whether to Deploy

11. Sworn Employees About to Discharge a 40mm LL Launcher Will Advise Other Sworn Employees on Scene of the Discharge, if Safe and Feasible

12. Preferred Target Areas for 40mm LL Launchers Are the Buttocks, Thigh Area, Calves, and Large Muscle Groups

Sworn employees will also be prepared to employ other means to control the individual including, if necessary, other force options consistent with department policy if the individual does not respond sufficiently to the LLIM and cannot otherwise be subdued.

Sworn employees will collect and submit into evidence all primary components of the expended 40mm round to include the sponge nose cone with the rifling ring and the casing. If collection is not feasible, sworn employees will document their search efforts in their report.

13. A 40mm LL Will Not Be Used in Certain Circumstances, Unless Deadly Force is Authorized

A 40mm LL will not be used in the following circumstances, unless deadly force is authorized:

- To target a subject's head, neck, chest, or groin, or
- At substantially deviant ranges that are inconsistent with training, or
- At a person who is on an elevated surface (e.g., a ledge, a scaffold, or near a cliff, etc.) unless reasonable efforts have been made to prevent or minimize a fall-related injury (e.g., deploying a safety net).

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14. Whenever a Subject Has Been Struck by a 40mm LL Launcher Round, Sworn Employees Will Summon Medical Aid as Soon as Feasible

15. Sworn Employees Are Required to Report the Use of 40mm LL Launcher as Force, Regardless of Whether a Subject is Struck

(See manual section [8.400-POL-1\(3\)](#))

Per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#), use of a 40mm LL Launcher directed away from a person is a Type 1 use of force. Use of a 40mm LL Launcher directed at a person is a Type II use of force.

Sworn employees must justify each separate 40mm LL Launcher use in their use-of-force statement.

16. Sworn Employees will Securely Store 40mm LL Launchers

While on duty, 40mm LL Launchers will be secured in patrol vehicles when not in use.

When not on duty, sworn employees will store 40mm LL Launchers in a secure department locker.

8.300-POL-12 Pepperball Launcher

This section applies to all sworn employees who carry pepperball launchers.

Pepperball launchers launch pepper irritant powder projectiles that break on impact, providing distance between a sworn employee and a subject.

1. The Firearms Training Squad (FTS) Will Maintain Inventory Records for Pepperball Launchers

2. Pepperball Launcher Operators Trained Annually

Only sworn employees who have completed department pepperball training are permitted to use pepperball launchers.

SWAT and CRG commanders will forward training rosters to ETS within seven (7) days of training completion.

3. Sworn Employees Will Only Use Department-Issued Pepperballs and Pepperball Launchers

4. Sworn Employees May Use Pepperballs Only When Such Force is Objectively Reasonable, Necessary, and Proportional

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Sworn employees may use Pepperball Launchers in the following circumstances:

- When a subject poses an imminent threat of harm to any person, or
- When public safety interests dictate that a subject needs to be taken into custody and the level of resistance presented by the subject is:
 - Likely to cause injury to the sworn employee; or
 - If hands-on control tactics or other force options would be likely to cause greater injury to the subject than the use of the Pepperball Launchers.

Exception: Where multiple people are present, sworn employees will direct pepperballs towards the people posing a specific threat of harm to sworn employees or others or towards those who are engaging in acts of violence or significant property destruction.

Sworn employees deploying pepperballs will attempt to avoid or minimize incidental exposure to non-involved persons.

When directed towards a subject, the preferred target area for the pepperball is the area below the waist, including the buttocks, front of the legs, thighs, or sides of the legs.

Sworn employees will not target the head, neck, or genitals.

When used for area denial purposes, preferred targets are hard surfaces such as streets or walls.

Sworn employees will follow department training regarding deployment distances and target areas. Each situation will be evaluated on the totality of the circumstances at the time of the deployment.

