



Colorado Springs Police Department General Order

710 Reporting Use of Force

Section 700 – Force, Detention, and Arrest

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Supersedes Date: 9/17/2018

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.01 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines for reporting use of force.

.02 Cross Reference

[GO 815 Deadly Force Investigations](#)

[GO 705 Use of Force](#)

[GO 1917 Early Intervention Program](#)

[GO 1301 Treatment of the Public](#)

[GO 965 Vehicle Pursuits](#)

.03 Discussion

The authority to use force carries with it the need for accountability using thorough, accurate, and timely reporting.

.04 Policy

Officers shall report use of force in a timely, complete, and accurate manner as prescribed by this policy.

Those responsible for reviewing use of force will complete their review in a timely and complete manner and promptly address any identified issues.

.05 Definitions

Deadly Force: Any use of force that creates a substantial risk of causing death or serious bodily injury.

Less Lethal Use of Force: Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force. This includes any physical effort used to control, restrain, or overcome the resistance of another person.

Reportable force: Any use of force defined as reportable in section .10 of this policy. Reportable force does **not** include the mere display or pointing of less-lethal tools such as a conducted electrical weapon, chemical agent, baton, and specialty impact munitions. Reportable force also does not include displaying a firearm, if it is displayed without pointing it at a person.

Firearm: Lethal firearms excluding those dedicated to deploy less lethal munitions.

.10 Reportable Use of Force

The following types of use of force tactics **will be reported** following the procedures outlined in this policy:

- **Control Techniques:** The use of empty hand pain compliance techniques.
- **Pointing a Firearm:** The officer points a firearm at a person.
- **Strikes, Kicks, or Takedowns:** The use of strikes, kicks, or takedowns. This includes but is not limited to the arm bar, bar hammer, and figure four takedown.
- **Chemical Agents:** The use of chemical agents.
- **Conducted Electrical Weapon:** The use of a conducted electrical weapon.
- **Baton strikes or specialty impact munitions:** The use of an approved police baton to escort, control, takedown, or strike a suspect. The use of Specialty Impact Delivery Systems (SIM) to deliver specialty impact munitions.
- **Canine deployment that results in contact:** The deployment of a police canine, whether on-lead or off-lead, for the purpose of searching for and/or apprehending a suspect, which results in physical canine contact with a subject, regardless of any injuries sustained.
- **Deadly Force:** Deadly force as defined in section .05 is reported using the procedures detailed in General Order 815, Deadly Force Investigations.
- **Tactical Vehicle Intervention:** The deliberate act of impacting a suspect vehicle with a law enforcement vehicle in an attempt to force the suspect's vehicle to stop. This TVI definition also includes situations in which authorized units use TVI to prevent a vehicle's imminent use to commit a crime.
- **Any other use of force tactic that causes pain and/or injury:** the preceding list does not cover every possible use of force tactic. This category covers any unlisted use of force tactic that causes pain and/or injury.

The following actions **do not** need to be reported as a use of force:

- **Presence/Appearance:** An officer is present in uniform or with a badge or police lettering visibly identifying him or her as a law enforcement officer, to include a canine officer with their canine.

- **Voice Communication Skill:** Verbal and nonverbal communication and de-escalation tactics used by the officer to gain lawful compliance from an individual. This includes an officer's verbal commands.
- **Less lethal tools:** The display or pointing of any less lethal tool.
- **Nominal Physical Force:** Physical interaction meant to separate, guide, and/or control with the use of control techniques that are not likely to cause any pain or injury. This includes:
 - Use of escort hold techniques that are not reasonably likely to cause pain.
 - Use of hands or equipment to stop, push back, separate, or escort a person that are not reasonably likely to cause pain.
 - Deployment of a canine that does not result in contact with the subject(s).

.20 Requirements Following a Less Lethal Reportable Use of Force

When an officer is involved in a reportable use of force situation, there are three notification and reporting requirements:

1. Officers must notify a supervisor of a reportable use of force.
2. Officers must complete an offense report as described in section .30.
3. Officers must complete the required BlueTeam incident as described in section .40.

.30 Less Lethal Force Reporting Procedures in an Offense Report

All involved officers that used reportable force, as defined in this policy, must document the incident by completing an offense report. The report must be completed by the end of the shift unless a delay is approved by a supervisor.

- The only exception to this offense report requirement is when an officer points a firearm at a person.
- A use of reportable force that exclusively involves pointing a firearm does not require an offense report.
- However, if an offense report is otherwise required in an incident that involved pointing a firearm, that use of force should be documented in the offense report.

The offense report will include the following:

- Why and how the contact occurred
- Description of the force used by the officer against the individual

Reasons for the use of force using the relevant factors listed in GO 705.40

- Extent of injury to the officer or other person
- Medical treatment required
- The name of the medical facility used

- Interviews with witnesses
- Other pertinent information the officer wishes to include

In situations where the use of force was observed by independent witnesses such as citizens, fire and ambulance personnel, etc., officers should make reasonable efforts to locate and identify those witnesses, and will include this information in the offense report. Officers should make efforts to ensure witnesses are interviewed by an officer other than the one(s) who used force whenever practicable.

