



TASERS™

When properly applied in accordance with this policy, the TASER™ device is considered a non-deadly control device which is intended to incapacitate a violent or potentially violent individual without causing serious injury. It is anticipated that the appropriate use of such a device will result in fewer serious injuries to deputies and suspects.

Policy. Personnel who have completed training approved by this office may be issued a TASER for use during their current assignment. Personnel leaving a particular assignment may be expected to return their issued device. Court Security Officers, Bailiffs and Deputies shall only use authorized TASERS and cartridges. The device may be carried either in an approved holster or secured in the driver's compartment of an official vehicle so that it is readily accessible at all times.

- (a) If the TASER is carried in a holster, the TASER shall be carried on the opposite side as the duty weapon.
- (b) All TASERS shall be clearly and distinctly marked to differentiate them from the duty weapon and any other devices.
- (c) Whenever practical, two or more TASER cartridges shall be carried on their person at all times while carrying a TASER.
- (d) Personnel shall be responsible for insuring that their issued TASER is properly maintained and in good working order at all times.

Verbal and Visual Warnings. Unless it would otherwise endanger personnel or public safety, or is impractical due to circumstances, a verbal announcement of the intended use of the TASER shall precede the application of TASER in order to:

- (a) Provide the individual with a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply.
- (b) Provide others with warning that a TASER may be deployed.

If after a verbal warning, an individual continues to express an unwillingness to voluntarily comply with lawful orders and it appears both reasonable and practical under the circumstances, the operator may, but is not required to, display the electrical arc (provided there is not a cartridge loaded into the TASER) or laser in a further attempt to gain compliance prior to the application of the TASER. The aiming laser should never be intentionally directed into the eyes of another as it may permanently impair their vision.

The fact that a verbal and/or other warning was given or reasons it was not given shall be documented in any related reports.

Use of the Taser. As with any law enforcement equipment, the TASER has limitations and restrictions requiring consideration before its use. The TASER should only be used when its operator can safely approach the subject within the operational range of the TASER. Although the TASER rarely fails and is generally effective in subduing most individuals, operators should be aware of this potential and be prepared with other options in the unlikely event of such a failure.

Authorized personnel may use the TASER when circumstances known to the operator at the time indicate that the application of the TASER is reasonable to subdue or control.

- (a) A violent or physically resisting subject or,
- (b) A potentially violent or physically resisting subject if:

1. The subject has verbally or physically demonstrated an intention to resist;
2. The operator has given the subject a verbal warning of the intended use of the TASER followed by a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply;
3. Other available options reasonably appear ineffective or would present a greater danger to the operator or subject.

(c) Although not absolutely prohibited, personnel should give additional consideration to the unique circumstances involved prior to applying the TASER to any of the following individuals:

1. Pregnant females
2. Elderly individuals or obvious juveniles
3. Individuals who are handcuffed or otherwise restrained.
4. Individuals who have been recently sprayed with alcohol based Pepper Spray or who otherwise in close proximity to any combustible material.
5. Passively resisting subjects.
6. Individuals whose position or activity may result in collateral injury (e.g. falls from height, operating vehicles).

(d) Individuals suspected of being under the influence of drugs/alcohol or exhibiting symptoms of “excited delirium” (e.g. nudity, profuse swearing, irrational behavior) may be more susceptible to collateral problems and should be closely monitored following the application of the TASER until they can be examined by paramedics or other medical personnel.

(e) Because the application of the TASER in the “Drive Stun” mode (i.e. direct contact without darts) relies primarily on pain compliance and requires close proximity to the subject, additional caution should be exercised and the controlling effects may be limited.

The TASER shall not be used to torture, psychologically torment or inflict undue pain on any individual. The display of the electric arc as authorized in this policy shall not constitute torture or torment.

Multiple Applications of the TASER. If, after a single application of the TASER, an operator is still unable to gain compliance from an individual and circumstances allow, the operator should consider whether or not the probes or darts are making poor contact, or if the use of the TASER is limiting the ability of the individual to comply or if the other options or tactics may be more appropriate. This however, shall not preclude multiple, reasonable applications of the TASER on an individual.

Report of Use. All TASER displays to obtain compliance and discharges shall be documented in the related arrest/incident report. Accidental discharges of a TASER cartridge will also be documented. Any report documenting the discharge of a TASER, cartridge will include the cartridge’s serial number and an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the discharge.

Medical Treatment. Absent extenuating circumstances or unavailability, only Taser trained personnel, or qualified medical personnel, including certified paramedics, should remove TASER darts from a person’s body. Used TASER darts shall be considered a sharp biohazard, similar to a used hypodermic needle, and universal precautions should be taken accordingly.

All persons who have been struck by TASER darts or who have been subjected to the electric discharge of the device shall be immediately cleared prior to booking. Additionally, any such individual who falls under any of the following categories should, as soon as practicable, be examined by paramedics or other qualified medical personnel.

- (a) The person is suspected of being under the influence of controlled substances and/or alcohol.

- (b) The person may be pregnant.
- (c) The person reasonably appears to be in need of medical attention.
- (d) The TASER darts are lodged in a sensitive area (e.g. groin, female breast, near the eyes).
- (e) The person requests medical treatment.

Persons who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse swearing, extraordinary strength beyond physical characteristics, imperviousness to pain or who require a protracted physical encounter with multiple personnel to bring under control may be at an increased risk of sudden death and should be examined by qualified medical personnel as soon as practicable. Any individual exhibiting signs of distress after such an encounter shall be medically cleared prior to booking.

If any individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal should be witnessed by at least two authorized personnel, and/or medical personnel, and shall be fully documented in related reports. If any audio recording is made of contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included if possible.

The transporting officer shall inform any person receiving custody or any person placed in a position of providing care, that the individual has been subjected to the application of the TASER.

Training. Only those personnel who have received the initial training and annual re-certification can carry and/or use a TASER device. A reassessment of an operator's knowledge and/or practical skill may be required at any time deemed appropriate by the instructor or supervisor, and/or their designee.