(For pepperball launcher use during crowd events, see manual section [14.090-POL-5 Use of Force](#))

5. Sworn Employees About to Discharge a Pepperball Launcher Will Advise Other Sworn Employees on Scene of the Discharge, if Safe and Feasible

6. As Soon as Reasonably Possible, Sworn Employees Will Request and/or Render Medical Aid

Sworn employees will request and/or render medical aid, as soon as reasonably possible, for subjects who appear to have been injured by a pepperball deployment or who complain of pain or injury resulting from pepperball deployment.

7. Sworn Employees are Required to Report the Use of Pepperballs Regardless of the Effect, as Well as Decontamination Procedures that Followed

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8. Sworn Employees must Justify Each Separate Volley of a Pepperball Deployment

After the initial volley of pepperball deployment, each subsequent deployment must be reasonable, and the sworn employee will re-evaluate the situation accordingly.

9. Sworn Employees are Required to Report the Use of Pepperballs, Regardless of Whether a Subject is Struck

Per manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#), pepperball deployment is a Type II use of force.

8.300-POL-13 CS Gas

This policy applies to SWAT officers using CS gas as a less-lethal tool outside of crowd events.

CS gas (2-Chlorobenzylidene malononitrile gas) is a chemical irritant dispersed in the air for the purpose of producing temporary physical discomfort. CS gas does not include oleoresin capsicum (OC) (see manual section [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#)).

The effects of exposure to CS gas are usually between 15-30 mins after the subject has been removed from the area and decontaminated.

For when CS gas is deployed for crowd events, see manual section [14.090 – Crowd Management, Intervention, and Control](#) (see also [RCW 10.116.030](#) - Use of tear gas).

1. SWAT Will Maintain Inventory Records for CS Gas

2. SWAT Officers Will Only Use Department-Issued CS Gas

3. SWAT Trains CS Gas Operators Annually

Only SWAT officers who have completed CS gas training are permitted to use CS gas.

4. SWAT Officers are Limited in the Use of CS Gas

SWAT officers are only allowed to use CS gas when necessary to alleviate the present risk of serious harm posed by a:

- Riot, or
- Barricaded subject, or
- Hostage situation.

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Prior to using CS gas outside of a crowd management incident, SWAT officers who have received training for CS gas use within the past 12 months will:

- Determine whether the present circumstances warrant the use of CS gas and whether available and appropriate alternatives have been exhausted, and
- Announce to subjects the intended use of CS gas, and
- Allow sufficient time and space for the subject(s) to comply with the SWAT officer's directives, and if safe and feasible, notify any other persons in the vicinity to disperse.

5. Sworn Employees are Required to Report the Use of CS Gas

The deployment of CS gas is reported and investigated as a Type II use of force (see manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#)).

8.300-POL-14 Firearms

This section applies to all sworn employees.

The department acknowledges that this policy does not cover every situation that may arise. Any deviations from the provisions of this policy will be examined rigorously and critically reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The involved sworn employees must be able to clearly articulate the reasons for the use of deadly force, including whether the sworn employee's life or the lives of others were in immediate peril, and if there was no reasonable alternative.

1. Sworn Employees Will Only Discharge Firearms in Situations Where Deadly Force is Permitted

(See manual sections [8.000 – Use of Force Principles](#) and [8.050 – Use of Force Definitions](#) for further guidance)

2. Firearms May be Used on Animals

Firearms may only be used on animals in the following circumstances:

- Against a dangerous animal to deter an attack or to prevent injury to persons present; or
- To euthanize a critically injured animal.

3. Sworn Employees Will Only Carry and Use Department-Approved Firearms, Except in Exigent Circumstances

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4. Sworn Employees Will Pass an Annual Firearms Qualification

All sworn employees are required to qualify with their on-duty, back-up/off-duty firearms as directed by the Education & Training Section Captain (see manual section [9.065 – Firearms Qualifications](#)).

