1. Requires De-Escalation

General Order II-42, Use of Force

I. POLICY

C. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that de-escalation is the preferred, tactically sound approach in many critical incidents.

IV. AUTHORIZED USE OF FORCE

D. Upon the lowering or elimination of resistance by the subject, Officers shall similarly, deescalate, or reduce their use of force while maintaining control of the subject.

General Order II-44, Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW)

I. POLICY

A. It is recognized that Officers may encounter situations where force may be necessary to overcome resistance in order to achieve a specific law enforcement objective. The force applied by an Officer in any situation may range from verbal direction to the use of deadly force, if confronted with a situation where the Officer or some other person is threatened with serious physical injury or death.

B. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that the use of force in any situation shall be limited to the force which is needed to halt aggressive actions and/or to overcome specific resistance by the subject in order to accomplish a lawful objective.

2. Has Use of Force Continuum

General Order II-42, Use of Force, II, M, (below) and Figure 1 (see below)

I. POLICY

A. It is recognized that Officers may encounter situations where force may be necessary to overcome resistance in order to achieve a specific law enforcement objective. The force applied by an Officer in any situation may range from verbal direction to the use of deadly force, if confronted with a situation where the Officer or some other person is threatened with serious physical injury or death.

B. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that the use of force in any situation shall be limited to the force which is needed to halt aggressive actions and/or to overcome specific resistance by the subject in order to accomplish a lawful objective.

C. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that de-escalation is the preferred, tactically sound approach in many critical incidents.

D. It is also the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that Officers shall exhaust all other reasonable means of apprehension, or defense of themselves or another, before resorting to the use of deadly force.

II. DEFINITION

M. Force Guidelines – A framework for making decisions involving reasonable use of force by Officers. The structure of the Force Guidelines is based on constitutional considerations and case law and describes appropriate decision making in a fluid and dynamic situation. The Force Guidelines consider the totality of circumstances to include the relationship
between the subject’s form of resistance, all reasonably perceived factors that may have an effect on the situation, and the response options available to the Officer. (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1

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**Force Guidelines**

**The Decision-Making Process**

The Force Guidelines recognize that officers make use of force decisions based on the totality of circumstances at the time of the incident. Circumstances are fluid and dynamic. Formulating a valid response requires continual assessment as the situation changes.

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**Subject Resistance**

- Is the subject verbally or physically resisting my lawful authority?
- Is the subject making attacking movements that are not likely to cause death or great bodily harm?
- Is the subject making attacking movements that are likely to cause death or great bodily harm?

**Situational Factors**

- What environmental factors influence this situation? Weather? Location? Presence of others?

---

**Justification**

- Were my actions reasonable based on the subject’s resistance and the totality of the circumstances?
- Am I able to articulate the reasons for my actions?
- Was I in compliance with constitutional and state laws, agency policy, and training?

**Officer’s Response**

- Can I physically control the subject?
- Could I use a non-lethal weapon not meant to cause death or great bodily harm?
- Is deadly force the appropriate option to prevent death or great bodily harm to myself or others?

---

Figure 1
2. **Has Use of Force Continuum (continued)**

General Order II-44, Conducted electrical Weapon (CEW)

I. **POLICY**

A. It is recognized that Officers may encounter situations where force may be necessary to overcome resistance in order to achieve a specific law enforcement objective. The force applied by an Officer in any situation may range from verbal direction to the use of deadly force, if confronted with a situation where the Officer or some other person is threatened with serious physical injury or death.

B. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that the use of force in any situation shall be limited to the force which is needed to halt aggressive actions and/or to overcome specific resistance by the subject in order to accomplish a lawful objective.

C. A Conducted Electrical Weapon is considered to be a less-lethal weapon and is among those supplied by the Department in the interest of reducing the potential for injury to an Officer, a person the Officer may be taking into custody, and innocent bystanders.

3. **Bans Chokeholds and Strangleholds**

General Order II-42, Use of Force

V. **UNAUTHORIZED USE OF FORCE**

C. Officers shall not, at any time, obstruct the breathing or carotid blood flow of a person by applying any pressure, obstruction or chokehold.

D. Officers shall utilize all less-lethal weapons and firearms in the manner consistent with their training. Examples of prohibited use include, but are not limited to:

2. The ASP being used as a choking device.

4. **Requires Warning Before Shooting**

General Order II-42, Use of Force

IV. **AUTHORIZED USE OF FORCE**

A. Deadly Force

5. Officers may discharge a firearm in connection with the performance of official police duties, for the following reasons:

   d. To apprehend a fleeing felon ONLY when:

      2) Some warning, if feasible, has been given.

