
**DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

GO:	23-001	DATE: 02/01/2023
PREVIOUSLY ISSUED: G.O. 100.20 01/01/2015		RE-EVALUATION DATE: 02/01/2026
MPAC Standard(s): 1.1.0, 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.1.8		
TO:	ALL COMMANDING OFFICERS	
CC:	DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM COCHRANE DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN KENT DEPUTY CHIEF RUPERT DANIEL SENIOR CAPTAIN TRENT DUDA	
SUBJECT:	USE OF FORCE	

I. Purpose

The policy and procedure of the Springfield Police Department regarding the use of force including less lethal force and deadly force, are set forth in this order with the purpose of providing officers with specific guidelines about when an officer may use force. The goal is to use only the amount of force that is objectively reasonable, necessary and proportional to accomplish a lawful objective.

II. Policy

The Springfield Police Department places its highest value on the safety of all persons. A reverence and respect for the dignity of all persons and the sanctity of human life shall be reflected in all policies, training, leadership, and procedures of the Springfield Police Department. The department's regulations, policies, and procedures are designed to ensure that this core value guides officers in their use of force.

All members of the Springfield Police Department will seek to gain the voluntary compliance of persons. Members shall use de-escalation techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force when it is safe and feasible to do so based on the totality of the circumstances. Members will use only the amount of force that is reasonable, necessary and proportional to accomplish lawful objectives, and will de-escalate at the point the threat diminishes. 1.1.1

This policy and Municipal Police Training Committee guidelines provide officers with a basis on which to utilize sound judgment in making reasonable and prudent decisions.

III. Definitions

BOLA WRAP: Bola Wrap is a handheld remote restraint device that discharges a tether and temporarily restrains an individual at a safe distance.

CHOKEHOLD (PROHIBITED): The use of a lateral vascular neck restraint, carotid restraint or other action that involves the placement of any part of an officer's body on or around a person's neck with the intent to limit the person's breathing or blood flow. The Springfield Police Department does not train its officers in the use of chokeholds.

DEADLY FORCE: Force that can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Discharging a firearm is always considered to be deadly force regardless of whether anyone is injured or whether the officer was aiming the firearm at anyone.

LESS LETHAL FORCE: Less lethal force is that degree of force, which is neither likely nor intended to cause death or serious physical injury.

OBJECTIVELY REASONABLE: The reasonableness of a particular use of force is based on the totality of circumstances known by the officer at the time of the use of force and weighs the actions of the officer against the rights of the subject, in light of the circumstances surrounding the event. It must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight.

The calculus of reasonableness must allow for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second decisions in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and dynamic and rapidly evolving about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation.

The reasonableness inquiry in an excessive-force case is an objective one: whether the officers' actions are objectively reasonable in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to their underlying intent or motivation.

NECESSARY: No reasonably effective alternative to the use of force appears to exist and the amount of force used is reasonable to effect the lawful purpose intended. Necessity is based on the totality of the circumstances known by the officer at the time of the use of force.

PROPORTIONAL: To be proportional, the level of force applied must reflect the totality of circumstances surrounding the situation at hand, including the nature and immediacy of any threats posed to officers and others. Officers must rely on training, experience, and assessment of the situation to decide an appropriate level of force to be applied. Reasonable and sound judgment will dictate the force option to be employed.

Proportional force does not require officers to use the same type or amount of force as the subject. The more immediate the threat and the more likely that the threat will result in death or serious physical injury, the greater the level of force that may be reasonable, necessary and proportional to counter it.

SERIOUS BODILY INJURY: Bodily injury that results in permanent disfigurement, protracted loss or impairment of a bodily function, limb or organ, or a substantial risk of death.

DE-ESCALATION: De-escalation tactics are actions that an officer can take to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources are available to resolve the situation. The goal of de-escalation is to gain the voluntary compliance of persons, when feasible, and thereby reduce or eliminate the necessity to use physical force.

DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES: Actions used by officers that seek to minimize the likelihood of the need to use force during an incident and increase the likelihood of gaining voluntary compliance from a subject. Verbal persuasion, warnings, slowing down the pace of an incident, waiting out a person, creating distance between the officer and a threat and requesting additional resources to resolve the incident, including, but not limited to, calling in medical or licensed mental health professionals.

DUTY TO INTERVENE: Officers shall verbally or physically intervene with other officer(s) in order to prevent the abusive conduct or excessive force.

IV. Procedures

A. Use of Force

1. Officers shall use the amount of force that is objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional under the circumstances to protect themselves and/or others while performing their lawful duties. When feasible and practical, officers shall attempt to de-escalate potential use of force situations with non-physical force alternatives. When de-escalation attempts have failed and a decision to use force is made, officers must engage in a continual assessment of the ongoing situation, threats, options, and risks. 1.1.1
2. Officers are further trained that whenever a particular force option is utilized, the particular force option shall terminate when a subject is under control and/or when the subject no longer offers force or resistance. 1.1.0; 1.1.2
3. An officer shall utilize and carry, and/or have immediately available, only department authorized weapons, restraining devices and chemical agents while on duty. Officers are only permitted to use equipment they have been authorized to carry while on duty consistent with the prescribed manner in which they have been trained. The carrying and use of any unauthorized weapons, restraining devices and chemical agents when on duty is strictly prohibited.
4. All officers of the Springfield Police Department shall strictly adhere to the Use of Force Policy and all federal, state, and local laws including the U.S. and Massachusetts Constitutions. Violation of this policy shall be considered misconduct subject to corrective action, disciplinary action, possible criminal prosecution and/or civil liability.
5. Any employee, sworn or civilian, whose action(s) or use of force in an official capacity results in death or serious physical injury, is required to be removed from duty pending an administrative review. 1.1.8

B. De-Escalation

Officers, including school resource officers and officers responding to mental health-related calls, shall, unless it is not possible to do so, avoid the use of force by using de-escalation techniques. Examples include verbal persuasion and warnings, slowing down the pace of an incident, waiting out persons, using barriers, creating distance between the member and the threat, and requesting additional resources such as specialized units (crisis intervention-trained (CIT) members, behavioral health care providers, or negotiators) before resorting to force, and to reduce the need for force. De-escalation techniques may mitigate threats, give officers time to utilize extra resources, and increase time available to call more officers or specialty units.

- a. Officers shall talk to the person; attempt to convince the person to comply and not use threatening phrases or profanity; reduce any threat presented by withdrawing to a position that is tactically advantageous; or take actions that allow the member greater distance and time, in order to de-escalate a situation or deploy a lesser force option or no force at all.
- b. Officers shall perform their work in a manner that avoids unduly jeopardizing their own safety or the safety of others through poor tactical decisions including, but not limited to, immediately approaching a person without proper evaluation of the situation, failing to leave sufficient space between the member and the person, closing the reactionary gap, or escalating a situation.
- c. Officers shall not use tactics that unnecessarily escalate an encounter or create a need for force.
- d. Officers shall de-escalate force immediately as resistance decreases.
- e. If the officer has no alternative to using force, the officer shall use only the amount of force that is objectively reasonable, necessary and proportional to respond to the threat or resistance and shall immediately reduce the level of force as the threat or resistance lessens or stops.

C. Less Lethal Force

An officer may use that level of less lethal force that is objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional to bring an incident and/or person under control. This should be utilized when de-escalation tactics have been attempted and failed or are not feasible based on the totality of circumstances. 1.1.4

An officer is authorized to use less lethal force to:

- a. Effect an arrest
- b. Protect the officer or another subject(s) from physical harm, including persons from harming themselves.
- c. Restrain or subdue a resistant subject
- d. Bring an unlawful situation safely and effectively under control

Examples include:

- a. OC Spray
- b. Electronic Control Weapons (e.g. TASER)
- c. Baton
- d. Personal Weapons (e.g. hands, elbows, knees, feet)

- e. Bola Wrap

D. Deadly Force

1. The use of Deadly Force/Lethal Force shall always be the last resort.
2. Officers shall not use Deadly Force unless they have exhausted de-escalation options and Less-Lethal Force options have been tried and failed, or are not safe based on the totality of circumstances.
3. An officer may use Deadly Force when they reasonably believe such action is immediately necessary to protect an officer or another person from an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury.
4. Prior to the decision to employ Deadly Force, officers shall consider environmental considerations such as field of fire, backdrop, bystanders, potential for ricochet, possibility of over penetration, and other risks to life.
5. Where safety permits, officers should identify themselves as a law enforcement officers and state their intention to use Deadly Force before using a firearm or employing Deadly Force.
6. An officer may use Deadly Force to prevent the escape of a fleeing person if force is authorized and no reasonable force alternative exists that is within SPD policy, the member has given a verbal warning to the person (if time, safety, and circumstances permit), and there is probable cause to believe that:
 - a. The person has committed or is in the process of committing a felony involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical injury or death, and
 - b. The escape of the person would pose an imminent threat of death or serious physical injury to the member or another unless the person is apprehended without delay, and
 - c. Officers have identified themselves as law enforcement officers, have stated their intention to use Deadly Force, and have given the person a reasonable opportunity to comply voluntarily, if time, safety, and the circumstances permit.

