



<b>USE OF FORCE – GENERAL</b>		
<b>new:</b> ✓ <b>rescinds:</b> 20.6 ✓ <b>amends:</b> All previous		<b>cross-reference:</b>  <b>accreditation standards:</b> NYSLEAP Standard(s): 2.2, 2.7, 4.1, 6.1, 6.2, 8.1, 9.3, 18.1, 20.1, 20.5, 20.6, 21.1, 21.2, 25.1, 32.3, 32.4, 33.1, 35.1, 40.1; 40.2
<b>effective date:</b> January 1, 2010	<b>update date:</b> June, 2024	

*This General Order is for office use only and does not apply in any criminal or civil proceeding. This General Order should not be construed as creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims. Violations of this General Order will only form the basis for office administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.*

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish the guidelines and limitations concerning the appropriate and acceptable use of deadly and less-lethal force.

**II. POLICY**

The main responsibility of the Sheriff’s Office is to protect the life and property of civilians. In compliance with applicable law, officers shall use only the amount of force necessary and reasonable to accomplish lawful objectives and to control a situation, effect an arrest, overcome resistance to arrest, or defend themselves or others from harm. When force is necessary, the degree of force employed should be in direct relationships to the amount of resistance exerted, or the immediate threat to the officers or others. There is a compelling public interest that officers authorized to exercise the use of force do so in an objectively reasonable manner and in a way that does not violate the civil rights guaranteed by our Constitution and applicable law. Officers who use excessive or unjustified force degrade the confidence of the community that they serve, undermine the legitimacy of police officer’s authority, and hinder the Office’s ability to provide effective law enforcement services to the community.

Officers who use excessive or unauthorized force shall be subject to discipline, possible criminal prosecutions, and/or civil liability. The use of force is only authorized when it is objectively reasonable and for a lawful purpose. Accordingly, the Office will thoroughly review and/or investigate all uses of force by officers to assure compliance with all legal requirements and this policy.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

*Active Aggression:* Is when a person attacks or attempts to attack an officer or another person. Exhibiting aggressive behavior (i.e. strikes, kicks, or attempted strikes or kicks with hands, fists, the head, elbows, knees or an instrument) are examples.

*Active Resistance:* When a subject makes physically evasive movements to interfere with an officer's attempt to control that subject; including bracing, tensing, pulling away, actual or attempted flight, pushing; or actions that a reasonable office would believe pose a threat to the safety of the officer or other person.

*Administrative Review:* A written determination that requires the gathering and assessing of information to develop a course of action.

*Authorized Weapons:* Weapons that meet Office specifications and officers are permitted to carry; and for which officers successfully complete proficiency and safety training.

*Conducted Electrical Weapon:* An incapacitating weapon used for subduing a person by administering an electrical charge for the purpose of disrupting superficial voluntary muscle functions (NMI). This is an intermediate-range weapon and is classified as less-lethal.

*Critical Firearm Discharge:* A discharge of a firearm by a Tompkins County Sheriff's deputy to the extent such discharges are authorized under this policy. Range and training discharges, and discharges at animals are not included under this section. *See G.O. 602 Firearms.*

*Deadly Force:* Any physical force that can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Officers must understand that deadly physical force is an extreme measure and should only be used in accordance to the law and as stated in this policy and other policies governing the use of force.

*De-escalation:* A decrease in the severity of force used in an incident in direct response to a decrease in the level of resistance.

*Exigent Circumstances:* Those circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to believe that a particular action is necessary to prevent physical harm to an individual, the destruction of relevant evidence, the escape of a suspect, or some other consequence improperly frustrating legitimate law enforcement efforts.

*Force:* Any physical strike or instrumental contact with a person; any intentional attempted physical strike or instrumental contact that does not take effect; or any significant physical contact that restricts the movement of a person. The term includes the discharge or a firearm or pointing a firearm at or in the direction of a human being, use of a chemical spray, use of impact weapons, use of electronic control weapons (ECW), chokeholds or hard hands, taking of a subject to the ground, or the deployment of a canine. The term does not include escorting or handcuffing a person with minimal or no resistance. Use of force is lawful if it is **objectively reasonable** under the circumstances to effect an arrest, or protect the officer or other person.

