



# TASER USE INCIDENTS



ISSUE DATE:	18 November 2025	EFFECTIVE DATE:	
RESCINDS:	28 June 2023 Version		
INDEX CATEGORY:	03 - Field Operations		
CALEA:	Law Enforcement Standards Chapter 4		

## I. PURPOSE

This directive outlines the policy governing the discharge of Department Taser devices.

## II. POLICY

- A. **Sanctity of Human Life.** The Department's highest priority is the sanctity of human life. The concept of the sanctity of human life is the belief that all human beings are to be perceived and treated as persons of inherent worth and dignity, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, military status, immigration status, homeless status, source of income, credit history, criminal record, criminal history, or incarceration status. Department members will act with the foremost regard for the preservation of human life and the safety of all persons involved. A member's decision to utilize a Taser will be made in accordance with G03-02, "[De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Use of Force.](#)"
- B. **De-Escalation.** Department members are required to use de-escalation techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force, unless doing so would place a person or a Department member in immediate risk of harm, or de-escalation techniques would be clearly ineffective under the circumstances at the time, in accordance with G03-02, "[De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Use of Force.](#)" Department members will continually assess the situation and modify the use of force as circumstances change and in ways that are consistent with officer safety, including stopping the use of force when it is no longer necessary.
- C. **Response to Resistance and Use of Force.** As defined in G03-02, "[De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Use of Force.](#)"
  - 1. Department members' use of a Taser must be objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional under the totality of the circumstances, including using the minimum amount of force needed under the circumstances.
  - 2. Department members will continually assess the necessity of the use of a Taser and whether alternatives may be employed, including the use of de-escalation techniques, other response options, and availability of other resources.
- D. **Authorized Use.** In accordance with G03-02-01, "[Response to Resistance and Force Options.](#)" Department members may use a Taser only in response to following persons:
  - 1. **Assailants.** The use of a Taser is an authorized force option against an **assailant**, when the person is using or threatening to use force which is likely to cause physical injury.
  - 2. **Active Resisters.** The use of a Taser is an authorized force response option against an **active resister**, when:
    - a. there is objectively reasonable belief at the time that the person is armed, **the person presents a risk of serious injury to the Department member or others**, and other reasonable force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective under the circumstances at the time, or

- b. the person is exhibiting violent and aggressive behavior, and there is objectively reasonable belief at the time that the person has committed:
  - (1) a felony offense; or
  - (2) any other offense against a person (e.g., battery, aggravated assault) or that disregards or endangers the bodily safety of others (e.g., reckless discharge of a firearm).
- E. In determining the appropriate use of a Taser, Department members will balance the risks and benefits of a Taser discharge based on several factors, including, but not limited to the:
  1. threat presented by the person to the Department member or the public.
  2. threat of self-harm presented by the person.
  3. availability of other force options.
  4. likely outcome of the Taser use.
  5. risk of injury.
  6. person's apparent age, size, physical and mental condition, disability, and impairment.
  7. the seriousness of the offense and whether Taser discharge is immediately necessary.
- F. **Restrictions.** Tasers can cause serious injury or death. For the safety of everyone involved, the following additional restrictions apply:
  1. **Use in Schools.** The use of Tasers is strongly discouraged in schools and on students. Therefore, Tasers will not be used in a school or on students, unless the Department member assesses the reasonableness and necessity of the Taser use based on the totality of the circumstances, including the person's apparent age, size, and the threat presented, and determines that Taser discharge is immediately necessary.
  2. **Explosion Hazards.** Tasers will not be used in any environment that contains potentially flammable, volatile, or explosive material.
  3. **Removing Barbs.** Members will not remove Taser barbs embedded in the person's flesh. Only trained medical personnel may remove Taser probes from a person's flesh.
  4. **Multiple Tasers on One Person.** Members will not use multiple Tasers against the same person, unless a member already attempted to use a Taser against the person but the probes did not make contact with the person.
  5. **Use of One Taser on Multiple Persons.** Department members will avoid discharging a single Taser against multiple persons unless **all persons the Taser is deployed against are defined as assailants** and other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective under the circumstances at the time.
    - a. Department members will be mindful that the Department Taser device will energize up to six discharged probes simultaneously with a single initiation of the Taser Selector Switch to re-energize the probes.
    - b. Department members are reminded that each Taser discharge, including subsequent applications of Taser energy against a person, must be individually justified.
    - c. Department members are prohibited from using a single Taser on multiple persons when:
      - (1) the use of a Taser is **NOT** an authorized force option against all persons targeted and