Restrictions on the Use of Deadly Force

1. Deadly Force shall not be used to subdue persons whose conduct is a threat only to property.
2. Deadly Force shall not be used against persons whose conduct is a threat only to themselves.

3. The following are prohibited unless the use of Deadly Force is authorized and no reasonable alternatives exist:
 - a. Discharge of a firearm at a person.
 - b. Strikes with any hard object, such as a baton, flashlight, radio, weapon stock/handle, or improvised impact weapon to the person's head, neck, sternum, spine, groin, or kidneys.
 - c. Intentional strikes of a person's head against a hard, fixed object including, but not limited to, a roadway, concrete floor, wall, or iron bars.
 - d. Kneeing or kicking a person's head, neck, back, or torso, including "knee drops" onto a prone or supine person.
 - e. Intentionally deploying a Controlled Electronic Weapon (CEW, aka Taser) to the neck, chest, groin or face of a person.
 - f. Discharge of a less-lethal munition to the chest, neck, or head at close range.
 - g. The use of any force on a person whose health, age, condition, or circumstances make it likely that death or serious physical injury will result.
4. Firing warning shots is prohibited.
5. Firing into crowds is prohibited.
6. Officers shall not fire any weapon from or at a moving vehicle, except:
 - a. To counter an immediate threat of death or serious physical injury to the member or another person, by a person in the vehicle using means other than the vehicle. See Vehicle Pursuit Policy.

E. Force Levels ([Hyperlink to be included to Investigation of Review/Investigations and training materials](#))

1. The officer's response options within each of the five force levels identified in the Use of Force Model are not necessarily listed in the order of use and/or need. The officer may de-escalate, stabilize or escalate their response based upon their risk assessment and the perceptions of the subject's degree of compliance or non-compliance.
2. The force tactics listed in each of the five force levels identified in the Use of Force Model are those tactics that officers are trained in. The Department recognizes that there are other methods and tactics that can be used at each of the levels of authority. If a tactic is used that is not listed it must be objectively reasonable, necessary and proportionate as it relates to the officer's risk assessment and the subject's action(s).
3. An officer shall use de-escalation techniques and other alternatives to force consistent with their training, whenever possible and appropriate.
4. Whenever possible an officer shall allow an individual time and opportunity to submit to advisements, warnings, or verbal commands before force is used. This opportunity should be given when such delay will not compromise the safety of the officer or another, and will not result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime.

F. Prohibited Actions

1. The Springfield Police Department prohibits any use of force for punishment, or as a punitive measure. This includes using force to punish an individual for fleeing, resisting arrest, insulting or assaulting an officer.
2. Springfield Police Department officers will not use force against handcuffed or otherwise restrained persons unless necessary or reasonable under the circumstances to stop an assault, prevent injury or escape. Officers shall not use force against a handcuffed or restrained person if the person's actions only present a risk of property damage.
3. Restrained persons are to be seated or placed on their side. Officers shall not position a restrained person face-down as it may cause positional asphyxia. Officers shall not place a person on their back as it can cause radial nerve damage to the wrist and forearm area.
4. The use of chokeholds and/or neck holds is strictly prohibited. (MGL c6E s14(c)) SPD does not and will not in the future, train its officers in the use of chokeholds and/or neck holds.

G. Duty to Intervene ([Hyperlink to be included to Use of Force Reporting](#))

1. An officer present and observing another officer using physical force, including deadly force, beyond that which is objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional based on the totality of the circumstances, shall intervene to prevent the use of unreasonable force. Intervention may be verbal and/or physical depending on the urgency of the situation and potential level of misconduct and/or problematic behavior.
2. Failing to intervene shall be subject to appropriate departmental disciplinary action or possible criminal prosecution (MGL c6E s15), unless intervening would result in imminent harm to the officer or others.
3. Any harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against any officer who either intervened to prevent or stop an excessive force incident or made, intended to make, or is required to make a report regarding the witnessed excessive force incident shall be reported immediately to an appropriate supervisor and will not be tolerated. Any such actions may result in disciplinary action.

H. Duty to Provide Medical Assistance

1. After any level of force is used the officer involved, or any officer aware of a visible injury, complaint of injury, signs of medical distress, or when medical attention is requested by any person, officers shall immediately evaluate the need for medical attention, render aid consistent with their training, and request for medical attention to be provided as soon as the situation safely allows. The officer

shall promptly notify their immediate supervisor when a use of force has resulted in injury or medical treatment is requested. The officer shall also inform their supervisor of the circumstances necessitating such treatment. 1.1.5

2. Members will treat injured persons, whether another officer, a member of the public, or a subject, with dignity and respect.

I. Training

Newly hired officers and veteran officers will be provided access to the agency's use of force policy and will receive instruction on the policy through the use of a variety of adult learning techniques, including scenario-based training, problem-solving practices, online learning platforms, and traditional lecture formats. This training will be provided at Police Academy training for newly hired officers, and through annual training provided by the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC). Veteran officers will be provided updates, and or amendments, to the Use of Force policy via written directives, training bulletins, Roll Call trainings, and during annual In-Service training. 1.1.13

Training records shall electronically track SPD officers' compliance with training requirements, and allow officers to digitally acknowledge completion of each training course as well as completion of annual training requirements and training on any new or substantially revised policies.

Cheryl C. Clapprood
Police Superintendent

CCC/klg

**DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

GO:	23-002	DATE: 02/01/2023
PREVIOUSLY ISSUED:	NEW	RE-EVALUATION
	DATE: 02/01/2026	
	MPAC Standard(s): 1.1.6	
TO:	ALL COMMANDING OFFICERS	
CC:	DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM COCHRANE DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN KENT DEPUTY CHIEF RUPERT DANIEL SENIOR CAPTAIN TRENT DUDA	
SUBJECT:	USE OF FORCE REPORTING	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to set forth the policy and procedures of the Springfield Police Department regarding the reporting of the use of force and the protocols that must be followed whenever an officer exerts or observes another officer exert a reportable use of force in the performance of their duties. This policy applies to all sworn personnel.

II. Policy

It shall be the policy of the Springfield Police Department that all officers accurately, thoroughly, and in a timely manner report all uses of force utilizing the following use of force reporting requirements.

III. General Guidelines and Considerations

The use of force has profound impact on the persons who are subject to it, the officers who deploy such force, and members of the community. How SPD officers use force affects how the community views the police and impacts the legitimacy of the Department in the eyes of the community.

The nature of officers' work requires them to make split second decisions, often in dangerous and dynamic circumstances. When incidents involving force occur they demand a timely, thorough and complete inquiry into all the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident. Only through a comprehensive investigative inquiry can the complete and accurate facts of the incident evolve, allowing for public trust and confidence to be maintained. Thorough and accurate reporting of all incidents involving the use of force shall be completed when a use of force occurs

IV. Procedures

A. General Reporting Requirements ([Hyperlink to BlueTeam reporting system](#))

1. For all uses of force (i.e., any force above un-resisted handcuffing), the officer(s) using force, when safe to do so, are required to immediately orally report the use of force to an uninvolved supervisor.
2. In addition to immediately notifying the uninvolved supervisor, an officer using force will document the force in the BlueTeam system and by writing a use of force narrative before the end of their shift.
3. In reporting all uses of force, officers will provide a use of force narrative that explains with specificity the type of force used, including the following. The use of force narrative will be scanned as a PDF and attached to the BlueTeam use of force report.¹
 - a. The reason for each use of force (e.g. each strike);
 - b. The reason for the initial police presence and the legitimate police objective necessitating the use of force;
 - c. Details regarding the level of resistance encountered and the subject's actions, including whether subject was armed;
 - d. All efforts to de-escalate the situation to avoid the use of force and/or to minimize the level of force used, or reasons why such de-escalation efforts could not be attempted;
 - e. Subject's condition;
 - f. If the subject was injured or complained of injury(s) during or prior to the arrest;
 - g. Medical services offered to subject and if treatment received or refused by subject; and
 - h. Injury(s) to officer(s) and medical services received if applicable.
4. When documenting their uses of force, officers shall not use conclusory statements, boilerplate, or canned language (e.g., "violent struggle" or "only reasonable and necessary force was used") without providing supporting incident-specific detail in their use of force reports.
5. Officers will note in their use of force reports the existence of any body-worn camera or other video footage, regardless of source.
6. All incidents of force (including personal weapons such as hands, elbows, knees and feet) will be reported in the appropriate use of force section found in BlueTeam, which is SPD's electronic use of force reporting system. BlueTeam will provide a way to electronically capture use of force incident details, including the following:
 - a. Call for service number
 - b. De-escalation techniques utilized
 - c. Person's injuries
 - d. Person's resistance
 - e. Use of force tool (e.g., personal weapons (hands, feet, etc.), Taser,

