

# THE RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

## 11XX-XX

### DE-ESCALATION

#### PURPOSE

To define the process of de-escalation and provide guidelines for the exercise of de-escalation techniques and tactics to increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance by a subject.

#### VALUES REFLECTED

This directive reflects the RPD values of *Fairness, Service, Integrity, Courage, and Compassion*. By following the guidelines presented in the following directives, department personnel demonstrate our commitment to the well-being of every individual we encounter.

#### UNITS AFFECTED

All Divisions/All Personnel

#### REFERENCES/FORMS

N.C. General Statute 15A-401(d) "Use of Force in Arrest"  
DOI 1108-01 "Use of Force and Weapons"  
DOI 1108-03 "Prisoners and Restraints"  
DOI 1105-03 "Officer Involved Shootings and In-Custody Deaths"  
DOI 1109-12 "Interacting with Vulnerable Populations"  
TRAINING MATERIALS TBD

May be Released to the Public

Effective Date: 00-00-2022

Prepared By:

Chief of Police

Supersedes: N/A

Approved By: NEW CITY MANAGER  
City Manager

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

The Raleigh Police Department affirms the sanctity of life and seeks to preserve and improve quality of life as it carries out its mission in service to the community.

Employees are often faced with challenging, dynamic, and evolving situations. Employees require training and equipment to effectively and strategically slow down those situations in a manner that allows more time, distance, space, and tactical flexibility to bring about a safe resolution, maintain public trust, and reflect organizational values. Employees are empowered to utilize all available resources as these situations are often a result of extraordinary challenges being faced by those involved.

The process of de-escalation may minimize the likelihood that an employee uses physical force, beyond touch, during an incident. It may also increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance, and/or decreases the amount of force that may be needed. During a force encounter officers must constantly evaluate the threat posed by the individual and level of force being used by the officer. This may mean decreasing or increasing the level of force during an encounter as necessary depending on the totality of factors facing the officers.

The employment of de-escalation techniques is especially important to maintain safety of all during encounters with children, youth, and persons experiencing a behavioral, health, or situational crisis.

## **DEFINITIONS**

De-escalation is defined as taking action or communicating verbally or non-verbally prior to or during a potential force encounter in an attempt to stabilize the situation and reduce the immediacy of the threat so that more time, options, and resources can be called upon to resolve the situation without the use of force or with a reduction in the force necessary. De-escalation is a process that may include, but is not limited to, the use of such techniques as presence, verbal commands, warnings, verbal persuasion, and tactical repositioning.

## **DE-ESCALATION & USE OF FORCE**

### De-Escalation Techniques

Whenever feasible, prior to using physical force, officers must use de-escalation techniques in an attempt to gain voluntary compliance and reduce or avoid the need for force. De-escalation tactics should be used when time and the totality of the circumstances allow for them to be deployed (i.e., when the officer or others are not in imminent physical danger).

Whenever possible, and when such delay will not unreasonably compromise the safety of the officer or other individuals, result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime, officers shall allow an individual time and opportunity to submit to verbal commands before force is used.

## Totality of the Circumstances

When time and circumstances reasonably permit, an officer(s) shall consider whether a subject's lack of compliance is a deliberate attempt to resist or is the result of an inability to comply based on factors including, but not limited to:

- Medical conditions
- Mental impairment
- Developmental disability
- Physical limitation
- Language barrier
- Drug interaction
- Behavioral crisis

*An employee's awareness of all factors that may influence a lack of compliance should be balanced against the facts of the incident and which techniques are the most appropriate to bring the situation to a safe resolution.*

## **SUPERVISOR ROLES**

The role of the supervisor during difficult, dynamic, challenging, and evolving situations is critical to ensure the safety of all parties involved, compliance with applicable policies, and accountability. Supervisors shall ensure an appropriate number of personnel are engaged in an incident and should also be actively assessing tactical positioning and/or deployment of specialized equipment.

At an appropriate time and when it is feasible to do so, supervisors should:

- provide timely and constructive feedback directly to the employee
- assess whether personnel successfully employed de-escalation techniques during a use of force review
- refer the employee to further training in consultation with training staff if deficiencies are noted.

## **Training**

This policy will be reviewed annually based on NC Education and Training Standards mandates and/or Departmental training needs.