- (2) the probes maintain contact with the skin of a person for which the continued use of a Taser is **NOT** an authorized force option.
- d. Department members are reminded that the authorized manner of use of a Taser, as outlined in Item III-B of this directive, will be followed for each person a Taser device is discharged against.
6. **No Drive Stuns.** Drive stunning with a Taser is prohibited.
- NOTE:** The ability to perform drive stuns is not included in the functionality of Department Taser devices.
7. **Persons Vulnerable to Injury from Tasers.** Tasers will not be used on a person who is observed to be or overtly appears to be at a greater risk of serious injury or death from taser use, unless the person is defined as an **assailant** and other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective.
- NOTE:** People who are potentially at greater risk of serious injury from Taser use include, but are not limited to, children, pregnant women, the elderly, people with low body mass, people in medical distress, people with a pre-existing medical condition that may become aggravated (e.g. heart ailment), or people exhibiting symptoms of a behavioral or mental health crisis that causes them to be in medical distress.
8. **Persons Who are Handcuffed or Restrained.** Department members will refrain from using a Taser against a person who is fully restrained and controlled (e.g., both hands secured together) with handcuffs or other restraining devices (e.g., flexible restraining devices), unless the **person is defined as an assailant** and other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective under the circumstances at the time.
9. **Fleeing Persons.** Tasers will not be used on a person whose **ONLY** action is flight alone. The use of a Taser on a fleeing person is only authorized when in compliance with Item II-D of this directive.
10. **Pain Compliance.** Department members are prohibited from using a Taser for pain compliance, punishment, or retaliation.
11. **Persons with Weapons.** Department members are prohibited from using a Taser against a person solely because they possess a weapon. The use of a Taser on a person who is armed is only authorized when in compliance with Item II-D of this directive.
- G. **Increased Discharge Risk.** Taser discharges under certain circumstances may increase the risk of serious injury or death. Unless other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective, Department members should avoid the use of a Taser on persons who:
1. are elevated above the ground or are in an unstable position (e.g., tree, roof, ladder, ledge, balcony, porch, bridge, or stair);
  2. could fall and suffer an impact injury to the head or other area;
  3. could fall on a sharp object or surface (e.g., holding a knife, falling on glass);
  4. may be less able to catch or protect themselves in a fall (e.g., people who are restrained, handcuffed, incapacitated, or immobilized; people with a disability);
  5. may have impaired reflexes (e.g., from alcohol, drugs, or certain medications);
  6. are running, or are otherwise in motion;
  7. are operating or riding any mode of transportation (e.g., vehicle, bus, bicycle, motorcycle, or train); or
  8. are located in water, mud, or marsh environment if the ability to move is restricted.

- H. **Justify Separate Uses of Force.** An initial Taser discharge, each subsequent Taser discharge, or additional applications of Taser energy (either re-energizing discharged cartridges with the Taser Selector Switch or discharging additional cartridges) must be documented on the Tactical Response Report (TRR) and individually justified as a separate use of force, including, but not limited to, the persons change in behavior or lack thereof.

**NOTE:** Each officer who discharges a Taser must complete a TRR for each person subjected to the Taser discharge. Multiple Taser discharges by an individual officer against a single person will be reported on a single TRR. Each Taser discharge will be documented within the "Taser Use" section of the TRR, and each discharge will be individually justified within the "Narrative" section of the TRR.

- I. Department members will refer to U04-02-02, "[Control Devices and Instruments](#)" for specific procedures on Taser device protocols including training, maintenance, assignment, manner of carry, and accountability.

**REMINDER:** Taser Devices will be carried in a Department-approved holster on the member's support (non-firearm) side.

- J. Due to the use of gunpowder to propel its projectiles (cartridges), certain Taser devices, including the Taser T10, fall under the Federal definition of a firearm (18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(3)(A). However, the use, deployment, training, and certification of the T10 will be consistent with this policy and the Department directives titled "[Control Devices and Instruments](#)," "[Prescribed Uniform and Equipment Items](#)," and "[Annual Prescribed Weapon Qualification Program and Taser Recertification](#)."

**NOTE:** The policies and procedures outlined in the Department directives titled "[Firearm Pointing Incidents](#)" and "[Firearm Discharge Incidents - Authorized Use and Post-Discharge Administrative Procedures](#)" do not apply to the pointing, use, or deployment of a Taser device.

### III. CONDITIONS ON THE DISCHARGE OF A TASER

- A. **Taser Discharge.** A Taser discharge is:

1. any cartridge discharge, including accidental discharges and single cartridge discharges, irrespective of whether or not they make contact with a person, are able to make a connection to apply energy, or actually apply energy from the Taser; or
2. any action taken to re-energize the probes that are in contact with the person.

**NOTE:** It is not considered a discharge of a Taser if the Taser, the Taser's flashlight, and/or the Taser's laser pointers were merely displayed or the Taser's Warning Alert was used where there is no electrical contact with the person or cartridge discharge.

