

WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

THOMAS F. COATES, III
CHIEF OF POLICE



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	310.01	9/16/2024	9/16/2024
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Police Baton		11/28/2016, 7/19/2022	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: 1.2.2, 1.3.1, 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.3.9, 1.3.10, 1.3.11, 1.3.12, 1.3.13 RIPAC Standards: 2.9, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14, 2.15, 2.18, 2.19, 2.21		6/15/2020, 9/13/2022, 7/8/2024	
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POLICE BATON

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines for the use of the baton as a weapon in response to resistance options.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Woonsocket Police Department to train all sworn officers in the use of the police baton as a weapon in response to resistance options.

III. PROCEDURES

A. PARAMETERS

1. Where lethal force is not authorized, officers should assess the incident to determine which less-lethal force option will best de-escalate the incident and bring it under control in a safe manner.
2. Department members shall only use that force that is objectively reasonable to accomplish lawful objectives per *General Order 300.01 Response to Resistance*. [RI 2.9](#)
3. Police officers are authorized to use department-approved police batons to accomplish lawful objectives, as follows:

- a. To protect themselves or another from physical harm;
- b. To restrain or subdue a resistant individual; and
- c. To bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control.

B. TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Batons

- a. The ASP Expandable Baton is the only baton authorized to be carried by members of the Woonsocket Police Department. [RI 2.12\(a\)](#)
- b. Department members are authorized to carry the baton only after receiving instruction and successful completion of course requirements including policy review.
- c. Before being issued, a certified instructor shall inspect and approve all department-issued batons. [RI 2.12\(c\)](#)
- d. During training, a certified instructor will perform a documented inspection of all police batons. [RI 2.12\(e\)](#) Defective or unsafe batons shall be taken out of service and replaced. [RI 2.12\(d\)](#)
- e. When not worn on the duty belt, the baton shall be kept in a safe secure location (i.e. locked patrol vehicle, locker, etc.)
- f. The department-issued police baton is not authorized to be utilized as an off-duty weapon.

2. Training and Proficiency.

- a. At least biennially, each sworn officer is required to demonstrate proficiency with the Woonsocket Police-approved police baton which they are authorized to use. [RI 2.19\(c\)](#) Proficiency standards are established as follows:
 - 1) Attain minimum qualification requirements following performance standards as determined by current training doctrine, methods, or trends. [RI 2.18\(a\)](#)
 - 2) Being familiar with recognized safe-handling techniques. [RI 2.18\(c\)](#)
 - 3) Knowledge of department directives on the use of less-lethal force options. [RI 2.18\(b\)](#)
 - 4) The program of instruction will be conducted by a qualified instructor who has achieved and maintained certification in the use of the police baton.
- b. The Training Officer will maintain training documentation to include lesson plans, attendance sheets, and proficiency records.
- c. Officers requiring remedial training will be given personal instruction on the subject matter by a certified instructor who will document the session and provide a subsequent opportunity to achieve proficiency standards.
- d. Remedial training will be provided, and proficiency standards satisfied before an officer is authorized to carry the police baton. [RI 2.19\(d\)](#)

3. The Training Lieutenant shall issue and maintain an inventory of all department-issued police batons. [RI 2.12\(b\)](#)

C. BATON PROCEDURES

1. The baton can be used whenever an officer finds it necessary to use physical force to gain and maintain control of a combative or violent individual and other force options have been unsuccessful or unavailable due to circumstances.
2. Consideration must be given to minimize the injury to that person.
3. Target selection is based on the amount of force an officer perceives as reasonably necessary to bring a non-compliant subject under control.
 - a. Primary target areas include the extremities.
 - b. Secondary target areas include the torso and joints.
4. Officers may have to rely on the baton to subdue a violently resisting subject. However, officers must realize that blows to the head with the baton could prove fatal. Therefore, the delivery of blows to the head is prohibited unless they are consistent with *Policy 300.01 "Response to Resistance"*.
5. Areas of the body that should be avoided when using the baton: Fatal Areas should be avoided
 - a. The head;
 - b. The neck;
 - c. Solar plexus;
 - d. Kidney;
 - e. Tail bone; and
 - f. Spine.
6. The police baton WILL NOT be used to strike handcuffed individuals.
7. The baton may also be used as a barricade or repelling device in crowd control situations.
8. If there is an emergency, other objects or pieces of equipment may be used as a baton "of necessity" (i.e. flashlights, tree branches, metal or plastic pipes, or tubes).
9. The baton is permitted to be used for other lawful purposes during an officer's duties, (i.e. gaining entry to vehicles, gaining entry to residences, etc.).

D. PROVIDING FIRST AID

Appropriate medical attention will be administered as needed and as soon as is practical in any use of force incident resulting in injury or allegation of injury. [RI 2.13](#)

E. REPORTING

1. In all cases where a police baton is used upon a person, a “Response to Resistance” form along with an incident report will be completed by the officer(s) implementing the use of force. [RI 2.14](#)
2. Administrative review of the use of force incidents:
 - a. All reported uses of force will be reviewed by The Office of Professional Standards (OPS) to determine whether at a minimum:
 - 1) Departmental rules, policies, or procedures were violated;
 - 2) The relevant policy was understandable and effective in covering the situation;
 - 3) If department training is currently adequate;
 - 4) If department equipment needs to be addressed.
 - b. All findings of deficiencies shall be reported to the appropriate unit for resolution and/or discipline. [RI 2.15](#)
3. All “Response to Resistance” reports will be retained as required by department policy and a documented annual analysis of those reports will be compiled by OPS. [RI 2.21](#)
4. This analysis shall, at a minimum, identify the following:
 - a. Date and time of incidents;
 - b. Types of encounters resulting in the use of force;
 - c. Trends or patterns related to race, age, and gender;
 - d. Trends or patterns resulting in injury to any person; and
 - e. Impact of findings on policies, practices, equipment, and training.
10. Each calendar year an annual summary report of this analysis may be made available to the public upon request.

Per order,

Thomas F. Dates, III

Chief of Police

Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police