*Great Bodily Harm/Serious Physical Injury:* Serious bodily injury creates a substantial risk of death, causes serious or permanent disfigurement, or results in long-term loss or impairment of the functioning of any bodily member or organ.

*Hard Hand Control:* Impact oriented techniques that include knee strikes, elbow strikes, punches, and kicks. Control strikes are used to subdue a subject and include strikes to pressure

points such as: the common peroneal (side of the leg), radial nerve (top of the forearm), or brachial plexus origin (side of neck).

- Defensive strikes are used by officers to protect themselves from attack and may include strikes to other areas of the body, including the abdomen or head. Techniques in this category include pressure point controls, stunning or striking actions delivered to a subject's body with the hand, fist, forearm, legs, or feet. These techniques target the major muscle groups and are delivered to create muscle cramping, thereby inhibiting muscle action and allowing the officer to subdue the subject. In extreme cases of self-defense, the officer may need to strike more fragile areas of the body where the potential for injury is greater. The use of neck restraints, chokeholds, or other similar weaponless control techniques, however, are prohibited unless the use of deadly force is authorized.

*Harm:* Injury inflicted upon a person, whether visible or not.

*Imminent Threat:* An officer's reasonable perception of impending danger, death, or serious injury from any action or outcome that may occur during an encounter. A subject may pose an imminent or impeding threat even if he or she is not pointing a weapon at the officer but has, for example, a weapon within reach, is running for cover carrying a weapon, or running to a place where the officer has reason to believe a weapon is available.

*Impact Weapon:* Office-approved tools that provide a method for gaining control of a subject when lethal force is not justified, but when empty-hand control techniques are not sufficient to effect control.

*Less Lethal:* Is defined as a use of force application which meets an operational objective while limiting the potential for serious physical injury or death.

*Level of Control:* The amount of force that an officer uses to gain control over a subject.

*Level of Resistance:* The amount of force used by a subject to resist compliance with the lawful order or action of an officer.

*Non-Verbal and Verbal Non-Compliance:* When a subject expresses his/her intentions not to comply with an officer's directive through verbal and non-verbal means. An officer may encounter statements ranging from pleading to physical threats. Such statements may also include physical gestures, stances, and subconscious mannerisms.

*Objectively Reasonable Force:* The degree of force used in effecting an arrest, investigatory stop, or other seizure is evaluated by using an objective, reasonable police officer standard. The reasonableness of each particular use of force will be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, based on facts and circumstances known to and confronting the officer at the time. (See, *Graham v. Connor*, 490 US 388 (1989).) In determining the appropriate level of force to be used, officers shall evaluate each situation in light of the unique facts and circumstances of each case. Those factors include, but are not limited to, the seriousness of the crime or suspected offense; the level of threat or resistance presented by the subject; the risk or

apparent attempt by the subject to escape; and whether the subject was posing an imminent threat to officers or others.

*Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Spray:* A hand-held aerosol spray containing an organic derivative of red peppers. O.C. spray is classified as an inflammatory agent that irritates the mucus membranes and eyes to cause tears and pain. It is an intermediate range weapon that is classified as being less-lethal. The effects do not normally last beyond 30-35 minutes on average.

*Passive Resistance:* Behavior that is unresponsive to police verbal communication or direction (e.g., ignoring or disregarding police attempts at verbal communication or control; going limp; or failing to physically respond or move) and verbal resistance (e.g., verbally rejecting police verbal communication or direction; telling the officer that he or she will not comply with police direction, to leave alone, or not bother him or her). Verbally indicating an intention to actively resist an officer's attempts at control raises a subject's resistance above purely passive (e.g. telling an officer that he or she intends to fight the officer).

*Reasonable Belief:* Facts or circumstances that would cause a reasonable, similarly-trained police officer to act or think in a similar manner, under similar circumstances.

