

Shooting Policy

304.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the shooting policy is to establish procedures for the use and reporting of incidents involving the discharge of firearms. This policy is for internal use only and does not increase the Department's and/or an officer's civil or criminal liability in any way. Violations of this policy can only form the basis for departmental administrative actions.

304.1.1 POLICY

It is the policy of this department to resort to the use of a firearm, when it reasonably appears to be necessary, and generally:

- (a) An officer may use deadly force to protect himself/herself or others from what he/she reasonably believe would be an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.
- (b) An officer may use deadly force to stop a fleeing suspect when the officer has probable cause to believe that the suspect has committed, or intends to commit, a felony involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious bodily injury or death and the officer reasonably believes that there is an imminent or future potential risk of serious bodily injury or death to others if the suspect is not immediately apprehended. Under such circumstances, a verbal warning should precede the use of deadly force, where feasible.
- (c) To stop a dangerous animal.
 - 1. Officers are authorized to use deadly force against an animal in circumstances where the animal reasonably appears to pose an imminent threat to human safety and alternative methods to neutralize the threat are not reasonably available or would likely be ineffective.
 - 2. In circumstances in which officers have sufficient advanced notice that a potentially dangerous domestic animal (e.g. dog) may be encountered, such as in the serving of a search warrant, officers should develop reasonable contingency plans for dealing with the animal without the use of deadly force (e.g. fire extinguisher, Taser, OC Spray, animal control officer). Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any officer from resorting to deadly force to control a dangerous animal if circumstances reasonably dictate that a contingency plan has failed or becomes impractical.
- (d) An officer may euthanize an animal that is so badly injured that human compassion requires its removal from further suffering and where other dispositions are impractical. In these instances, the officer should notify dispatch.
- (e) For target practice at an approved range.

Where feasible, a warning should be given before an officer resorts to deadly force as outlined (a) and (b) above. A specific warning that deadly force will be used is not required by this policy; only that a warning be given if feasible.

304.1.2 WARNING SHOTS

Generally, warning shots or shots fired for the purpose of summoning aid are discouraged and may not be discharged unless the officer reasonably believes that they appear necessary, effective and reasonably safe.

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304.1.3 MOVING VEHICLES

Shots fired at or from a moving vehicle are rarely effective and are generally discouraged.

- (a) Unless it reasonably appears that it would endanger officers or the public, officers are expected to move out of the path of any approaching vehicle.
- (b) This is not intended to restrict an officer's right to use deadly force directed at the operator of a vehicle when it is reasonably perceived that the vehicle is being used as a weapon against the officer or others.
- (c) Officers may use deadly force to stop a fleeing suspect when the officer has probable cause to believe that the suspect has committed or intends to commit a felony involving the infliction or threatened imminent infliction of serious bodily injury or death and the officer reasonably believes that there is an imminent or future potential risk of serious bodily injury or death to others if the suspect is not immediately apprehended. Under such circumstances, a verbal warning should precede the use of deadly force when feasible.

304.1.4 REPORT OF WEAPON DISCHARGE

Except during training or recreational use, any member who discharges a weapon accidentally or intentionally, on or off-duty, shall make a verbal report to his/her supervisor as soon as circumstances permit. If on-duty at the time of the incident the member shall file a written report with his/her Division Commander prior to the end of shift unless otherwise directed. If off-duty, as directed by the supervisor but no later than the end of the next regularly scheduled shift.