- B. **Authorized Manner of Use.** When it is safe and feasible to do so, a member who is discharging a Taser device will:

1. give verbal commands and warnings prior to, during, and after the discharge of the Taser, including informing other Department members on the scene of the discharge of the Taser.

**REMINDER:** Consistent with G03-02-01, "[Response to Resistance and Force Options](#)," when encountering noncompliance to lawful verbal direction, when it is safe and feasible to do so, Department members will consider if the noncompliance may be due to limited English proficiency or other language barriers, a medical condition, or disability.

2. allow a person a reasonable amount of time to comply with a warning prior to the initial and subsequent discharges, the application of Taser energy, or continuing the use of a Taser, either with additional cartridge discharges or applications of energy, unless doing so would compromise the safety of a Department member or another person.

**NOTE:** Consistent with G03-02-01, "[Response to Resistance and Force Options](#)," when encountering noncompliance to lawful verbal direction, when it is safe and feasible to do so, Department members will consider if the noncompliance may be due to limited English proficiency or other language barriers, a medical condition, or disability.

3. aim for person's back below the neck area. When frontal shots are necessary, aim for lower center mass (below chest or area of the heart) and legs.
  - a. Department members will target the person's lower center mass and **are prohibited from** targeting the person's head, chest, neck, groin, genitalia, or anterior pelvis.
  - b. It is recommended that Department members discharge the Taser to the person's back whenever possible.

4. consider their immediate surroundings and take precautions to identify the appropriate target prior to the discharge of a Taser to minimize risk and account for the safety of uninvolved members of the public.

**NOTE:** An individual discharged probe from a Department Taser device that does not strike a target may detach from the wire and continue to travel beyond the intended target.

5. discharge cartridges when the member is within the effective range of the Taser, which is up to a maximum of 40 feet from the person.
6. use only one five-second energy cycle and reassess the situation, including whether the person has the ability and has been given a reasonable opportunity to comply, before any additional cycles are given or additional cartridges are discharged.
7. if the person is incapacitated, immediately attempt to restrain the person while incapacitated.
8. if the person has been exposed to three, five-second energy cycles (or has been exposed to a cumulative 15 total seconds of energy) and the member has not gained control of the person, switch to other force options unless the member can reasonably justify that continued Taser use was necessary to ensure the safety of the member or another person.

**NOTE:** Prolonged Taser exposure under certain circumstances may increase the risk of serious injury or death.

- C. **Request Supervisor.** As soon as practical, a member who has used or anticipates using a Taser will request that a supervisor respond to the scene.

#### IV. POST-DISCHARGE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Discharging Member.** Immediately upon gaining control and restraining the person, the discharging member will:
  1. position the person in a manner that allows free breathing. **Unless the person continues to pose a threat to the Department member or any other person**, Department members will **not** sit, knee, or stand on the person's chest or back which may reduce the person's ability to breathe or cause unnecessary physical stress on the person.
  2. **not** restrain a person above the shoulders, including the head or neck, in a position which interferes with the person's ability to breathe, **unless the person continues to pose an imminent threat of death or great bodily harm to the Department member or any other person.**
  3. request the appropriate medical aid, including contacting emergency medical services (EMS) from the Chicago Fire Department, if:
    - a. the person was exposed to electricity;

- b. probes penetrated the person's skin; or
  - c. the person appears to be in any physical distress or complains of injury or aggravation of a known pre-existing medical condition (e.g., heart ailment).
4. if the person appears to be injured or complains of injury, provide medical aid as soon as reasonably practical, consistent with their Department training, including Law Enforcement Medical and Rescue Training (LEMART) to injured persons until medical professionals arrive on scene.
  5. notify the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) of the Taser discharge.

**NOTE:** If a member discharges a Taser outside of the City of Chicago, the member will also notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction and the Chicago Police Department's Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC).

6. complete a Tactical Response Report (TRR) (CPD-11.377) for all Taser discharges consistent with the procedures outlined in G03-02-02, "[Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report.](#)"
7. complete the appropriate case report and other required reports and submit the reports to their immediate supervisor for review and approval.

**B. Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC).** OEMC will immediately notify the:

1. immediate supervisor of the involved member(s).
2. field supervisor and watch operations lieutenant from the district of occurrence.
3. Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC).

**NOTE:** CPIC will notify the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) of the discharge of a Taser.

**C. Reviewing Supervisor.** When notified that a member discharged a Taser, the assigned reviewing supervisor will:

1. respond immediately to the scene and assume command and oversight of the scene unless relieved by a higher-ranked supervisor.

**NOTE:** When the discharging member's immediate supervisor is unavailable, the watch operations lieutenant, from the district of occurrence, will assign a reviewing supervisor from the district of occurrence.