B. Non-Deadly Force

1. Non-deadly force may be applied if circumstances dictate; however:

   a. Officers will attempt to gain voluntary compliance through the use of verbal techniques, prior to employing physical force, when practical.
4. **Requires Warning Before Shooting (continued)**  
*General Order II-44, Conducted Electrical Weapon (CEW)*

V. **AUTHORIZED USE**

D. When a determination to discharge the weapon has been made, the Officer shall:

1. Give a verbal warning when it is feasible to do so.

5. **Restricts Shooting at Moving Vehicles**  
*General Order II-42, Use of Force*

V. **UNAUTHORIZED USE**

B. Firing at or from Vehicles

3. Officers shall not fire at a moving vehicle or any occupant of a moving vehicle. The Officer’s use of deadly force may be justified if the occupant of a moving vehicle poses an immediate threat with a firearm, or fires upon an Officer or another, and all other reasonable means to avoid the danger have failed.

4. Officers shall not fire from a moving vehicle.

6. **Requires Exhaust All Other Means Before Shooting**  
*General Order II-42, Use of Force*

I. **POLICY**

A. It is recognized that Officers may encounter situations where force may be necessary to overcome resistance in order to achieve a specific law enforcement objective. The force applied by an Officer in any situation may range from verbal direction to the use of deadly force, if confronted with a situation where the Officer or some other person is threatened with serious physical injury or death.

B. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that the use of force in any situation shall be limited to the force which is needed to halt aggressive actions and/or to overcome specific resistance by the subject in order to accomplish a lawful objective.

C. It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that de-escalation is the preferred, tactically sound approach in many critical incidents.

D. It is also the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that Officers shall exhaust all other reasonable means of apprehension, or defense of themselves or another, before resorting to the use of deadly force.

IV. **AUTHORIZED USE OF FORCE**

A. Deadly Force

1. Deadly force is force that is likely to cause death or serious physical injury. Use of deadly force may be an Officer’s first and only appropriate response to a perceived threat. Deadly force does not necessarily mean that someone died from the force used. The deadly force can cause serious physical injury or no harm at all. Deadly force is only permitted when other reasonable means to avoid danger have failed, or are impractical, and the Officer reasonably believes that deadly force is immediately necessary to defend oneself or another from imminent danger of death or serious physical injury.
6. Requires Exhaust All Other Means Before Shooting (continued)

General Order II-42, Use of Force (continued)

5. Officers may discharge a firearm in connection with the performance of official police duties, for the following reasons:
   c. When other reasonable means to avoid the danger have failed, and the Officer reasonably believes this action is immediately necessary to defend oneself or another from death or serious physical injury.
   d. To apprehend a fleeing felon ONLY when:
      1) Other reasonable means of apprehension have failed; and
      2) Some warning, if feasible, has been given; and

7. Requires Duty to Intervene

General Order IV-1, Rules of Conduct

III. RULES OF CONDUCT

A. General Instructions

5. Employees shall advise:
   b. A supervisor, as soon as practical, of violations of this Order and/or any General Orders.

F. Crime and Criminality

3. Employees shall take necessary action and/or intervene, on a known violation of law or local ordinance, or violation of City or Department policy and/or procedure, unless such action is prohibited or restricted by this or any other General Order or policy.

4. Employees have a duty to intervene to prevent or stop wrongdoing by another employee when it is safe and reasonable to do so.

8. Requires Comprehensive Reporting

General Order II-42, Use of Force

VII. INVESTIGATING AND REPORTING THE USE OF FORCE, LETHAL AND LESS-LETHAL

A. Whenever there has been serious physical injury or death of a person as a result from the use of force:

1. The Watch Commander shall ensure the following persons are immediately notified:
   a. The Chief of Police via the involved Officer’s Chain of Command;
   b. The Commander, Office of Professional Standards;
   c. The Manager, Community Awareness Division;
   d. The Commander, Crimes Against Persons Division.

2. The Office of Professional Standards shall conduct an investigation and forward their completed report to the Chief of Police as soon as possible.

3. The Crimes Against Persons Division shall conduct an investigation in cases of injury or death, or as directed by the Chief of Police.

B. Whenever any person is hospitalized for a serious physical injury or death results due to the use of force by an employee:
8. Requires Comprehensive Reporting (continued)

General Order II-42, Use of Force (continued)

1. The District Major, or designee, shall remove the employee from operational assignment and reassign the employee to inside duty, or place the employee on administrative leave pending an administrative review.

2. The employee shall be afforded the opportunity to use the services of any component of the Employee Assistance Program which may be available.

C. An Officer who uses force with a lethal and/or less-lethal weapon while off duty shall contact the Watch Commander via the Emergency Communications Center as soon as circumstances permit.