*Soft Hand Control:* The use of physical strength and skill in defensive tactics to control arrestees who are reluctant to be taken into custody and offer some degree of physical resistance. Such techniques are not impact oriented and include pain compliance pressure points, takedowns, joint locks, and simply grabbing a subject. Touching or escort holds may be appropriate for use against levels of passive physical resistance.

*Verbal Commands:* The use of advice, persuasion, warnings, and or clear directions prior to resorting to actual physical force. In an arrest situation, officers shall, when feasible, give the arrestee simple directions with which the arrestee is encouraged to comply. Verbal commands are the most desirable method of dealing with an arrest situation.

#### IV. **PROCEDURES**

##### A. General

1. Officers shall use advisements, warnings, verbal persuasion, and verbal instructions when possible before resorting to force.
2. Force shall be de-escalated immediately as resistance decreases.
3. When feasible based on the circumstances, officers will use disengagements; area containment; surveillance; waiting on a subject; summoning reinforcements; and/or calling in specialized units, in order to reduce the need for force and thereby increase officer, suspect and civilian safety.
4. Officer shall allow individuals time to submit to arrest before force is used, wherever possible.

## B. Use of Force Authorization and Limitations

Officers of the Office are authorized to use only the amount of force necessary to accomplish lawful objectives. Force may be used:

1. To effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom the officer reasonably believes has committed an offense.
2. To defend the officer or others from the use, or imminent use, of physical force.
3. To take persons into protective custody when authorized by law, such as person who are a danger to themselves or others, person incapacitated by alcohol, and/or runaway children.
4. To prevent someone from committing suicide or inflicting serious physical injury upon themselves.
5. To assist a licensed physician or psychologist in providing necessary medical treatment.
6. To control a situation, and to overcome passive or active resistance to a lawful order.
7. To neutralize an unlawful assault and defend themselves or others from harm.

The authorized use of physical force ends when resistance ceases and/or the officer has accomplished the purpose necessitating the use of force. Justification for the use of force is limited to the facts known or perceived by the officer at the time such force is used, including levels of resistance, suspect's behavioral cues, the number of officers and/or offenders present, and the availability of other options.

Force shall never be used to subject a person to torture and/or other cruel or inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

## C. Verbal Warning

When tactically feasible, an officer will identify him/herself as a police officer and issue verbal commands and warnings prior to the use of force. When feasible, an officer will allow the subject an opportunity to comply with the officer's verbal commands. A verbal warning is not required in circumstances where the officer has to make a split-second decision, or if the officer reasonably believes that issuing the warning would place the safety of the officer or others in jeopardy.

## D. Use of Deadly Force in Defense of Human Life

An officer is justified in using deadly physical force only when he or she reasonably believes such force is necessary to:

1. Defend the officer, or a third person, from the imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.

2. Effect an arrest or prevent the escape from custody of a person whom they reasonably believe has committed or attempted to commit a felony involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical injury; AND the officer reasonably believes this person still poses a significant threat of death or serious physical injury to the officer or other persons. Where feasible, the officer should give warning to the intent to use deadly physical force.

See, *Tennessee v. Garner*, 471 U.S.1,85 (1985): The United States Supreme Court rules that the use of deadly force to prevent the escape of a suspected felon violates the Fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable seizure if used against an apparently unarmed non-violent suspect (the case involved a burglary suspect). The Supreme Court further stated that deadly force may be used against an offender who has attempted or committed an offense involving the infliction or threatened infliction of great bodily harm. Deadly force may not be used against an unarmed, non-violent, property crime offender. The United States Supreme Court decision went on to state that when an officer is justified in the use of deadly force he will, if feasible, first give a verbal warning. (Example: "Police Officer, Halt").

#### E. Deadly Force Restrictions

1. Warnings Shots Prohibited

- Officers are prohibited from discharging their firearms as a means of warning or frightening a person.