¹ Currently, SPD supervisors will collect hard copy use of force narratives from involved officers, scan them, and upload them to the BlueTeam system. SPD is working on upgrading its systems so that involved officers will eventually be able to type their use of force narratives directly into BlueTeam.

baton, OC Spray)

- f. Location of the use of force on the person's body
 - g. Supervisor(s)' narratives regarding their use of force incident review and investigation and approval
7. The booking sergeant will fill out the appropriate report (preexisting or officer involved injury), which is required by G.L. Ch. 276. The photo lab staff or designee will take digital photographs of prisoners' actual and/or reported areas of injuries. These photographs will become part of the use of force report. The photo lab staff or designee will also take photographs of officers (e.g., torn uniform, grass stains, injuries, and photos of hands).
 8. If a subject/prisoner makes any complaint of an unreasonable use of force during the booking sergeant's intake while filling out the prisoner injury report, the booking sergeant will report that complaint to the Internal Investigations Unit and to the Superintendent's office.
 9. Every officer required to complete a use of force report must do so without conferring or discussing the matter with other officers or anyone else.
 10. In addition to intervention techniques, an officer present and observing another officer using force beyond that which is objectively reasonable, necessary and proportional shall report, orally, the incident to an uninvolved supervisor as soon as reasonably possible but not later than the end of the officer's shift.
 11. If an officer who has observed a use of force by another officer has a reasonable belief that there has been a failure to report the use of force, they will immediately report the use of force, and the failure to report such use of force, to the Internal Investigations Unit and the Superintendent's office.
 12. Any harassment, intimidation, or retaliation against any officer who either intervened to prevent or stop an excessive force incident, or made a report regarding an excessive force incident that they witnessed shall be reported immediately to an appropriate supervisor and will not be tolerated. Any such actions may result in disciplinary action.
 13. These mandatory use of force reports shall be submitted and maintained through the Springfield Police Department's electronic use of force reporting system, BlueTeam.1.1.6 (3, 4)
 14. This policy is meant to be read and followed in conjunction with the following policies
 - a. Use of Force policy
 - b. Use of Force - Review and Investigation

Cheryl C. Clapprood
Police Superintendent

CCC/bgb

**DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

GO:	23-005	DATE: 02/01/2023
PREVIOUSLY ISSUED: NEW	RE-EVALUATION	DATE: 02/01/2026
	MPAC Standard(s): 1.1.7	
TO:	ALL COMMANDING OFFICERS	
CC:	DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM COCHRANE DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN KENT DEPUTY CHIEF RUPERT DANIEL SENIOR CAPTAIN TRENT DUDA	
SUBJECT:	USE OF FORCE- REVIEW AND INVESTIGATION	

I. Purpose

The Springfield Police Department has established procedures to provide a comprehensive approach to both the review and the appropriate investigation of Use of Force events within the Springfield Police Department. Identified roles for supervisors are set forth to gather all relevant and necessary data in relation to Use of Force Levels 1 through 5 for review and submission to investigators for the purpose of thorough inquiry to ensure accountability and transparency.

The manner in which police personnel use both deadly force and less-lethal force is an extremely critical issue to the Department and the community, and one that understandably generates intense public scrutiny. When these incidents occur, they demand a thorough and complete inquiry into all the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident. Only through a comprehensive investigative inquiry can the complete and accurate facts of the incident evolve allowing for public trust and confidence to be maintained.

II. Policy

It shall be the policy of the Springfield Police Department to ensure that officers accurately, thoroughly, and in a timely manner report all uses of force and supervisors utilize the following Use of Force investigation requirements. As set forth below, supervisors will report to and manage the scene upon being notified of a Level 3, 4, or 5 Use of Force.

III. Definitions

Deadly Force: Force that can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Discharging a firearm is always considered to be deadly force regardless of whether anyone is injured or whether the officer was aiming the firearm at anyone. **Level One (1):** References cooperative control tactics used with a non-resistant subject, such as un-resisted handcuffing, hand control or escort techniques (e.g., elbow grasp) and does not constitute a Use of Force.

Level Two (2) Force: Includes (1) uses of force such as wrist lock, arm bar, and single use of OC spray, where there is no reported or observed injury beyond the level of discomfort commonly associated with the use of OC spray, however in the event of a single use of OC spray, all available body worn camera footage will be tagged and investigated within 72 hours; (2) pointing a firearm or Conducted Electrical Weapon (“CEW”) at an individual; (3) “cycling” a CEW as a form of warning (“Displaying the Arc”); (4) pressure point compliance techniques that do not result in injury; and (5) forcible takedowns that do not result in actual injury or complaint of injury. It does not include escorting, touching, or handcuffing a person with minimal or no resistance.

Level Three (3) Force: An intermediate Use of Force that causes or could reasonably be expected to cause an injury greater than transitory pain but does not rise to a Level 4 or 5 Use of Force. Level 3 may include uses of force such as (1) the use of OC spray if there is an injury reported or observed, or if OC spray is used more than once on the same individual; and (2) pressure point compliance techniques.

Level Four (4) Force: A serious level of force including (1) any discharge of a CEW in drive stun or probe mode, aimed at a person, that is not Level 2 or 3 force, including where a CEW is fired at a person but misses; (2) weaponless defense techniques (e.g., elbow or closed-fist strikes, kicks); (3) any discharge of a less-lethal launcher/munition; (4) any canine inflicted injury, except those that would otherwise Level 3 force; and (5) any strike, other than a strike with impact weapon, to the head, neck, sternum, spine, groin, or kidney area.

Level Five (5) Force: The most serious level of force, to include (1) strikes to the head, neck, sternum, spine, groin, or kidney area with an impact weapon; (2) weaponless defense techniques (e.g., elbow or closed-fist strikes, kicks) directed to the head, neck, sternum, spine, groin, or kidney area that results in visible injury, and/or requires medical attention, and/or results in complaint of injury; (3) firearms discharges, including unintentional firearm discharges; (4) applications of three or more CEW cycles on an individual during a single encounter regardless of the mode (probe or drive-stun) or duration of the application and regardless of whether the applications are by the same or different officers; (5) uses of force resulting in death, serious physical injury, loss of consciousness, or requiring hospitalization; and (6) uses of deadly force.

Uninvolved Supervisor: Supervisor not directly engaged in, or present for, the police action in progress (foot pursuit, vehicle pursuit, Use of Force)

IV. Procedures

A. General

1. All Use of Force incidents shall be documented and reviewed by an Uninvolved Supervisor one level above an involved officer in the incident.
2. Incidents will be categorized as a Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4, or Level 5 Use of Force.
3. Any Uninvolved Supervisor should confirm the Use of Force level based upon the circumstances of the incident.
4. When an incident involves multiple types of force or multiple members, the entire incident will be reported and investigated at the highest Use of Force level by any member during the incident.
5. Whenever a supervisor uses, directs, or is otherwise personally involved in any type of force, the investigation will be conducted by a supervisor uninvolved, at a higher rank than the officer who used the force.
6. If the force as alleged was a Level 3, 4, or 5 Use of Force, or any level of force which necessitates medical attention at a local hospital, the booking sergeant shall ensure that the appropriate personnel conduct an investigation of the force used. The booking sergeant need not interview the subject if they have already been interviewed by someone else.

B. General Supervisory Use of Force Review Responsibilities

1. SPD will ensure that Level 2, 3, 4, and 5 uses of force are appropriately and thoroughly reviewed to identify unlawful conduct, policy violations, and tactical needs.
2. The first-line supervisor or their designee will ensure that the entire Use of Force file is complete, and that all relevant documents (e.g., Use of Force narrative, prisoner injury report, body worn camera footage, witness statements) are compiled in a Use of Force file in Blue Team.
3. Every supervisor in the chain of command is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the Use of Force review completed by supervisors, and for initiating corrective action if necessary.
4. The Watch Commander will ensure that whenever a supervisor uses, directs, or is otherwise personally involved in any type of Use of Force, including participating in the tactical planning that led to the Use of Force, an Uninvolved Supervisor, of a higher rank will review the Use of Force.

5. The Superintendent or his/her designee may, in their discretion, reassign a review of force to the Internal Investigation Unit (IIU).
6. When a supervisor has any questions or concerns regarding the findings of the Use of Force review (including any concerns that the findings are not supported by a preponderance of the evidence), the supervisor will recommend changes to the findings after consultation with the investigating supervisor and the previous reviewer, and document the specific evidence or analysis supporting the modification.
7. If a supervisor determines that an officer's report reveals evidence of misconduct or potential criminal conduct, including material omissions or inaccuracies, and/or coordination with other officers when writing the Use of Force report, the supervisor will take corrective action, including notifying IIU and the Superintendent within 24 hours.
8. If the misconduct or evidence reveals conduct that is criminal in nature, the Superintendent will direct that the Detective Bureau investigate the criminal matter and the Superintendent will notify the appropriate prosecutorial authority within 24 hours.
9. When it appears to a reviewer that there is additional relevant and material evidence that may assist in resolving inconsistencies or improving the reliability or credibility of the findings, that supervisor will ensure that it will be included in the investigation.
10. When it appears to a reviewer that the findings are not supported by a preponderance of the evidence, that reviewer will consult with the investigating supervisor and previous reviewers to clarify the discrepancy, and document any modifications, including the specific evidence or analysis supporting the modification.