1. Communications shall notify the Watch Commander who will determine if an immediate internal investigation is necessary.

2. In addition to verbally reporting the use of force, the Officer shall complete a Use of Force Report and submit it to their Supervisor as soon as possible.

D. All accidental discharges of a firearm, an ASR or CEW shall be reported on a Use of Force Report.

VIII. USE OF FORCE REPORTS

A. An Officer using physical control or deadly force, as defined in this Order, shall complete and file a Use of Force Report, prior to going off duty, whenever an employee:

1. Discharges a firearm for other than training or recreational purposes;

2. Takes an action that results in, or is alleged to have resulted in, injury or death of another person;

3. Applies force through the use of lethal or less-lethal weapons; or

4. Applies weaponless physical force at a level as defined by the agency.

B. If the Officer is unable to complete the Use of Force Report, the immediate supervisor shall prepare the report based on available information.

C. The Supervisor approving the Use of Force Report will ensure the Incident Summary portion is complete in the Use of Force Report before routed it through the Officer’s Chain of Command.

D. The Use of Force Report shall be sent electronically, via Blue Team. A documented administrative review will be conducted by the Officer’s Chain of Command through the rank of Major.

E. Following the documented administrative review, the respective Major shall electronically forward the Use of Force Report to the Office of Professional Standards via Blue Team.

1. The Office of Professional Standards will:
   a) Enter the approved Use of Force Report into IAPro, and
   b) Send a PDF version to the Records and Evidentiary Services Division
   c) If any report indicates additional training may be needed, the report will be forwarded to the Training Division for their review.

2. Conduct a review of the Use of Force Report and report the findings to the Chief of Police.

F. The Use of Force Report is a synopsis of the incident for statistical purposes and is in addition to any reports required by J:\Research\GeneralOrders\III Operational General Orders\III-23 Incident Reports.pdf.
8. Requires Comprehensive Reporting (continued)
   General Order II-42, Use of Force (continued)

   G. The *Use of Force Report* shall be used by the:

      1. Training Division to:
         a) Monitor use of force techniques and tactics, to determine effectiveness of intermediate weapons, and to identify equipment upgrades and training needs, and
         b) Conduct a documented annual review and analysis of training needs, effectiveness of the weapons used, and a review of policies and practices for the Chief of Police.
         c) Conduct a documented annual review of all assaults on Departmental law enforcement Officers to determine trends or patterns, with recommendations to enhance officer safety, revise policy, or address training issues.

      2. The Office of Professional Standards to:
         a) Alert the Department of potential complaints of excessive force;
         b) Monitor use of force incidents in order to identify Officers who may be in need of additional training in the use of force and the policies of the Department; and
         c) Prepare the documented annual administrative review and analysis of the Department’s use of force activities, policies and practices for the Chief of Police. The administrative review and analysis will include
            1) Date and time of incidents,
            2) Types of encounters resulting in use of force,
            3) Trends or patterns related to race, age and gender of subjects involved,
            4) Trends or patterns resulting in injury to any person including employees, and
            5) Impact of findings on policies, practices, equipment and training.

   General Order II-43, Lethal and Less-lethal Weapons

   V. SPECIAL SITUATIONS

      A. Display of a Firearm

         1. Aiming a firearm at an individual to gain compliance with verbal commands is considered a use of force and a Use of Force Report will be completed.

   Office of Professional Standards, Standard Operating Procedure III-02, Firearms Investigations

   I. POLICY

      A. It is the policy of the Office of Professional Standards that firearms investigations that also involve an investigation by the Investigative Services Bureau be conducted in an atmosphere of cooperation to ensure that the needs of both investigations are met without hindering the effectiveness of the investigation. Items or information obtained by the Investigative Services Bureau can be shared with the OPS investigators, however OPS investigators cannot share information they may obtain.

      B. Incidents involving the discharge of a firearm at an animal or an accidental discharge, shall be investigated by the affected officer’s supervisor, unless otherwise directed by the Office of Professional Standards. If there has been injury or death of a person or a person has been exposed to danger from the accidental or intentional discharge of a firearm, the Office of Professional Standards will conduct the administrative investigation to assure compliance with state law and department policy.

   II. NOTIFICATION

      A. Upon notification of a discharge of a firearm requiring investigation, the OPS Commander will assign an investigator(s). The primary investigator has responsibility for the investigation.
      B. The OPS Commander may respond to the scene of the shooting based on the severity of the situation.
8. Requires Comprehensive Reporting (continued)
Office of Professional Standards, Standard Operating Procedure III-02, Firearms Investigations (continued)

III. INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

A. Office of Professional Standards Investigators will respond to the scene and will be briefed by the Supervisor in charge of the scene.