2. Shooting at or from Moving Vehicles

- Officers are prohibited from discharging their firearms at or from a moving vehicle (collectively, "moving vehicle") or bicycle unless officers reasonably believe deadly force is necessary to defend the officer or a third person from the use, or imminent use, of deadly force. For purposes of this policy, officers will not discharge their firearms at moving vehicle except under extreme circumstances. Such discharges will be rigorously scrutinized. Officers shall, as a rule, avoid tactics that could place them in a position where a vehicle could be used against them. When confronted with an oncoming, moving vehicle, officers must attempt to move out of its path, when possible, and should generally avoid placing themselves in situations where the use of deadly force is more likely.

3. Risk to Innocent Bystanders

- When officers are about to discharge their firearms they should be aware of their field of fire, including the backdrop, so as to avoid creating an unnecessary, substantial risk of harm to innocent persons. Officers are prohibited from discharging their firearms when, based on the totality of the circumstances, discharging a firearm would constitute a greater risk to innocent human life than the subject's actions. (i.e. discharging a firearm into a crowd, or shooting into a building or through a wall, where the subject is not clearly identified and it is unknown if there are other occupants present.)

4. Pointing Weapons

- Officers are prohibited from drawing and pointing their firearms at or in the direction of a person, absent an objectively reasonable determination that the situation may escalate to the point where deadly force would be authorized under this policy. It is the rule of this Office that drawing a firearm and pointing it a target is considered a use of force and must be documented as such.

5. Use of Firearm to Dispatch Animals

Whenever possible, officers should seek the permission of their supervisor prior to using deadly force against a domesticated animal.

- Officers may use deadly force against an animal that represents a threat to the officer or to public safety.
- Deadly force may also be used as a humanitarian measure, where an animal is seriously injured and humaneness demands its immediate removal from further suffering.

6. Use of Office Weapons for Training and Other Purposes

- Officers may discharge their firearms for the purpose of practice, firearms training, when on the police range or other established shooting ranges, or when authorized by the Sheriff to participate in law enforcement competition events.

7. Use of Office-Owned Firearms While Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs

- Officers shall not carry or use any Office-owned firearms or weapons while impaired by alcohol, drugs, or any other medical condition that might interfere with their judgement or proficiency.

8. Security, Storage and Safe Handling of Firearms

- a. Officers shall be trained in accordance with Office guidelines and shall obey all safety rules when handling any firearm or any other weapon. No person other than Tompkins County Deputy Sheriffs shall be permitted access to any Office-owned firearm, with the exception of; police officers from other jurisdictions in the official performance of their duty; for repair or maintenance as approved by the Office; or other circumstances with the express permission of the Sheriff.
- b. Officers will secure and store firearms, both on and off duty, in such a way as to ensure that no unauthorized person will have access to or gain control over the firearm. All Office firearms kept at home must be secured in a safe place inaccessible to family members, especially children.
- c. Whenever an officer is in the Office and removes his/her handgun or other weapon, the item must not be left in the open and must be secured so that it is not readily accessible to civilians, suspects, victims, or witnesses.

## F. Use of Less-Lethal Force

Officers shall only use weapons and control techniques that are issued and/or approved for use by the Office. The use of less-lethal force shall be limited to defensive and control purposes. Officers shall use only the reasonable amount of force necessary to overcome resistance or accomplish the police task. The use of less-lethal force shall conform to applicable Office Standards of Conduct policies, procedures, and training.

### 1. Authorization to Use Less-Lethal Force

- Officers are authorized to use Office approved, less-lethal force techniques and authorized weapons under those circumstances provided above in Section IV, B.

**Note:** Nothing in this policy is intended to discourage officers from using a higher level of force whenever such force is necessary and objectively reasonable under the circumstances.

### 2. Less-Lethal Force Restrictions

The following tactics of less-lethal force may be permitted in circumstances **only** when deadly force is authorized by this policy under those circumstances provided above in Section IV, D.

- a. Any chokeholds or neck restraints, with or without a device that restricts a person's airway;
- b. Any strike with an impact weapon or object to a person's head or neck; and/or
- c. Any use of flashlights, radios, or any other items not issued or trained specifically as defensive weapons.

