



LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



Use of Force

Preamble to the Use of Force Policy

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is committed to the sanctity and preservation of life, human rights, and the dignity of every individual as described in Our Core Values. Department members are sometimes required to use force in self-defense, defense of others, and during the execution of lawful duties. In all situations, Department members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with lawful and constitutional standards.

As leaders on the Sheriff's Department, all members shall view their duties in the context of safety for themselves and others, with an emphasis on respect, professionalism, and reverence for human life, even when force is required.

In cases where Sheriff's Department personnel must take action to conduct lawful duties where there is not necessarily an immediate physical threat, members shall take into account and communicate (where applicable) tactical considerations predicated on preventing the use of force whenever possible.

For planned tactical operations, such as service of warrants, parole compliance searches, tactical cell extractions, and prolonged passive resistance, members shall develop a tactical plan predicated on preventing the use of force whenever possible. Supervisors shall be present during planned tactical operations.

The Sheriff's Department is committed to upholding lawful, professional, and ethical standards through assertive leadership and supervision before, during, and after force incidents. This includes force prevention efforts, effective tactics, dispassionate and objective review, and analysis of every incident.

Use of Force Defined

Force is defined as any physical effort used to control or restrain another, or to overcome the resistance of another.

Use of Force Reporting Procedures

The Sheriff's Department recognizes each use of force by its members requires a thorough, fair, and objective review.

Any use of force (A) which is greater than that required for un-resisted Department-approved 1) searching or handcuffing, 2) control holds or come-alongs, or 3) hobbling or (B) which results in an injury or a complaint of pain constitutes Reportable Force and must be reported.

NOTE: Throughout this section, the term "suspect" is used to refer to any individual upon whom force has been used.

Reportable Force Categories

There are three categories of Reportable Force.

Category 1 Force involves any of the following where there is no injury:

- Searching and handcuffing techniques resisted by a suspect;
- Hobbling resisted by a suspect;
- Control holds or come-alongs resisted by a suspect;
- Take downs; and/or
- Use of Oleoresin Capsicum spray, Freeze +P or Deep Freeze aerosols, or Oleoresin Capsicum powder from a Pepperball projectile (when a suspect is not struck by a Pepperball projectile) if it causes only discomfort and does not involve injury or lasting pain.

Category 2 Force involves any of the following:

- Any identifiable injury;
- A complaint of pain that a medical evaluation determines is attributable to an identifiable injury; and
- Any application of force other than those defined in Category 1 Force, but does not rise to the level of Category 3 Force.

Category 3 Force involves any of the following:

- All shootings in which a shot was intentionally fired at a person by a Department member;
- Any type of shooting by a Department member which results in a person being hit,
- Force resulting in admittance to a hospital;
- Any death following a use of force by any Department member;
- All head strikes with impact weapons;

- Kick(s), delivered from a standing position, to an individual's head with a shod foot while the individual is lying on the ground/floor;
- Knee strike(s) to an individual's head deliberately or recklessly causing their head to strike the ground, floor, or other hard, fixed object;
- Deliberately or recklessly striking an individual's head against a hard, fixed object,
- Skeletal fractures, with the exception of minor fractures of the nose, fingers or toes, caused by any Department member;
- All canine bites; or
- Any force which results in a response from the IAB Force/Shooting Response Team.