



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **USE OF TASER**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*

GEORGIA MILTENBERGER
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Cottage City Police Department to utilize the minimum amount of force necessary to affect an arrest or subdue a violent or potentially violent individual. To that extent, the Department has authorized the use of the TASER® as a non-lethal weapon.

Cottage City Police officers are permitted to carry non-lethal weapons in accordance with Maryland State Law under Criminal Law Procedures Subtitle 2, § 4-201. Non-sworn personnel are not permitted to carry and / or use non-lethal weapons. Only sworn personnel who are trained and certified may be issued and carry the TASER®

The TASER® is not intended to be used in place of a firearm when the use of deadly force is authorized.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. The TASER® is an electro-muscular disruption weapon that disrupts the body's ability to communicate messages from the brain to the muscles causing temporary motor skill dysfunction.
- B. Drive Stun is a secondary function of the TASER® that will stun a subject by making direct contact with the body after the air cartridge has been expended or removed.

- C. The air cartridge is the replaceable cartridge which uses compressed nitrogen to propel two barbed probes on thin connecting wires sending a high voltage/low current signal into a subject.
- D. The TASER ® has a data port that stores the date and time of each firing of the weapon and provides a complete and accurate documentation of its use.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. The TASER ® may be used to control dangerous or violent subjects when deadly force does not appear to be justified and/or necessary. The TASER® may also be used to subdue a subject when other conventional non-lethal tactics such as the ASP® baton, O.C. spray or open hand tactics have been or will likely be ineffective or there is reasonable expectation that it will be unsafe for officers to approach within physical contact range of the subject.
- B. Only a properly functioning and charged TASER ® shall be carried on duty.
- C. Officers who are trained and certified to carry the TASER® shall, at the beginning of each shift;
 - 1. Remove the air cartridge from the front of the TASER® by squeezing the buttons on either side of the cartridge.
 - 2. Insert a freshly charged battery pack into the base of the handgrip and check the TASER's® proper operation of the Laser by releasing the safety.
 - 3. Squeeze the TASER's® trigger to check that the weapon produces a noticeable arc between the two metal contacts at the front.
- D. Officers will carry the TASER® in an issued departmental holster. The holster will be worn on the duty belt opposite the side the member's service weapon is carried.
- E. The TASER® may be deployed from up to 21 feet away from the subject when;
 - 1. The suspect is punching or kicking;
 - 2. Threatening to punch or kick;
 - 3. Lesser force options have been or will be ineffective, or

4. The officer reasonably believes the subject is a credible threat.
- F. Other deployment considerations include, but are not limited to;
1. An imminent threat to others;
 2. The suspect is actively resisting;
 3. The severity of the crime;
 4. The suspect is attempting to evade arrest by fighting;
 5. The suspect is pregnant or the officers believes the suspect is pregnant and a successful use of the TASER® may cause complications from a secondary Injury or fall, and;
 6. Consider using the legs as a target area if the suspect is wearing heavy or multiple layers of clothing.
- G. When practical, the officer shall give a loud verbal warning to the subject and the other officers present that he/she will be firing the TASER®
1. The officer should deploy the TASER® at the subject's center of mass, avoiding such areas as the head, face, neck, groin areas or the breast area of females
 2. Ensure the probes are removed from the subject's skin by a TASER® certified officer or trained medical personnel.
 3. The use of the drive stun is discouraged except in situations where the probe deployment is not possible and the immediate application of the drive stun will bring a subject displaying active, aggressive or aggravated aggressive resistance safely under control. Multiple drive stuns are discouraged and must be justified and articulated on the Use of Force form. If the initial application is ineffective, the officer will reassess the situation and consider other available options.
 4. The officer shall examine the arrestee for any injuries caused either directly or indirectly by the use of the TASER®. If any injuries are present or if the arrestee complains of an injury, whether visible or not, the arrestee shall be transported to a medical facility for treatment prior to being transported to the booking facility. If the arrestee shows visible signs of an injury but declines medical treatment, he/she shall be asked to sign a properly executed waiver of medical treatment. This form shall accompany the arrestee to the booking facility and be presented to the Department of Corrections personnel at the time of intake.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Any officer who deploys a TASER®, whether the probes took effect or not shall immediately notify a supervisor of its use and complete a departmental Use of Force Report prior to the expiration of the officer's tour of duty.
- B. If any injuries to the arrested person are present, whether or not caused by the use of the TASER® shall immediately or as soon as practicable, call for an ambulance or transport the arrestee to a medical facility for treatment.
- C. As soon as possible, ensure that color photographs are taken of the arrestee's injuries or probe impact points and attach the photographs to the Use of Force Report.
- D. Supervisors shall thoroughly investigate all uses of the TASER® to ensure its use conforms to department guidelines. A complete report with recommendations shall be prepared and submitted to the Chief of Police within 30 days.