In limited circumstances when a confrontation escalates suddenly and unpredictably, however, an officer may use any means or device at hand such as a flashlight, radio, and other issued equipment, to defend themselves, another person, or to bring a situation under control. This decision should be based on the circumstances surrounding the officer at the time, if the officer determines it was reasonably necessary to do so, as long as the level of defensive action is objectively reasonable given the existing circumstances.

- d. Force shall not be used against persons in handcuffs, except as objectively reasonable to prevent imminent bodily harm to the officer or another person or persons, to prevent attempted escape, or, as objectively reasonable, where physical removal is necessary to overcome passive resistance.

### 3. Impact Weapons

Authorized impact weapons may be used only when an officer is confronted with actual or imminent active aggression against him/herself or another person. *See G.O. 903 Use of*



*Less Lethal Impact Munitions and G.O. 902 Use of Less Lethal Impact Weapons (Baton).*

The use of a baton or similar instrument to strike a blow to a subject's arms or legs will be considered use of less-lethal force. The use of any such items to intentionally strike a subject's head or neck is prohibited except where deadly force is authorized by this policy.

4. Oleoresin Capsicum (OC Spray)

Authorized OC spray is an alternative to physical control techniques and the use of other intermediate weapons. As with any other use of force, however, OC spray must not be used indiscriminately or without justification. Officers must be able to articulate the reason(s) the subject was sprayed with OC spray. OC spray may be utilized to gain or maintain control of person who are actively resisting arrest or lawful custody, or exhibiting active aggression, or to prevent individuals from physically injuring themselves or other persons. *See G.O. 904 Use of Less Lethal Chemical Agents.*

5. Conducted Electrical Weapon

A Conducted Electrical Weapon (i.e. TASER) is authorized for use when other less-lethal options have been ineffective, or when it reasonably appears that such options will be ineffective in subduing the subject. Conducted Electrical Weapons shall only be used in situations where the subject is actively resisting, attempting to avoid arrest by escape and poses an imminent threat to the safety of him/herself, another person, or the officer. *See G.O. 905 Conducted Electrical Weapons.*

6. Canine

Use of specially trained police canines for law enforcement responsibilities in the apprehension of subjects constitutes a real or implied use of force. A canine handler may only use the degree of force that reasonably appears necessary to apprehend or secure a subject as governed by this policy as well as *G.O. 43.6 Canine Program.*

In all instances where a canine is deployed or displayed in an effort to gain compliance from a subject, the canine handler shall complete a Defensive Action Report.

G. Training and Qualifications

In addition to training required for firearms qualification, officers shall receive Office authorized training designed to simulate actual situations and conditions and, as otherwise necessary, to enhance officers' discretion and judgment in using deadly and less-lethal force in accordance with this policy. *See G.O. 602 Firearms.*

1. All training, including remedial training, will be documented.
2. All officers shall receive annual in-service training for all lethal weapons and training in the Office's Use of Force Policy and related case law updates. All officers qualified

in the use of impact weapons, OC spray, electronic control weapons, and control techniques shall, at least every two years, requalify on such weapons or techniques under the instruction of a certified instructor.

3. Training and proficiency results for any authorized weapon will be documented in the training files. Officers must demonstrate proficiency with weapons in compliance with New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services and Municipal Police Training Council requirements.
4. All officers who fail to demonstrate the required proficiency with Office issued weapons shall receive remedial training. Remedial instruction for Office issued firearms shall follow the Office Firearms Policy. *See G.O. 602 Firearms.*
5. An officer failing to demonstrate proficiency with a weapon shall not return to duty with that weapon until such time as proficiency is demonstrated and documented.
6. Only officers demonstrating proficiency in the use of Office authorized weapons shall be approved to carry such weapons. *See G.O. 602 Firearms.*

H. Provide Attention to Medical and Mental Health Needs *(Updated 10/5/2020)*

1. An officer who has custody of a person must provide attention to the medical and mental health needs of a person in their custody and obtain assistance and treatment of such needs, which are reasonable and provided in good faith. *See NYS Civil Rights Law Article 3 §28*
  - a. Any time a person has visible injuries or complains of being injured as a result of force used against him/her by an officer, the officer must take appropriate actions to provide medical care for the injured person, when safe to do so. This includes providing first aid, requesting emergency medical services, and/or arranging for other transportation to a hospital or emergency medical facility.
  - b. The immediate mental health needs of a person shall be based upon the reasonable cause to believe that a person, who appears to be mentally ill, is conducting themselves in a manner which is likely to result in a serious harm to themselves or others.
2. Officers shall 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 shall 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.

