



RESTRICTIVE USE OF FORCE POLICIES

The Arlington County Police Department

Above all else, the Arlington County Police Department is committed to the principle that all individuals will be treated with dignity and respect. As part of our commitment to the community, we regularly evaluate and update our policies and training practices to ensure compliance with the law, best practices and standards administered by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC). The concepts outlined below have been reflected in departmental policy, practices or training since at least 2015 when Chief Farr assumed command of the agency. Each individual policy will reflect the most recent revision date, however, they were reviewed and affirmed when ACPD received its initial accreditation from the VLEPSC in 2019.

BAN CHOKEHOLDS AND STRANGLEHOLDS

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section III, Procedure G

In less lethal force situations, officers are prohibited from deliberately attempting to block a suspect's airflow, otherwise intentionally interfering with a suspect's ability to breathe, or attempting to cause the suspect to lose consciousness.

REQUIRE DE-ESCALATION

POLICY: 570.03 Crisis Intervention

Officers are trained in objective reasonableness, and by policy, must use the appropriate amount of force for the situation, to include de-escalation techniques. De-escalation is integrated into officers' training beginning at the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy (NVCJA) and is a recurrent theme in training throughout their career. The Department also sponsors a [Crisis Intervention Training](#) (CIT) program, which equips officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to manage a person in mental crisis. Many of the skills learned effectively de-escalate a variety of situations not involving mental crisis. Every recruit class competes CIT training within the first year of completing field training. Our goal is to train 100% of the agency in CIT.

REQUIRE WARNING BEFORE SHOOTING

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section III, Procedure A, 2d

When feasible, officers are required to give, or attempt to give, some warning before using deadly force to prevent the escape of a dangerous suspect under certain conditions. Starting at the police academy, a key component of our officers' regular training is verbalization of commands so that citizens understand what the officer wants them to do and what the officer intends to do.

EXHAUST ALL OTHER MEANS BEFORE SHOOTING

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section III, Procedure A

Officers may use deadly force only to protect themselves or others from what is reasonably believed to be an immediate threat of death or serious bodily harm, or to prevent the escape of a dangerous suspect under certain conditions. Beginning in their training at NVCJA, officers are trained in de-escalation and reasonable selection of use of force techniques.

DUTY TO INTERVENE

POLICY: 401.05 Duty to Intervene

Sworn officers have a duty to intervene and restore appropriate order during any police action where the amount of force being used is beyond what is objectively reasonable. Officers shall immediately report any intervention to a police supervisor who shall notify the Office of Professional Responsibility as soon as practical. Additionally, officers are required to report knowledge of an employee violating any law, ordinance, rule or regulation of the Department which is supported by policies 407.00 *Duty Responsibilities*; 401.04 *Reporting Violations* and 511.05 *Fitness for Duty and Early Intervention Program*.

BAN SHOOTING AT MOVING VEHICLES

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section III, Procedure C, 2

Officers are prohibited from discharging a firearm at a moving vehicle unless the occupant threatens to use or uses lethal force, or the vehicle is operated in a manner deliberately intended to strike an officer or citizen, and all other reasonable means of defense, as well as all other reasonable evasive actions have been exhausted, are not practical or are not available.

REQUIRE COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section III, Procedure L, Procedure C; 538.05 Use of the TASER CEW, Section III, Procedure F

The Department thoroughly reviews any incidents involving use of force involving a police weapon, a vehicle used to apply force, injury or death to any person, the use of active countermeasures, or an allegation of excessive force. The pointing of a firearm at a person must be documented in a case report or field investigation.

REQUIRE USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM

POLICY: 538.04 Use of Force, Section II, E

The amount of force applied by officers shall be objectively reasonable in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them. Objective reasonableness is defined as a standard of caution, wherein officers must determine the necessity for force, as well as the appropriate level of force, by evaluating the circumstances known to the officer at the time the decision to use force is made. Officers must be able to articulate that their perception of the threat and their response is the same as a reasonable officer faced with the same facts and circumstances. Officers are trained that the level of the threat may dictate an immediate response at a corresponding level of force.

The Department's Written Directives Manual is available online at powerdms.com/public/ARLVA/tree