C. Level-Specific Supervisory Responses

1. Level 1 Supervisor Response

Use of cooperative control tactics with a non-resistant subject, such as un-resisted handcuffing, hand control or escort techniques (e.g., elbow grasp) does not constitute a Use of Force. Therefore, no Use of Force report will be drafted and no supervisory response will occur.

2. Level 2 Supervisor Response

- i. A supervisor may respond to the scene upon notification of a Level 2 Use of Force but responding to the scene is not mandatory.
- ii. Level 2 uses of force will be reviewed by an Uninvolved Supervisor of the same rank or rank above the involved officer. If there is more than one involved officer, the supervisor who will review the Use of Force will be the supervisor of the officer who first initiated the Use of Force.
- iii. A supervisor of the officer(s) employing a Level 2 Use of Force will review and

document approval of a Level 2 force, and/or reclassify the Use of Force as a Level 3, 4, or 5 force before the end of the shift during which the force was used and no later than the subsequent shift.

- iv. The investigating supervisor will review the documentation as soon as practicable and will direct the officer to provide more information, if needed.
- v. When the supervisor requests revisions, clarifications, or additional information from the involved officer, he or she must detail the requested revisions in Blue Team.
- vi. The reviewing supervisor will author a brief summary of their investigation and attach the PDF to the Blue Team entry specific to the event.
- vii. When a reviewing supervisor believes that there may have been criminal conduct or a serious policy violation, they will consult with the on-duty captain or lieutenant. If so determined they will:
 - i. notify the Detective Bureau commander or designee when they believe that criminal conduct has occurred. Additionally, they will notify the detective bureau commander if information is obtained at any step in the investigation that suggests criminal conduct.
 - ii. make the appropriate notifications when they believe a policy violation may have occurred.
 - iii. A lieutenant or captain shall relieve the officer from duty, if the situation warrants.
- viii. Investigating supervisors will complete their review within 72 hours.
- ix. The commander of the shift or unit (captain or lieutenant) will review the Uninvolved Supervisor's Use of Force review of Level 2 force to ensure that the Use of Force report file is thorough, complete, makes the necessary and appropriate findings of whether the Use of Force was consistent with SPD policy. Consideration is to be made whether there are tactical, equipment, or policy considerations that need to be addressed.

3. Level 3 and 4 Uses of Force

- a. Upon notification of a Level 3 or 4 Use of Force, an Uninvolved Supervisor of the officer(s) using force shall respond to the scene.
- b. Level 3 or 4 uses of force will be reviewed by an Uninvolved Supervisor of the same rank or rank above the involved officer. If there is more than one involved officer, the supervisor who will review the Use of Force will be the supervisor of the officer who first initiated the Use of Force.
- c. A supervisor of the officer(s) employing a Level 3 or 4 Use of Force will review and document approval of a Level 3 or 4 force, and/or reclassify the Use of Force as a Level 2, 3, 4, or 5 force before the end of the shift during which the force was used and no later than the subsequent shift.
- d. The investigating supervisor will review the documentation as soon as practicable

- and will direct the officer to provide more information, if needed.
- e. When the supervisor requests revisions, clarifications, and/or additional information from the involved officer, he or she must detail the requested revisions in Blue Team.
 - f. The reviewing supervisor will author a brief summary of their investigation and attach the PDF to the Blue Team entry specific to the event.
 - g. When a reviewing supervisor believes that there may have been criminal conduct or a serious policy violation, they will consult with the on-duty captain or lieutenant. If it is determined that there may have been a criminal conduct or a serious policy violation, the reviewing supervisor will:
 - i. notify the Detective Bureau commander or designee when they believe that criminal conduct has occurred. Additionally, they will notify the detective bureau commander if information is obtained at any step in the investigation that suggests criminal conduct.
 - ii. notify the Internal Investigations Unit Captain if they believe a policy violation may have occurred.
 - iii. The Superintendent, captain, or lieutenant may relieve the officer from duty, if the situation warrants.
 - h. Reviewing supervisors will complete their investigation within 72 hours.
 - i. The commander of the shift or unit (captain or lieutenant) will review the Uninvolved Supervisor's Use of Force review of Level 3 or 4 force to ensure that the Use of Force report file is thorough, complete, makes the necessary and appropriate findings of whether the Use of Force was consistent with SPD policy; and whether there are tactical, equipment, or policy considerations that need to be addressed.
 - j. The watch commander will ensure that upon arrival at the scene, the Uninvolved Supervisor will identify and collect information sufficient to establish the material facts related to the Level 3 or 4 Use of Force, including the following:
 - i. Locate relevant civilian witnesses including the subject and third parties, and arrange for those witnesses to be interviewed. Interviewing of witnesses will be coordinated with the Detective Bureau officers as set out in paragraph 42 herein. Witnesses need not be interviewed at the scene, but sufficient information to allow identifying and contacting witnesses should be gathered.
 - ii. Separate all officers involved in a Level 3 or 4 Use of Force incident until interviewed, or if that is not possible, advise them to not discuss the matter with other officers.
 - iii. Group interviews will be prohibited. Supervisors will not ask officers or other witnesses leading questions that suggest legal justifications for the officers' conduct.
 - iv. All officers who use Level 3 or 4 force will be asked to provide an oral Use of Force statement in person to the Uninvolved Supervisor.

- v. Review and flag for retention any, body-worn camera footage capturing any part of the Use of Force incident.
 - vi. Canvass the area for any CCTV or other surveillance cameras in the area, document their locations, and attempt to obtain video voluntarily and review the footage.
 - vii. Photograph or arrange to have photographed the scene and location of the incident and identify relevant evidence to be collected if not collected by the supervisor, such as forensic evidence.
 - viii. Photograph or arrange to have photographed the subject for identification purposes and all injuries or claims of injury to anyone involved, and denote the lack of injury when applicable.
- k. All Level 3 and 4 uses of force will be thoroughly reviewed by an Uninvolved Supervisor above the rank of the involved officer.
 - l. The supervisor conducting the Use of Force review will evaluate in writing all uses of force for compliance with SPD policy, as well as any other relevant concerns (e.g., tactical or threat assessment).
 - m. The supervisor should provide timely, constructive feedback, where appropriate.
 - n. The Uninvolved Supervisor's Use of Force review will be completed within 72 hours of the Level 3 and 4 Use of Force, unless the supervisor's commanding officer approves an extension. The completed Use of Force review will include documentation of the following:
 - i. A detailed narrative description of the incident
 - ii. The supervisor's actions in reviewing or screening the incident
 - iii. Documentation of all evidence that was gathered
 - iv. A review of the incident, including a discussion and resolution of any material inconsistencies in the evidence; whether the force used was necessary, proportional, objectively reasonable, and otherwise within SPD policy.
 - o. For force reviews involving Level 3 and 4 uses of force, the commander of the shift or unit (captain or lieutenant) in the officer in charge's chain of command is the reviewing supervisor.
 - p. After the Captain completes the assessment of a Level 3 and 4 Use of Force, the file will be forwarded to the Use of Force Committee ("UFC"). If warranted, the officer's chain of command or the UFC may assign or reassign a Use of Force for investigation to IIU

4. Level 5 Uses of Force

- a. Upon notification of a Level 5 Use of Force, an Uninvolved Supervisor will respond to the scene.
- b. SPD will ensure that an Uninvolved Supervisor will respond to and investigate all Level 5 Use of Force incidents; and any other incident as deemed appropriate by the Police Superintendent or their designee.
- c. For any Level 5 Use of Force which may potentially include criminal charges, the Uninvolved Supervisor will notify the Commander of the Detective Bureau.
- d. The supervisor who responds to the Use of Force will lead all investigative activity regarding the Use of Force, which includes locating and interviewing witnesses, securing the scene and evidence, locating video surveillance that may have captured the incident, and making notifications.
- e. The supervisor will work cooperatively with any other department or division or outside personnel investigating underlying criminal activity at the scene, whether such criminal activity relates to the SPD officer's Use of Force or not, and will make every effort to avoid activities which compromise, impede, or otherwise disrupt the criminal investigation at the scene of the Use of Force.