I. Duty to Intervene *(Updated 10/5/2020)*

1. Any officer present and observing another officer using force that they reasonably believe to be clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall

intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force, if and when the officer has a realistic opportunity to prevent harm. *See G.O. 311 Duty to Intervene.*

2. An officer who observes another officer use force that exceeds the degree of force as described in subdivision 1 of this section should promptly report these observations to a supervisor. *See G.O. 311 Duty to Intervene.*

## J. Use of Force Reporting

A use of force reporting system allows for the effective review and analysis of all Office use of force incidents. The reporting system is designed to help identify trends, improve training and officer safety, and provide timely and accurate information to the Office. Officers shall complete the appropriate Office Defensive Action Report whenever they use force against a subject above un-resisted handcuffing. This includes the display of and/or use of OC spray, impact weapon, TASER, firearm, or any action that results in or is alleged to have resulted in, injury to or the death of another person. Each member using force against a subject will complete a separate Defensive Action Report. This requirement shall not apply when an officer simply draws any weapon while on scene and is not directly related in controlling the subject.

### 1. Officer's Responsibilities

- a. When an officer finds it necessary to use force to affect and arrest, or for any other law enforcement purpose, whether on duty or off-duty, that officer shall:
  - Notify a supervisor of the incident as soon as circumstances allow.
  - Complete a Defensive Action Report form, which shall list all other employees involved in or witnessing the incident.

**Note:** Reference *G.O. 705 Use of On-Body Recording Devices* for procedures on viewing OBRD videos before/after completing the Defensive Action Report. All Defensive Action Reports must be completed and forwarded to the shift supervisor, or designee, as soon as practical after the incident. Shift supervisors will be held responsible to see that this form is completed prior to the officer leaving their tour of duty. However, when special circumstances exist, such as those incidents resulting in the death or serious injury of a person, or other high intensity events, an extension will be granted for a period of at least 48 hours. This position is supported by the Police Psychological Services Section of the International Assn. of Chiefs of Police, which is comprised primarily of psychologists and other experts on human behavior who are intimately familiar with the law enforcement experience.

### 2. Supervisor's Responsibilities

- a. When a use of force incident occurs, the shift supervisor has the primary responsibility to make certain that all necessary Defensive Action Report forms are properly completed, reviewed for accuracy, and submitted as required by officers under their command.
- b. The supervisor shall then complete the Defensive Action Report – Administrative Review form and forward it to the Undersheriff through the chain of command.

The supervisor shall review the associated OBRD video prior to forwarding the Administrative Review form through the chain of command. This form is for administrative purposes only and shall not be included in the case file.

- c. When an officer has been involved in a critical firearm discharge as defined by this policy, the supervisor shall: *(Updated 06/2024)*
1. Immediately respond to the scene and initiate the incident command system, if appropriate;
  2. Secure the scene;
  3. Insure that officers and community members receive appropriate medical attention;
  4. Conduct a preliminary investigation into the critical firearm discharge. If there is a threat to public safety, the officer involved shall provide a brief public safety statement to the supervisor at the incident scene. The public safety statement is intended to establish the level of danger that may still exist, aid the initial operational response to locate suspects, and focus the initial stage of the investigation. If the officer is still on the scene and is physically and emotionally capable of providing it, investigators should collect this information as soon as possible. If the officer has been removed from the scene due to injury or related reasons, other officers or witnesses who were present may be able to provide some or all of the pertinent public safety statement information. See *Public Safety Statement* attachment.
  5. Again, depending on the officer's physical and emotional condition, the supervisor should ensure that a preliminary basic walkthrough of the incident scene is conducted with the involved officer to help gather the necessary public safety information.
  6. Make notification or cause notification to be made to the on-call Investigator and the remaining chain of command. As soon as possible, the lead criminal investigator should replace the patrol supervisor as the IC;
  7. Secure, or cause to be secured, all evidence of use of force for appropriate processing by the investigative units;
  8. Identify witnesses and the involved officer(s), and ensure that they are separated for interview by investigating units; and
  9. As soon as possible, secure the weapon(s) used by the involved officer(s).
- d. When an on-duty or off-duty employee has been involved in a use of force incident, which has resulted in death or serious injury to any person, the