5. Sworn Employees Will Not Use Firearms as Impact Weapons, Except When a Subject is Attempting to Take the Firearm, or Lethal Force Is Permitted

6. A Sworn Employee May Draw their Firearm in the Line of Duty When the Sworn Employee Reasonably Believes It May Be Necessary for Their Own Safety or for the Safety of Others

Sworn employees will not draw their firearm unless the circumstances surrounding the incident create a reasonable belief that it may be necessary to use the firearm in accordance with policy on the use of firearms (see manual section [8.200 – Using Force](#)).

Unnecessarily or prematurely drawing their firearm may limit a sworn employee's alternatives in controlling a situation, may create unnecessary anxiety on the part of the public, and may result in an unwarranted or unintentional discharge of the firearm.

When a sworn employee determines that the threat is over, the sworn employee will holster their firearm, when feasible.

7. Sworn Employees Will Not Fire Warning Shots

8. When Feasible, Sworn Employees Will Issue a Verbal Warning to the Subject and Fellow Sworn Employees Prior to Discharging a Firearm

(See manual section [8.200-POL #5](#))

Sworn employees will issue a verbal warning to the subject, other sworn employees, and other individuals present, that a firearm will be discharged and defer discharging the firearm a reasonable amount of time to allow the subject to comply with the warning.

Verbal warnings may come from any sworn employee involved in the incident when employing a team tactics approach.

Exception: A verbal warning is not required if giving the warning would compromise the safety of the sworn employee or others. In such circumstances, only the deploying sworn employee will document their reason for believing their safety would have been compromised in their use of force statement.

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9. Sworn Employees Will Not Fire at or From a Moving Vehicle

Firearms will not be discharged at a moving vehicle unless a person in the vehicle is immediately threatening the life of the sworn employee or another person with deadly force by means other than the vehicle. The moving vehicle itself will not presumptively constitute a threat that justifies a sworn employee's use of deadly force (see [RCW 10.116.060\(3\)](#)).

A sworn employee threatened by an oncoming vehicle will, if feasible, move out of its path instead of discharging a firearm at it or any of its occupants.

Sworn employees will not discharge a firearm from a moving vehicle unless a person is immediately threatening the sworn employee or another person with deadly force.

10. Pointing a Firearm at a Person is a Type I Use of Force

Sworn employees will document all incidents where they point a firearm at a person (see manual section [8.400 – Use of Force Reporting and Investigation](#) and [RCW 10.118.030](#)).

Unholstering or displaying a firearm – including in a sul or low-ready position – without pointing it at a person is not reportable force.

11. All Firearms Discharges are Investigated and Reviewed

Intentional and unintentional discharges (including discharges against people and against animals) are investigated by FIT.

A summary review of a firearm discharge is allowed under certain circumstances (see manual section [8.500-POL-5 Expedited Summary Review](#)).

Exception: This does not apply to discharges during legal recreational shooting, hunting, military activity, or on the range when the discharge is down range, and the range master or lead firearms instructor determines no investigation is required.

(See manual section [8.500 – Reviewing Use of Force](#))

8.300-PRO-1 Notification and Reporting for the Unintentional Discharge of Use of Force Tools

Sworn Employee

1. **Notifies** their supervisor.

Supervisor

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- 2a. For unintentional discharges of less-lethal tools, if no contact was made with an individual, the supervisor **does not need to respond** to the scene.
- 2b. For unintentional firearms discharges without injury to a person, the supervisor **responds** to the scene and **screens** the incident with FIT.
3. **Screens** the incident with the involved employee.
4. **Conducts** an initial investigation.
- 5a. For unintentional discharges of less-lethal tools, **writes** an "Unintentional Discharge of Less-Lethal" report and **attaches** the Unintentional Discharge of Less-Lethal Supervisor Screening (form 18.1) to the report.
- 5b. For unintentional firearms discharges, within 72 hours of the incident, **writes** a memo detailing the incident for the unintentional discharge and **routes** the memo through the chain of command to the Training Captain.
6. **Routes** the report to the Training Lieutenant.

Training Lieutenant

7. **Contacts** the involved employee's chain of command.
8. **Coordinates** if there are any training deficiencies or remedial training that is needed.