In responding to a Level 5 Use of Force, a supervisor will:

- a. Assume control of the Use of Force investigation upon their arrival.
- b. Record all interviews with civilian witnesses. If a civilian witness refuses to be recorded, the supervisor will document the refusal and take a written statement from the witness. If recorded interviews of witnesses are being done by other SPD personnel, the supervisor will have access to such interview recordings and can rely on those to lessen the number of interviews a witness is subjected to.
- c. Ensure that the shift commander (the lieutenant or captain) has separated all officers involved in, or who witnessed, a Use of Force incident until they are all interviewed. If it is not possible to separate all officers until they can be interviewed, they will be admonished to not confer, discuss or review the Use of Force incident with others until they are able to be interviewed.
- d. Ensure all video evidence is immediately gathered and assessed; this obligation can be discharged by assuring that other SPD personnel have secured this evidence.
- e. Arrange for a crime lab technician to process the scene and provide photos as soon as practicable; this obligation can be discharged by assuring that other SPD personnel have secured this evidence.
- f. Attempt to interview the person upon whom the officer used the Level 5 Use of Force to obtain the person's account of what happened, if possible, as an audio-recorded interview. They will also photograph or arrange to have photographed areas of injury or complaint of injury; this obligation can be discharged by assuring that other SPD personnel have secured this evidence.

- g. Review body-worn camera or other video which may have recorded all or part of the incident and describe in the force report what the video shows; this need not be done at the scene but within a reasonable time thereafter.
- h. Seek to obtain voluntary statements from all involved officers. All interviews with officers must be recorded (audio and/or video) and take place as soon as practical.
- i. Arrange for the involved officers to submit Use of Force written reports as soon as practicable after the incident, except in extenuating circumstances, such as when an officer is injured or incapacitated, in which case the officer will submit their written report as soon as the extenuating circumstance allows.
- j. As soon as practical after learning of the Level 5 Use of Force, notify the involved officer's commanding officer, the Police Superintendent, and Deputy Chiefs. This notification will contain basic facts about the incident as they are known at the time.
- k. Complete their investigation within 60 days or as soon as possible thereafter.
- l. If the supervisor uncovers potential administrative misconduct at any point in the investigation, the supervisor will notify the Captain of IIU and the Superintendent's office. If the supervisor uncovers potential criminal conduct at any point in the investigation, the independent supervisor will notify the Superintendent's office who will in turn authorize notifying the appropriate prosecuting authority and providing all relevant information.
- m. When a reviewing supervisor believes that there may have been criminal conduct or a serious policy violation, they will consult with the Watch Commander. If it is determined that there may have been a criminal conduct or a serious policy violation, the reviewing supervisor will:
 - i. notify the Detective Bureau commander or designee when they believe that criminal conduct has occurred. Additionally, they will notify the detective bureau commander if information is obtained at any step in the investigation that suggests criminal conduct.
 - ii. notify the Internal Investigations Unit Captain if they believe a policy violation may have occurred.
The Superintendent, captain, or lieutenant may relieve the officer from duty, if the situation warrants.

V. Associated Policies

- a. Use of Force policy (General)-
- b. Use of Force reporting policy-
- c. Forthcoming Force Investigation Team (FIT) policy and manual for reviews and investigations of Level 5 uses of force

**Cheryl C. Clapprod
Superintendent**

CCC/kg

**DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

GO:	23-004	DATE: 02/01/2023
PREVIOUSLY ISSUED: G.O. 21-002 01/12/2021		RE-EVALUATION DATE: 02/01/2026
	MPAC Standard(s): 1.1.3, 81.2.4	
TO:	ALL COMMANDING OFFICERS	
CC:	DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM COCHRANE DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN KENT DEPUTY CHIEF RUPERT DANIEL SENIOR CAPTAIN TRENT DUDA	
SUBJECT:	FOOT PURSUIT POLICY	

I. Purpose

SPD recognizes that the practice of engaging in foot pursuits is dangerous and can cause injury to the pursuing officer(s), the responding assisting officer(s), the subject being pursued, as well as members of the public. Thus, the purpose of this policy is to establish a balance between protecting the safety of the public and police officers during police pursuits on foot. This policy governs officers' decisions to initiate or continue the pursuit of suspects on foot, and law enforcement's duty to enforce the law and apprehend criminal offenders.

II. Policy

Foot pursuits are inherently dangerous police actions. It is the policy of the Springfield Police Department (SPD) that safety of community members and officers should be the overriding consideration in determining whether foot pursuits occur in a wide variety of circumstances. Therefore, this policy is intended to provide overall direction and guidance to officers when deciding to engage in, or continue, a foot pursuit, and how foot pursuits should be conducted. It also addresses supervisory oversight of foot pursuits. It is valid to decide not to engage in, or continue, a foot pursuit when the risks to the public, officers, and/or the subject being pursued outweigh the benefits of the apprehension.

III. Definitions

Foot Pursuit: When a member pursues (on foot or bicycle) a fleeing person who is attempting to evade detention by law enforcement who has established reasonable articulable suspicion (RAS) or probable cause that a person has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime.

Reasonable Articulable Suspicion (RAS): suspicion based on specific, objective, articulable facts, taken together with the member's training and experience, that a person has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime.

Probable Cause (PC): When a member has knowledge of facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a crime has, is or is about to occur and that the person identified is responsible for the crime.

Partner Splitting: When distance, obstacles, or loss of visual contact separates partners or other assisting members to the extent that it impedes the ability to provide assistance during a foot pursuit or the apprehension of a person being pursued. **Springfield Emergency Communications (SEC):** Dispatch Center operated by the Springfield Fire Department. Responsible for dispatch and emergency communications for the Springfield Police Department.

IV. General Guidelines and Considerations

Unless there are exigent circumstances such as an immediate threat to the safety of other officers or civilians, officers should not engage in or continue a foot pursuit under the following conditions:

1. If the officer believes the danger to pursuing officers or the public outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension.
2. If the officer becomes aware of any unanticipated circumstances that substantially increase the risk to public safety inherent in the pursuit.
 - i. Running into buildings, domiciles or otherwise secure areas
 - ii. Persons join efforts to assist subject fleeing to evade capture
3. No officer or supervisor should be criticized or disciplined for a decision not to engage in a foot pursuit if, in the officer's assessment, the risk is unreasonable due to existing conditions or circumstances, and/or outweighs the benefit of apprehension.
4. While acting alone, if exigent circumstances warrant, the lone officer should keep the suspect in sight from a safe distance and coordinate containment.
5. Officers shall avoid the use of unreasonable force during or at the conclusion of a foot pursuit, to keep members of the public and officers safe.

V. Procedures

A. Deciding Whether to Pursue:

1. An officer's decision to pursue on foot shall be made with an awareness of and appreciation for the risk to the officer, the public, and the subject of the pursuit.
2. Officers may legally pursue a person who they have reasonable articulable suspicion or probable cause to believe has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime and when officers reasonably believe the valid law enforcement need to detain the subject outweighs the threat to safety posed by a foot pursuit (*see Terry v. Ohio*, 392 US 1 (1968)). At a minimum, reasonable suspicion, based on articulable facts should exist at the commencement of the stop.
3. The decision to initiate or continue such a foot pursuit must be continuously re-evaluated considering the circumstances presented at the time.
4. Officers must also weigh the seriousness of the offense against the immediate need to apprehend. For example, the need to immediately apprehend a curfew violator is minimum, while the need to apprehend an armed carjacking suspect is more significant given the danger they pose to the public.
5. In deciding whether to initiate or continue a foot pursuit, officers should also consider risk factors when: acting alone; in an unfamiliar area; in an area that is hostile or susceptible to a possible ambush, such as a drug trafficking location; pursuing persons who are suspected or known to be armed; pursuing more than one person; unable to obtain backup quickly; unstable terrain or surface conditions exist; unable to maintain contact with SEC; or, pursuing in inclement weather, darkness, or reduced visibility conditions.

B. Prohibited Actions

SPD officers will not initiate or continue a foot pursuit if:

1. Mere flight by a subject who is not suspected of criminal activity is the sole justification for engaging in a foot pursuit.
2. The foot pursuit that is based solely on a person's response to police presence, including a person's attempt to avoid contact with the police (e.g., walking away, declining to talk, running away, or crossing the street to avoid contact). People may avoid contact with police for many reasons other than involvement in criminal activity.
3. The only purpose is to enforce minor violations including curfew violations, citation-only violations, or non-arrest able violations.