2. ensure the scene is protected and processed in accordance with G04-02, "[Crime Scene Protection and Processing.](#)"
3. confirm the notifications outlined in Item IV-B have been made and provide any additional relevant or updated incident information, if known.
4. determine whether to request an evidence technician to process the scene. An evidence technician will be requested if:
  - a. probes penetrated the person's skin or any other injuries incurred as a result of the Taser discharge. In this situation, an evidence technician must be requested to photograph the location of the probe penetration and any other injury;
  - b. the Taser discharge incident resulted in any property damage; or
  - c. the responding supervisor determines an evidence technician is required to document the area the Taser discharge occurred, whether indoors or outdoors.

5. take control of the Taser device and deliver it to the assigned investigating supervisor.
  6. request the Street Deputy to respond to all Taser discharges that result in potential life-threatening injury or death.
  7. if a death has occurred as a result of a Taser discharge, ensure the appropriate Forensic Services Division and Bureau of Detectives personnel are requested.
  8. review the discharging member's TRR and complete the appropriate section of the TRR consistent with the procedures outlined in G03-02-02, "[Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report.](#)"
- D. **Investigating Supervisor.** The watch operations lieutenant, or assigned investigating supervisor the rank of lieutenant or above designated as the watch operations lieutenant, from the district of occurrence, will:
1. ensure that a supervisor at least one rank higher than the discharging member responds to the scene of the Taser discharge when such a supervisor is available.
    - a. If a supervisor discharges a Taser, the watch operations lieutenant (WOL) of the district of occurrence may designate another supervisor of the same rank or higher than the involved supervisor to perform the field and other responsibilities of the reviewing supervisor (e.g., on-scene response, crime scene processing, canvass for witnesses, case reporting requirements, notifications).
    - b. If this designation occurs, the WOL will document the supervisor who performed the actions and the information provided by the designated supervisor in the "Reviewing Supervisor" section of the TRR.
  2. notify the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) (or CPIC when COPA is not available) and ensure that a log number is obtained for a Taser discharge notification. If the notification occurs during non-business hours (e.g., on weekdays between 1900 - 0900 hours, holidays, and weekends), the supervisor will contact the Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC) to obtain a log number.
  3. download the discharge data from the Taser and print a copy of the discharge information.
    - a. The investigating supervisor will ensure a copy of the Taser discharge data sheet is attached to the TRR.
    - b. If unable to download the Taser discharge data (required equipment is inoperable or not installed), the investigating supervisor will designate a Department member, preferably a supervisor, to report to an adjacent district with the involved Taser to await the download and printing of the Taser discharge data sheet and return the untampered Taser and data sheet to the investigating supervisor.
    - c. When alternate locations are unable to download the Taser discharge data, the investigating supervisor will ensure that 2nd watch personnel hand-carry the Taser device to the Taser Repair Center to download the discharge data and print a copy of the discharge information.
  4. ensure all evidence from the scene of the Taser discharge is inventoried, including:
    - a. the discharged probes, which will be detached from the wires and **secured before placing it in an Evidence Bag or an Evidence - Property Envelope by first placing it in a 1" x 6" clear tube container (Commodity Code No. 19-1717-0001) obtained from the Equipment and Supply Section;**
      - (1) **print in the Remarks section of the Evidence Bag (CPD-11.511) or in the Contents-Describe section of the Evidence - Property Envelope (CPD-34.559) the warning "CAUTION SHARP INSTRUMENT" in bold letters.**

(2) *if contaminated with biological elements (e.g., blood), affix a biohazard label to the container, as outlined in the Department directive entitled "Exposure Control Plan."*

- b. the used cartridge(s); and
- c. a copy of the Taser discharge data sheet.

5. for incidents which do not require the presence of the Street Deputy, investigate the incident, review the discharging member's TRR, and document the investigation of the incident on the Tactical Response Report - Investigation (TRR-I) (CPD-11.377-I) consistent with the procedures outlined in G03-02-02, "[Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report.](#)"

**NOTE:** The investigating supervisor will ensure all the attachments are included in the TRR, including the Taser discharge data.

6. ensure the expended cartridge is replaced from the district/unit supply. When needed, replacement cartridges may be requested from the Taser Repair Center.

**NOTE:** A copy of the TRR will be presented to the Taser Repair Center for replacement cartridges.

E. **Street Deputy.** In all cases in which a person has a potential life-threatening injury or a death has occurred in conjunction with a Taser discharge, the Street Deputy will:

- 1. proceed to the scene, assume command of the scene, and personally conduct a complete and thorough investigation of the incident.
- 2. ensure that all tasks delineated for subordinate personnel are performed.
- 3. review the discharging member's TRR and complete the appropriate section of the TRR-I consistent with the procedures outlined in G03-02-02, "[Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report.](#)"

(Items indicated by *italics/double underline* have been added or revised)

Authenticated by MWK

23-077 MWK/ASH

Larry Snelling  
Superintendent of Police