Other officers that are directly or indirectly involved to the incident, as either a party to the charges or as a witness, will document their actions and observations on an offense supplement report.

.40 Less Lethal Force Reporting Procedures in BlueTeam

All involved officers that used reportable force as defined in this policy must complete a report in BlueTeam. The report must be completed by the end of the shift unless a delay is approved by a supervisor.

If a tactical vehicle intervention occurs as part of a pursuit, the reporting requirements of [GO 965 Vehicle Pursuits](#) must also be followed.

The incident summary in BlueTeam should include a concise summary statement documenting the use of force incident. The offense report is the detailed account of the incident, and the BlueTeam report is a summary of key information. The incident summary should not have information that is not also included in the offense report.

The incident summary in BlueTeam should include the following information:

- Why and how the contact occurred.
- Describe the force/resistance used against the officer or others.
- Describe the force used by the officer against the individual.
- The resolution of the incident (for example, arrested and booked into CJC, transported to hospital, etc).

Reports will be analyzed collectively to evaluate the effectiveness of less-lethal devices, along with police officer performance and potential training needs. The Internal Affairs Section will maintain the data from BlueTeam and compile information on less-lethal deployments. The Internal Affairs Section will send a report every six months to the in-service training sergeant to identify any potential training needs for less lethal tools and/or techniques applied. In addition, the Internal Affairs Section will be able to produce current statistical data on a regular basis for use of force audit reports and other inquiries.

All reportable use of force incidents will be included as part of the six month and twelve month reporting criteria for the Early Intervention Program (EIP) as outlined in General Order 1917.

.50 Supervisor's Immediate Responsibility in Less Lethal Force Incidents

When a supervisor is notified of an incident in which there has been a reportable use of force, a supervisor is expected to respond to the scene and subsequently ensure the actions listed below are completed.

When the use of force is exclusively pointing a firearm, a supervisor is not required to respond to the scene, but must still evaluate the circumstances and consider responding dependent upon the specific facts.

Actions that must be taken:

- Obtain the basic facts from the involved officers.
- Ensure that any injured parties are examined and treated.
- Once any initial medical assessment has been completed or first aid has been rendered, ensure that photographs have been taken of any persons who were the subject of a use of force.
 - Photographs must be taken of officer(s) if the officer is injured.
 - Photographs must also be taken of any damage to department equipment or vehicles.
 - All photographs must be placed in DIMS (Digital Image Management System) under the case number assigned to the call for service.
- When an interaction between an on-duty officer and another person results in the officer being assaulted, the officer being a victim of a crime, and/or the person experiencing serious bodily injury, the supervisor overseeing the incident should, based on available information and to the extent feasible, ensure the involved officer has no further contact with the person, to include such actions as conducting an interview, transport for medical clearance, transport to the Criminal Justice Center, conduct guard duty, etc.
- Identify and interview any witnesses not already included in related reports.
- Ensure that all officers who witnessed the event complete supplements to the case as required in section .30 or are interviewed.

.60 Supervisors' Responsibilities in Review of Less Lethal Use of Force

The BlueTeam Use of Force Report will be prepared by the officer, and then routed in the following order:

1. The supervisor who responded to the incident

2. The involved officer's shift/section lieutenant with a copy (cc) to the officer's administrative supervisor
3. Division commander
4. Professional Standards Division/ Internal Affairs Section

When the use of force exclusively involves pointing of a firearm at a person, the BlueTeam routing will be:

1. The supervisor who responded or was notified of the incident
2. The involved officer's shift/section lieutenant with a copy (cc) to the officer's administrative supervisor
3. Professional Standards Division/ Internal Affairs Section

The responding supervisor who receives a BlueTeam use of force report is expected to review the use of force report and case reports to ensure their accuracy, adding commentary to further explain the situation and their observations. Responding supervisors are responsible for ensuring all interviews are completed, all required photographs are taken, and all case reports and supplements are complete at the time of their BlueTeam use of force report review. If there are potential policy violations, the responding supervisor must initiate the appropriate personnel investigation prior to going off shift.

The responding supervisor who receives a BlueTeam use of force report is expected to review use of force incidents to determine whether policies and procedures were followed.

In doing so, the responding supervisor will document or address all of the following:

- a) Documentation of the incident as described or captured in BlueTeam use of force report, any associated offense reports, body worn camera recordings, photographs, etc.
- b) Whether the notification and documentation requirements of this policy were met.
- c) Whether the force used was objectively reasonable in light of the factors to be considered under [GO 705 Use of Force](#) (Section .40).

Subsequent levels of review must review the documents listed under "a" above as necessary to assess the use of force, consider the factors listed in [GO 705 Use of Force](#) (Section .40), and take appropriate action as soon as practicable if there are potential policy violations.

The report must be routed to the division commander within 20 days of the use of force incident.