C. Preventing Foot Pursuits

1. Based on the inherent dangers associated with foot pursuits, officers should take precautions when initially confronting persons when RAS or PC has been established in order to prevent the person an opportunity to flee on foot.
2. When members are not readily identifiable as Springfield Police Officers, the risk of harm from a Foot Pursuit increases because of possible confusion by the person being pursued, by members of the public, or by other Department members. Examples of when Department members are readily identifiable as Springfield Police Officers include, but

are not limited to:

- a. Officers in Uniform utilizing marked SPD cruiser
 - b. Members of plainclothes units will wear equipment that readily identifies them as Springfield Police officers during operations. Clearly adorned with POLICE and visible equipment and badges.
 - c. Members of plainclothes operations will include unmarked vehicles that both are equipped with and utilize emergency equipment i.e. blue lights
3. Once RAS or PC has been established to conduct an investigative stop or make an arrest, officers shall utilize the Contact/Cover Principle (Recognized Position of Advantage & Disadvantage)
- a. Sufficient officer response to suggest futility of flight to suspect(s).
 - b. Tactical positioning by officer during initial contact with suspect(s) to cut off suspect's escape routes
 - c. Officers should place suspects in positions of advantage to the officer; i.e. handcuffing, sitting, kneeling etc.
 - d. Calm the suspect(s) by tone of voice and choice of words. Talking with suspect keeps his mind focused on what the officer is saying
 - e. Command presence/officer presence - Take control of the suspect(s) and situation
4. Officers should be aware of suspect's body language
- a. Telegraphing signs that they might run
 - b. Pulling pants up getting ready to run
 - c. Looking for escape routes

D. Alternatives to Foot Pursuit

In deciding whether or not to initiate a foot pursuit, an officer should consider to the extent that resources are available the following:

- a. Area Containment
- b. Additional officers
- c. Surveillance until additional resources become available
- d. Later apprehension of the subject under more favorable conditions for police

E. Pursuing Officer(s) Responsibilities and Foot Pursuit Coordination:

1. Officers initiating foot pursuits shall have communication(s) priority and shall not have operational responsibility for coordination of additional resources/officers during the foot pursuit unless circumstances dictate otherwise or until relieved of resource allocation by monitoring supervisor. Pursuing officers are reminded that voice transmissions while

running and in tactical situations may be difficult to understand and may have to be repeated.

2. The officer initiating the foot pursuit shall immediately, or as soon as safely practical, provide the following information to the SEC:
 - a. Call sign
 - b. Reason for foot pursuit
 - c. Officer location and direction of pursuit
 - d. Number of suspects and description
 - e. Whether or not suspect(s) are believed to be armed
3. The primary officer should immediately coordinate directly through the SEC with secondary officers to establish a perimeter in the area to contain the suspect.
4. Pursuant to BWC policy, all officers regardless of assignment shall have their body worn cameras activated for the duration of a foot pursuit.
5. Generally, the primary officer should not try to overtake the fleeing suspect but should keep the suspect in sight until sufficient manpower is available to take the suspect into custody.
6. Assisting officers should immediately attempt to contain the pursued suspect. Secondary officers should hold the containment area unless the suspect has been stopped and the primary officer requests assistance to take the suspect into custody.
7. When two or more officers are in pursuit, they should make efforts not to separate unless they remain in sight of each other and maintain communication, they should allow the lead officer to concentrate on the suspect's actions while the second officer provides backup and maintains communications with the (SEC) and other assisting officers.

F. Partner-Splitting

1. Partner splitting carries inherent risk to department members, members of the public, or the person being pursued, and may compromise safety, hinder effective communication between department members, prevent the ability to provide assistance during a foot pursuit, or create a situation that places the department member in a tactical disadvantage (e.g. potential cross-fire positioning).
2. When working with a partner, department members engaged in a foot pursuit:
 - a. will not engage in partner splitting, unless necessary to provide for the safety or protection of department members, members of the public, or the person being pursued.
 - b. should work to remain in sight of and maintain communications with their partner. The pursuing department member should concentrate on the actions of the person being pursued while the partner should concentrate on providing

back-up and maintaining communications with assisting department members.

- c. may consider separating from a partner or other assist units through a coordinated effort when using tactical positioning or containment strategies to eliminate flight opportunities, reduce the likelihood of continued flight by a person, or preserve officer and public safety.
3. If department members have multiple people detained and one flees, department members should not pursue the fleeing person if that leaves their partner or assisting department members in a situation in which the number of detained people cannot be safely controlled by the remaining department member(s).
4. If department members have multiple people detained and multiple people flee, department members should not separate if that leaves their partners or assisting department members in a situation that would prevent the ability to provide assistance during the foot pursuit or apprehension of the persons being pursued.

G. Termination:

The pursuing officer shall immediately terminate a pursuit:

1. If instructed to do so by a patrol supervisor or superior officer.
2. If subject goes into buildings, structures, confined spaces, or wooded or otherwise isolated areas without sufficient backup and containment of the area. The primary officer should stand by, radio their location, and await the arrival of officers to establish a containment perimeter. Officers should consider the need for specialized units such as canines, Emergency Services Unit, or aerial support as determined by the established deployment guidelines for these units.
3. If the suspect's identity is established or other information exists that allows for the suspect's probable apprehension later and there is no immediate threat to the public or police officers.
4. If the suspect's location is no longer known.
5. If primary officers lose communications with SEC or communications with backup officers is interrupted.
6. If the officer loses their department-issued radio, firearm, or other essential equipment that may endanger the officer or public if recovered by another person.
7. If an officer or civilian is injured during the pursuit who requires immediate medical assistance.
8. If the officer loses visual contact with the suspect.
9. If the officer is unsure of their own location or direction of travel.
10. If the officer reasonably believes they would not be able to control the person being

pursued should a confrontation occur (e.g., due to exhaustion or physical condition). When the pursuing officer terminates the pursuit, they will notify SEC with their location and request assistance if necessary.

When a foot pursuit concludes with an apprehension, members will not use more force than is necessary to arrest the person being pursued.

H. Documentation

Within the body of the narrative of incident and/or arrest reports, SPD officers shall include details surrounding the foot pursuit, including:

1. reasonable suspicion and/or probable cause for any offenses.
2. reason and circumstances surrounding the foot pursuit.
3. course and approximate distance of the foot pursuit.
4. involved vehicles and members.
5. any use of force.
6. any injuries and/or medical treatment.
7. any property or equipment damage.

I. Supervisor's Responsibilities: 81.2.4

1. Upon becoming aware of a foot pursuit, the supervisor will make every reasonable effort to ascertain sufficient information to direct responding resources and take command, control, and coordination of the foot pursuit. Supervisors should decide as soon as possible whether the pursuit should continue if:
 - a. two officers working in tandem, or backup is nearby, and a reasonable belief that the suspect has committed an act that would permit the suspect's detention
 - b. there is a reasonable belief that the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the public or other police officers
 - c. the pursuit does not violate provisions of this or related department policies, procedures, or training
2. The supervisor shall terminate a foot pursuit at any time they conclude:
 - a. The danger to pursuing officer(s) or the public outweighs the necessity for immediate apprehension of the suspect.
 - b. The pursuit lacks a lawful purpose or is unsupported by RAS or PC.
 - c. The pursuit is otherwise not in compliance with policy.
3. The notified supervisor will respond to the area whenever possible. The supervisor does not, however, need to be physically present to exercise control over a foot pursuit.

J. Supervisory Review of Foot Pursuits

1. For all foot pursuits associated with a reportable use of force and/or arrest, the supervisor will review the foot pursuit for any issues regarding tactics, policy or performance improvement. The supervisor shall review:
 - a. BWC footage of the event from the initiating member and other responding members.
 - b. Any written reports that were generated from the event;
 - c. Any other information available regarding the incident.
 - d. Whether the Foot Pursuit aligned with this policy.
2. The supervisor shall assess:
 - a. Whether opportunities for de-escalation or prevention of flight were missed and what tactics may have been useful.
 - b. Whether, during the pursuit, any tactics used could have been improved and if so, how those can be addressed or avoided in the future (e.g., through further training, coaching, or policy review).

K. Springfield Emergency Communications (SEC) Responsibilities:

Upon being notified that a foot pursuit is in progress, communications personnel shall immediately notify the patrol supervisor and provide all available information to involved personnel.

Communications personnel shall carry out the following responsibilities during a foot pursuit:

- a. Receive, record, and immediately report incoming information on the pursuit, the officers involved, and the suspect(s).
- b. Control all radio communications and clear the radio channels of all nonemergency traffic.
- c. Coordinate and dispatch backup assistance and support units under the direction of the patrol supervisor.
- d. If a foot pursuit is occurring near a school, during school hours, communications personnel shall notify that school administrator and school security of the facts and circumstances without delay.

Cheryl C. Clapprod
Police Superintendent

**DEPARTMENTAL AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

City of Springfield, Massachusetts

GO:	23-005	DATE: 02/01/2023
PREVIOUSLY ISSUED: SPD RULE 23/23A		RE-EVALUATION DATE: 02/01/2026
MPAC Standard(s): 41.2.2, 41.2.3, 41.2.4		
TO:	ALL COMMANDING OFFICERS	
CC:	DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAM COCHRANE DEPUTY CHIEF STEVEN KENT DEPUTY CHIEF RUPERT DANIEL SENIOR CAPTAIN TRENT DUDA	
SUBJECT:	VEHICLE PURSUIT POLICY	

I. Purpose

The primary purpose of this policy is to secure a balance between the high risk nature of vehicle pursuits and the obligation of police officers to enforce laws and apprehend violators.

II. Policy

Vehicular pursuits are inherently dangerous and therefore create risk of injury and fatalities to the pursuing officer(s), the occupant(s) of the pursued vehicle, and the public at large. While vehicle pursuits may sometimes be necessary to effectuate the enforcement of criminal laws, officers must weigh the balance between the protection of the lives and safety of the public, officers, and the subject, against the duty to enforce the law and apprehend subjects.

