

RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge this department's, governmental entity's and/or any of this department's employees' civil or criminal liability in any way. It is not to be construed as the creation of a particular standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance or litigation. Violations of this directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-departmental administrative sanctions.

Chief of Police: Michael Poehlman /s/		
Approving Deputy Chief: James Johns /s/		
General Order No: P-400-05	Issued: January 14, 2009	Supersedes: P-400-05
General Order Title: USE OF FORCE		

POLICY

It is the Policy of the Reno Police Department that officers use only the force that reasonably appears necessary to effectively bring an incident under control, while protecting the lives of the officer and others. The use of force must be objectively reasonable. The officer must only use that force which a reasonably prudent officer would use under the same or similar circumstances.

DEFINITIONS

Use of Force: For the purposes of this document, use of force is the amount of effort required by police to compel compliance from a person. Except as noted below, this includes any use of force occurring while the officer is acting in an official law enforcement capacity including undercover, plainclothes, or uniform assignments.

Physical Force: Use of any part of the officer's body or the use of police horses or canines to compel compliance.

Chemical Force: Use of any CN, CS, Mace, or OC aerosol or foam spray to compel compliance.

Impact Force: Use of any object, (nightstick, baton, flashlight, other) as a less-lethal weapon to compel compliance.

Electronic Force: Use of any electronic equipment (Taser or similar device) to compel compliance.

Firearms Force: The discharge of any firearm (including less lethal munitions such as 37mm, 40mm, etc.) of any type to compel compliance.

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

Non-Deadly Force: Any use of force other than that which is considered deadly force. This

includes any physical effort used to control or restrain another, or to overcome the resistance of another.

Objectively Reasonable: This term means that, in determining the necessity for force and the appropriate level of force, officers shall evaluate each situation in light of the known circumstances, including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the crime, the level of threat or resistance presented by the subject, and the danger to the community.

PROCEDURES

Use of Deadly Force

1. Law enforcement officers are authorized to use deadly force to
 - a. Protect the officer or others from what is reasonably believed to be a threat of death or serious bodily harm; and/or
 - b. To prevent the escape of a fleeing violent felon who the officer has probable cause to believe poses a serious threat of death or serious injury to the officer or others; and/or
 - c. To destroy an animal that represents a threat to public safety, or as a humanitarian measure where the animal is seriously injured, when the officer reasonably believes that deadly force can be used without harm to the officer or others.

Deadly Force Restrictions

1. Discharging a firearm to provide a “warning shot” is generally prohibited and may only be used under the most extreme circumstances.
2. Discharging a firearm at or from a moving vehicle is generally prohibited and may only be used under the most extreme circumstances.

Use of Non-Deadly Force

1. Where deadly force is not authorized, officers may use only that level of force that is objectively reasonable to bring an incident under control.
2. Officers are authorized to use department approved, non-deadly force techniques and issued equipment to
 - a. Protect the officer or others from physical harm; and/or
 - b. Restrain or subdue a resistant individual; and/or
 - c. Bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control.

Use of Other Weapons and Techniques

Use of weapons and techniques other than those issued and approved by the department are governed by this use of force policy and must be objectively reasonable.

REPORTING

A written use of force report is required following

1. Any use of Physical Force other than light touch and physical controls (unless there are visible or claimed injuries), as specified by department approved training.

2. Any use of Impact Force, Chemical Force, Electronic Force, or Firearms Force.
3. Any use of force that results in an apparent or claimed injury which is not otherwise precluded (e.g. Incidental Injury During Police Custody) according to the Blue Team Matrix.

Officers involved in a use of force requiring a written report will immediately inform their supervisor. All officers who use force requiring a written report and witness officers to that use of force will complete a written use of force report prior to the end of shift at the direction of the responding supervisor.

Supervisors, when notified of a use of force requiring a written report, will respond to the incident on a priority basis. Supervisors will follow reporting and notification requirements according to the Blue Team Matrix.

TRAINING

Procedures for implementing this policy will be disseminated through regularly scheduled training.