supervisor will immediately report the incident to the Sheriff, via the chain of command.

- In conjunction with New York State Executive Order 147, the Attorney General is required to investigate, and if warranted, prosecute certain matters involving the death of an unarmed civilian, whether or not in custody, caused by a law enforcement officer. The Attorney General may also investigate and prosecute in such instances where there is significant question as to whether the civilian was armed and dangerous at the time of his or her death. The Sheriff, or designee, shall be responsible for notification to the District Attorney and coordinating notification to the Attorney General's Office.

### 3. Office of the Sheriff

- a. The Undersheriff will review the Defensive Action Report forms to determine:
  - Whether the action was consistent with policy and procedure;
  - Whether the action warrants further administrative review/investigation; and
  - Recommendations on equipment upgrades, training, and/or policy issues, if applicable.
- b. The Undersheriff may confer with Office instructors/trainers who specialize in the field of force used, as needed. The Sheriff will be informed about any incident that may not be consistent with policy and procedure or indicates the action warrants further administrative review/investigation.
- c. In all cases where an officer's action is determined to be a violation of this General Order but **not** a violation of state law, this distinction shall be made clear in all public discussion of such incidents and in any disciplinary action which may result.
- d. The Undersheriff will conduct an annual analysis of all "Use of Force" incidents and provide a comprehensive report to the Sheriff.
- e. The Sheriff's Office will conspicuously post use of force directives on the office's website/transparency hub.
- f. If notified of a critical firearm discharge, the Undersheriff shall respond to the scene and in coordination with the Sheriff determine the appropriate post-incident investigative and administrative response. To include, if necessary, making appropriate notifications (i.e., the District Attorney's Office, New York State Police, Attorney General's Office, etc.). *(Updated 06/2024)*
  - The administrative investigations shall be conducted as a Class 1 category type. *See G.O. 400 Personnel Complaints and Internal Affairs Investigations.*

K. Submission to DCJS

1. The Sheriff or designee will cause all applicable use of force reports generated by this Office to be forwarded to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services in such manner prescribed by the Executive Law of New York State Section 837-T.

L. Maintenance and Accountability for Weapons

1. The Lieutenant of the Administrative Division will maintain a list of all approved weapons and ammunition that will be made available to all sworn employees. The Lieutenant will also maintain inventory reports for all weapons authorized by the agency and update inventories annually.
2. All weapons will be inspected by a qualified armorer or weapons instructor for proper functionality prior to issuance to an officer. Only weapons and ammunition authorized by the agency may be used by agency personnel in the performance of law enforcement duties.
3. At each training session for lethal or less lethal weapons, the armorer or instructor will conduct an inspection of all weapons assigned to each officer present and confirm that:
  - a. The weapons are properly assigned to the officer carrying the weapon;
  - b. That the weapons (lethal and less-lethal) are in working order; and
  - c. That inventory records accurately reflect weapons assigned to individual officers.
4. The procedures listed above will also apply to any weapons authorized by the agency for off-duty carry.
5. Whenever an officer's weapon is found to be unsafe or not functioning properly, it will be immediately turned in by the officer and the officer will be issued a replacement. The Administrative Lieutenant will maintain an inventory of replacement firearms and assure such firearms are available for issuance when needed.

Attachments:

- A. *Defensive Action Report*
- B. *Defensive Action Report – Administrative Review*
- C. *Public Safety Statement*

By Order Of



Derek Osborne  
Sheriff