Officers may engage in a pursuit only when they have a reasonable suspicion that a fleeing suspect has committed or has attempted to commit a felony crime of violence and the escape of the subject would pose an imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or to another person. Pursuits for property offenses, misdemeanor offenses, traffic, or civil infractions are prohibited. Officers must receive supervisory approval prior to initiating the pursuit.

III. Definitions

Authorized Police Vehicle: Any department issued vehicle whose use is authorized by a superior officer, equipped with operable emergency warning equipment:

- a. Marked or Unmarked Cruiser
- b. Undercover (UC) Vehicle Equipped with Emergency Warning Equipment
- c. Motorcycle and Dual Purpose Motorcycle
- d. Bicycle

- e. K-9 Vehicle
- f. Transport Van

Eluding: An Eluding driver increases speed, takes evasive action, and/or refuses to stop despite a member's signaling to stop by hand, voice, emergency lights, and/or siren even after a reasonable amount of time to yield or stop has passed.

Reasonable Articulate Suspicion (RAS): suspicion based on specific, objective, articulable facts, taken together with the member's training and experience, that a person has committed, is committing, or is about to commit a crime.

Probable Cause (PC): When a member has knowledge of facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a crime has, is or is about to occur and that the person identified is responsible for the crime.

Primary Unit: The law enforcement vehicle driven by an officer who initiates a pursuit, or any unit that assumes control of the pursuit as the lead vehicle (the first police vehicle immediately behind the eluding vehicle).

Secondary Unit: Any law enforcement vehicle which becomes involved as a backup to the Primary Unit and follows the Primary Unit at a safe distance.

Springfield Emergency Communications (SEC): Dispatch Center operated by the Springfield Fire Department. Responsible for dispatch and emergency communications for the Springfield Police Department.

Terminate: To discontinue the pursuit of an eluding vehicle.

Vehicular Pursuit: An active attempt by an officer in an authorized police vehicle, with emergency warning equipment activated, to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving vehicle, when the officer reasonably believes that the driver of the other moving vehicle is resisting apprehension by increasing the vehicle's speed, intentionally ignoring the officer, or otherwise attempting to elude the officer.

IV. Procedures

A. Authorized Vehicular Pursuits

1. An officer may, within the posted speed, engage in a pursuit of any motor vehicle operating in conformance with posted speed limit and other traffic laws, under any circumstance justifying a lawful motor vehicle stop.
2. No officer shall engage in a vehicular pursuit that requires the officer to exceed the posted or applicable speed limit or that involves a target vehicle operating in violation of the posted or applicable speed limit or other traffic laws unless the officer reasonably believes:
 - a. That the subject poses an imminent risk of physical harm to the officer, the public, or others; or
 - b. That the occupant(s) of the vehicle are wanted for the commission of violent felonious acts and it is determined that the imminent danger to the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the subject remain at large.

B. Prohibitions

1. Offenses that constitute G.L. Ch. 90 (traffic) offenses/infractions, property crimes (to include stolen motor vehicles), non-violent misdemeanors, refusal to stop for a police officer (G.L. Ch. 90 § 25), and non-violent felonies shall not be justification to engage in a pursuit of another vehicle, absent articulable exigent circumstances, regardless of whether or not the officer knows the vehicle's registration number or the identity of the vehicle operator.
2. No officer shall initiate or continue a pursuit on a divided highway/roadway opposite the direction of the flow of vehicular traffic.
3. In the event the eluding vehicle drives in the wrong direction; members shall maintain visual contact with the eluding vehicle by paralleling the vehicle while driving on the correct side.
4. Unless specifically authorized by a supervisor (Patrol Supervisor or OIC), no officer (other than the officers in the primary and secondary unit) shall engage in the main pursuit or pursue on parallel streets.
5. No officer shall participate in a pursuit with a civilian or a detainee present in the authorized police vehicle under any circumstances.
6. No officer or employee operating a privately owned vehicle, the prisoner transport vehicle, undercover (surveillance) vehicle, unmarked vehicles without emergency equipment, or any specialized vehicle requiring specific training prior to being authorized to operate that vehicle such as a department motorcycle, or bicycle will participate in a vehicular pursuit.
7. Vehicle intervention tactics such as blocking in or heading off a moving vehicle, using roadblocks, or ramming cars, are not authorized by SPD.

C. Pursuit Decisions:

1. Springfield Police Department prohibits vehicle pursuits, except where an officer obtains express supervisory approval, and the officer and supervisor have considered multiple factors and determined that the imminent danger to the public created by the pursuit is less than the immediate or potential danger to the public should the subject remain at large.
2. Even if a vehicle pursuit is authorized pursuant to Section V. (Authorized Vehicle Pursuits), the officer shall still consider the following factors:
 - a. **The risk of public safety in the absence of pursuit**
 - Severity of Crime/Offense believed to have been committed by one or more occupants of the pursued vehicle
 - The nature and degree of the threat to public safety should the vehicle not to be stopped

- Alternatives to the pursuit
- Whether the identities of the occupants are known to the point where later apprehension is possible and applicable

b. The foreseeable risk to public safety arising from the pursuit

- Population Density (including volume of pedestrian traffic)
- Nature of the area (residential, commercial, school zone and the volume, type, speed, and direction of vehicular traffic)
- Officers familiarity with the area
- Road and weather conditions
- Time of day
- Speeds involved
- Driving skills of the officer and the performance capabilities of the pursuit vehicle and the vehicle being pursued
- Operational status of emergency warning equipment
- Quality of radio communications
- The presence of other persons in the pursued vehicle

D. Pursuit Operations:

1. Before initiating a vehicle pursuit, the primary unit will obtain supervisory approval to engage in the pursuit. Upon engaging in a pursuit and throughout its duration, the primary unit and, if involved, secondary unit(s) shall activate and maintain use of emergency warning equipment.
2. The primary unit shall notify the SEC of the following:
 - a. location,
 - b. direction,
 - c. nature of the pursuit,
 - d. the description of the pursued vehicle,
 - e. the reason for the pursuit, and
 - f. the estimated speed(s) of the vehicle(s).

The officer(s) shall keep the SEC updated on the pursuit at regular intervals.

3. When engaged in a pursuit, officers shall exercise due care for the safety of the public and shall comply with all the provisions of G.L c.89, s. 7B (Operation of Emergency Vehicles), as follows:
 - a. The SPD officer shall be subject to the provisions of any statute, rule, regulation, ordinance or bylaw relating to the operation or parking of vehicles, including stopping for a school bus with red lights flashing.
 - b. The SPD officer may exceed the speed limit, if the officer exercises caution and

due regard under the circumstances for the safety of persons and property.

- c. Advise officers to follow 3-4 seconds behind, so as to provide sufficient reaction time and make themselves a smaller target (Safe Distance Training)
- d. Officer(s) shall not attempt to pass other pursuing vehicles unless requested to do so by the Primary Unit, and there is clear understanding between officer(s) involved that a vehicle will be passing other vehicles.
- e. Officer(s) may drive through an intersection contrary to traffic signs or signals; if the officer first brings the vehicle to a full stop. Because intersections present a high risk of collisions, officers shall exercise caution when proceeding through intersections, especially controlled intersections. Officers will ensure due regard for the safety of persons and property.

E. Responsibilities and Limitations of Primary and Secondary Units:

1. Primary Unit:

- a. Subject to the direction of a supervisor, the officer operating the primary unit is vested with the authority to decide and direct the pursuit actions.
- b. The officer operating the primary unit shall continually reevaluate and assess the pursuit. The officer shall terminate the pursuit, even in the absence of an order to terminate by a supervisor, when that officer reasonably believes that the foreseeable risks to the officer, the public or others arising from a continued pursuit is greater than the threat to public safety should the pursued vehicle be allowed to escape.
- c. Upon receipt of a notice to terminate the pursuit from a supervisor, the primary unit shall immediately reduce their speeds to within the posted speed limits and shall deactivate their emergency warning equipment.
- d. The pursuing officer shall notify the SEC when it is likely that a pursuit will continue into a neighboring jurisdiction.

2. Secondary Unit:

- a. Once the pursuit is engaged, the secondary unit shall maintain a safe distance behind the primary unit, but should remain close enough to provide aid and assume radio communications if and when necessary.
- b. Upon receipt of a notice to terminate the pursuit from the primary unit and/or a supervisor, the secondary unit shall discontinue the pursuit and shall immediately reduce their speeds to within the posted speed limits and shall deactivate their emergency warning equipment.

F. Responsibilities of the Supervisor:

1. Upon becoming aware of the pursuit, the supervisor shall evaluate the totality of the circumstances and decide, as quickly as possible, whether or not the pursuit should continue pursuant to the criteria of this policy.
2. If the supervisor concludes that a pursuit should commence and/or subsequently

continue, they shall monitor incoming information and coordinate activities as needed to ensure that proper procedures are followed.