B. OPS investigators will not become involved in questioning Officers and/or witnesses until the Investigative Services Bureau Investigator has completed the investigation or the Investigative Services Bureau Supervisor in charge of the investigation has given the approval for such questioning.

C. Upon approval to enter the crime scene, the OPS Investigator will request the Criminal Investigator’s Supervisor, or designee, accompany them while viewing the scene.

1. The purpose of entering the scene is to review the evidence of the crime scene in as close to the original state as possible.

2. The Investigator must ensure that photographs, videos, evidence, etc. have been obtained according to their needs.

D. The OPS Investigator(s) shall make immediate contact with the Supervisor of the employee involved in the shooting, to find out what actions the Supervisor took concerning the involved employee's weapon(s) and gun belt.

E. The OPS Investigator(s) will make contact with the technician assigned to the shooting and request the following information regarding the firearm:

1. Who they received the weapon and gun belt from.

2. What the technician observed.

3. Photographs of the weapon, cartridges be taken. (Show the technician pictures of the weapon and spent cartridges needed by the OPS.)

F. The OPS Investigator shall insure the following procedures are completed and include the information in their report.

1. An examination of the weapon(s) of all Officers at the scene at the time of the shooting. This will include weapons(s) in police vehicle(s).

2. Secure weapon(s) which have been fired (if needed).

3. Secure unspent ammunition, from fired weapon(s).

4. Secure spent cartridges, from fired weapon(s).

5. Secure all the evidence as needed.

6. Witnesses should be identified and as soon as Investigative Service Bureau has completed taking their statements, should be interviewed by the OPS investigator (after State Attorney interviews, if applicable).

7. Conduct a neighborhood as soon as possible. (A second neighborhood may be conducted the next day in an attempt to locate those witnesses that were not available for the first neighborhood.)

8. Obtain photographs and measurements of the scene.
8. Requires Comprehensive Reporting (continued)
Office of Professional Standards, Standard Operating Procedure III-02, Firearms Investigations (continued)

9. Have Communications make a copy of the tape(s).

10. Obtain medical release/records of injured parties, all copies of Officer/Detective/EMS/technical services reports.

11. Obtain firearms report.

12. Obtain Communications CAD Sheets.

13. Obtain crime scene diagrams from involved personnel, if needed for clarity of the case.

14. Obtain aerial photographs, if needed.

15. Submit requests for photographs.

16. Have the Department Armorer inspect the weapon(s) used for serviceability.

17. Conduct the investigation in accordance with all other SOPs.

III. VIDEO/PHOTO REENACTMENT

A. It is the policy of this Department to conduct a video/photo reenactment of shootings involving department employees that are formally investigated by the Office of Professional Standards. The following recommended guideline is for reenactments:

1. Procedures
   a. Investigator should notify the Union Representative or attorney concerning the time and place for the reenactment.
   b. The reenactment should be conducted at the same approximate time of the day to provide similar lighting conditions.
   c. The Investigator should contact the district Commander to request additional personnel as stand-ins/witnesses, etc., as needed.
   d. The investigator should contact the Forensic Services Supervisor to obtain a technician and provide a date, time and place of the reenactment.

2. Reenactment Interviews
   a. The Officer and the Union representative or attorney will be given the Bill of Rights, and the Internal Investigation Warning.
   b. All statements will be recorded.

IV. CASE COMPLETION

A. Cases will be completed within a time frame designated by the Chief of Police. All shooting investigations will be considered a high priority and will be conducted in an expeditious manner.

B. The primary Investigator will be responsible for setting up the Shooting Review Board and coordinating all activities to include notification to individuals.
# Relevant Statistics

## Use of Force Incidents

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Arrests*</td>
<td>9,753</td>
<td>11,366</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unique Use of Force</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>635</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of Force Cases-Department</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of Force Cases-Citizen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-66.7%</td>
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*Arrests are the total number of UCR arrests made by the St. Petersburg Police Dept.

## Use of Force Incidents Involving Arrests

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<th>Year</th>
<th># of Use of Force Arrests</th>
<th>% of Total Arrests</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
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## Use of Force Citizen Race

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<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>353</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>250</td>
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## Use of Force Citizen Gender

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<th>Race</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>516</td>
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Use of Force Officer Injuries and Medical Treatment

<table>
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<th>Officer Injuries</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Officers Injured</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Officers Hospitalized</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>62.5%</td>
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Use of Force Citizen Injuries and Medical Treatment

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<th>Citizen Injuries</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Citizens Injured</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Citizens Hospitalized*</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>-1.6%</td>
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* Total Citizens Hospitalized includes treatments and/or injuries unrelated to force