3. A supervisor may authorize officers (in authorized police vehicles) in addition to the primary and secondary units, to engage in the pursuit and/or a parallel pursuit, in exceptional circumstances or if the supervisor reasonably believes that there is a substantial likelihood of serious physical injury or death should additional officers not participate.
4. The supervisor shall continually reevaluate the need to continue the pursuit.
 - a. The supervisor is vested with the authority to terminate the pursuit, at any time, especially when they believe that the foreseeable risks to the pursuing officers and to the public, arising from the continued pursuit, are greater than the foreseeable threat to public safety should the pursued vehicle be allowed to escape.
5. When a supervisor directs the pursuit to be terminated, members shall immediately terminate the pursuit and advise the SEC of their location.
6. The supervisor may authorize the resumption of a pursuit when they believe that circumstances have changed, thereby warranting the resumption of the pursuit in accordance with the criteria of this policy.
7. A supervisor shall respond to the location where a vehicle has been stopped following a pursuit.

G. Responsibilities of Springfield Emergency Communications Center (SEC):

1. Upon being informed of a pursuit in progress, the dispatcher shall:
 - a. Immediately inform the Officer-in-Charge at Police Headquarters via phone
 - b. Receive and record all incoming information on the pursued vehicle
 - c. Advise all other units that a pursuit is in progress, providing all relevant information
 - d. Relay broadcast information from Primary/Secondary Units
 - e. Perform relevant record and motor vehicle checks as expeditiously as possible
 - f. Coordinate assistance of other officers under the direction of the supervisor
 - g. Notify affected law enforcement agencies over appropriate communications systems and seek their assistance if the pursuit is proceeding into another jurisdiction
 - h. Notify all affected agencies when a pursuit has been terminated or if apprehension has been made

H. Use of Firearms:

- a. Shooting at a moving vehicle is inherently dangerous and almost always counterproductive. Bullets fired at the vehicle itself are unlikely to stop or disable it; bullets may strike a passenger who is not a threat and may be a victim; bullets fired into a vehicle may not result in surrender, but may instead provoke a fight-or-flight response in which the driver is even more determined to escape or stop

the source of gunfire; and disabling the driver may result in a run-away vehicle that endangers the lives of officers or bystanders.

- b. Thus, officers shall not discharge their firearms from or at a moving vehicle or its occupants unless the occupants are using, or threatened the use of deadly physical force, against the officer or another person present, by means other than the vehicle. Discharging a firearm in this circumstance is never authorized when it is reasonable to believe that the vehicle may contain an innocent passenger or it is reasonably apparent that the vehicle may careen out of control and injure an innocent bystander.
- c. No officer should intentionally position his or her body into the path of a fleeing motor vehicle. If in proximity to a motor vehicle, the involved officer(s) should make every effort to move to an area of safety if the vehicle becomes a threat, including retreating from the threat, if practical.
- d. Shooting at a fleeing vehicle or a vehicle that is going away from the officer and is no longer an immediate threat is prohibited. Under such circumstances, officers should be aware of the potential inability of a bullet to penetrate metal or glass surfaces of an automobile and the likelihood of ricocheting bullets causing injury to innocent persons.

I. Termination of a pursuit:

- 1. The police officer serving as the primary unit engaged in the pursuit shall continually re-evaluate and assess the pursuit situation, including all of the initiating factors, and terminate the pursuit whenever they reasonably believe that the risks associated with continued pursuit are greater than the public safety benefit of making an immediate apprehension.
- 2. The pursuit may be terminated by the primary unit at any time.
- 3. A supervisor may order the termination of a pursuit at any time and shall order the termination of a pursuit when the potential danger to the public outweighs the need immediate apprehension. Such decision shall be based on information known to the supervisor at the time of the pursuit.
- 4. A pursuit shall be terminated if the identity of the occupants has been determined, immediate apprehension is not necessary to protect the public or police officers, and apprehension at a later time is feasible.
- 5. A pursuit shall be terminated when the police officers are prevented from communicating with their supervisors, communications or other police officers.
- 6. A pursuit shall be terminated if the police officer knows or is reasonably certain, that the fleeing motor vehicle is being operated by a juvenile and the suspected offense is not a violent felony.
- 7. When a decision is made to terminate a pursuit, the primary and secondary units shall immediately reduce their speeds to within the posted speed limits and shall deactivate their emergency warning equipment.
- 8. It is recognized that upon terminating a pursuit, the pursuing units are not required to

bring their vehicles to a stop and/or head in the opposite direction of the former target vehicle. The primary and secondary units may continue to operate their vehicles in the same direction as the previously pursued vehicle, so long as they maintain a safe distance and their actions do not constitute an active attempt to continue the pursuit.

9. Once a pursuit has been terminated, the primary, secondary, and other units aware of the pursuit may not reengage the pursuit without first requesting specific authorization from a supervisor regarding the changed circumstances that have occurred.

J. Inter-jurisdictional Pursuits:

1. Pursuit may continue into another jurisdiction when done in conformance with applicable Massachusetts General Laws, department policies, and the Western Mass Mutual Aid Agreement.

Outside the Commonwealth: On fresh and continued pursuit, a police officer may pursue and arrest a person who is wanted for the commission of specific felonious acts involving violence that threaten, have threatened, or are an imminent threat to the health, life, or safety of a person or persons into any neighboring state.

Within the Commonwealth: A police officer may make an arrest outside his/her jurisdiction on fresh and continued pursuit provided:

- a. The offense is one for which the officer would have the right of arrest without a warrant within their jurisdiction
- b. The offense was committed within the officer's jurisdiction.

Officers shall not become involved in another agency's pursuit unless specifically authorized by their supervisor.

In all cases where a pursuit enters an area of law enforcement responsibility of a police agency other than that of the initiating police agency, the police agency in pursuit shall be responsible for immediately notifying the police agency responsible for such area. The desk officer or duty supervisor for the police agency responsible for such area shall determine if assistance is necessary and police officers from police agencies other than the initiating agency shall not join the outside pursuit unless:

- a. Directed by such duty supervisor or desk officer; or
- b. The involved pursuit unit is unable to request assistance; or
- c. The situation demands immediate assistance. The supervisors of the respective police agencies involved in the pursuit shall communicate with each other to determine the respective responsibilities of each police agency and to determine which police agency will assume primary operational control of the pursuit. The supervisors shall also communicate with each other regarding any external conditions pertinent to the continued conduct of the pursuit. Communications between police agencies shall be controlled by inter-agency police radio systems, if they exist, or by telephone, or by both.

In all cases where the pursuit enters a municipality without a regularly organized police department, notification shall be made to the State Police troop responsible

for that area. Such troop shall maintain radio communications with all local police officers serving in any such municipality.

Agencies pursuing a vehicle into another jurisdiction must most notify that jurisdiction as soon as practical, provided that agency with all available information pertinent to the pursuit, including but not limited to:

- a. The reason(s) for the pursuit, or primary offense the driver or occupant(s) are believed to have committed
- b. Location, speed, and direction of travel
- c. Vehicle and occupant(s) description
- d. The number of vehicles and agencies involved in the pursuit
- e. Whether assistance is requested/needed or not
- f. Other available information as to the conditions of the pursuit

The pursuing agency will notify the other jurisdiction whether or not the pursuit has been terminated or is leaving their jurisdiction.

K. Post-Vehicle Pursuit Reporting:

1. Whenever an officer engages in a pursuit, [s]he shall file written reports on the incident detailing the circumstances. In addition, the Patrol Supervisor shall file the appropriate Pursuit Evaluation Form as well (and a supplemental narrative to the pursuing officer's incident/arrest report if applicable).
2. These reports shall be evaluated and reviewed by a supervisor not involved in the pursuit to determine if there has been compliance with departmental policies and regulations. The supervisor shall review the Pursuit Evaluation Form prior to the end of the shift in which the pursuit occurred which shall be submitted to the Police Superintendent for his/her review and filed with the Internal Investigations Unit for the purpose of conducting an annual analysis. 1.1.7, 41.2.2, 41.2.3
3. The department shall annually analyze pursuit activities for the purpose of identifying any improvements in this pursuit procedure and shall implement modifications to this procedure if warranted. A review of incidents involving vehicle pursuits may reveal patterns or trends that indicate training needs and/or policy modifications. The IIU Investigator shall conduct an annual analysis of all motor vehicle pursuits however long in duration that involved Springfield Officers. 1.1.7, 41.2.2, 41.2.3
4. Factors to be considered:
 - a. Frequency of pursuits
 - b. Pursuit date/time and (shift)
 - c. Original violation or offense

- d. Reason for terminating the pursuit
- e. Injuries
- f. Property damage
- g. Were emergency lights and siren used?
- h. Did a supervisor take control of pursuit?
- i. Supervisor: years on the job?
- j. Primary officer: years on the job?
- k. Average length of time and distance of pursuit?
- l. Did pursuit leave cities jurisdiction?
- m. Suspect information
- n. Did pursuit comply with SPD policy and procedures?
- o. Training issues identified

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CCC/klg