

Calaveras County Probation Department

Control Devices and Techniques Policy

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To reduce and minimize altercation-related injuries to officers and suspects, the Department authorizes the use of selected control devices. Certain control devices are provided in order to control violent or potentially violent suspects. It is anticipated that the use of these devices will generally result in fewer altercation-related injuries to officers and suspects. The below procedures are for the use and maintenance of control devices (e.g., baton, oleoresin capsicum [OC] spray and tear gas). Only those control devices that have been approved by the Chief Probation Officer or his/her designee are authorized to be carried by members of this department.

1.1 WHEN DEVICES MAY BE USED

When a decision has been made to restrain or arrest a violent or threatening suspect, an approved control device may only be used when its use appears reasonable under the circumstances.

1.2 REVIEW, INSPECTION AND APPROVAL

Every control device will be periodically inspected by the department Armorer or Rangemaster, or the designated instructor for a particular control device.

1.3 TRAINING FOR CONTROL DEVICES

- (a) Only officers trained and having shown adequate proficiency in the use of any control device and this agency's Use of Force policy are authorized to carry the device. Proficiency training must be monitored and documented by a certified weapons or tactics instructor.
- (b) Training for all control devices should occur every two years at a minimum.
- (c) All training and proficiency for control devices will be documented in the officer's training file.
- (d) Officers failing to demonstrate proficiency with the weapon or knowledge of this agency's Use of Force policy will be provided remedial training. If, after two additional attempts, an officer still cannot demonstrate proficiency with a weapon or knowledge of this agency's Use of Force policy, the officer may be subject to discipline.

2 BATON GUIDELINES

The baton is authorized for use when, based upon the circumstances perceived by the officer, such force reasonably appears justified and necessary to result in the safe control of the suspect.

The need to immediately incapacitate the suspect must be weighed against the risk of causing serious injury. The head, neck, throat, spine, heart, kidneys and groin should not be intentionally targeted except when the officer reasonably believes the suspect may cause serious bodily injury or death to the officer or others.

3 CHEMICAL AGENTS SPRAY GUIDELINES

Only authorized personnel may possess and maintain department issued oleoresin capsicum spray. Chemical agents are weapons used to minimize the potential for injury to officers, offenders, or other persons. They should be used only in situations where such force reasonably appears justified and necessary.

3.1 REQUIRED INSTRUCTION FOR USE

All personnel authorized to carry oleoresin capsicum spray, shall complete the required course of instruction prior to possessing and using the oleoresin capsicum spray.

3.2 CARRYING OF OLEORESIN CAPSICUM SPRAY

Field personnel carrying the oleoresin capsicum spray shall carry the device in its holster on the equipment belt. Plainclothes and non-field personnel may carry the oleoresin capsicum spray as authorized, consistent with the needs of their assignment or at the direction of their supervisor.

Canisters involved in any type of malfunction or damage shall be turned in to the Rangemaster for exchange. Damage to County Property forms shall also be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor and shall explain the cause of damage.

3.3 TREATMENT FOR OC SPRAY EXPOSURE

Persons who have been affected by the use of chemical agents should be promptly provided with the proper solution to cleanse the affected areas. Those persons who complain of further severe effects shall be afforded a medical examination by competent medical personnel.

3.4 PROHIBITED USE OF OC SPRAY

Field personnel shall not use OC spray against any member of the public involved in peaceful protest or civil disobedience when there is no objective risk of harm to an officer or the public.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 EQUIPMENT OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES

The assigned equipment officer shall control the inventory and shall issue all control devices. All damaged, inoperative and/or expended control devices shall be returned to the equipment officer for disposition, repair or replacement.

4.2 MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY

All normal maintenance, charging or cleaning shall remain the responsibility of personnel using the various devices.

5 REPORTING USE OF CONTROL DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES

Any application of a control device and/or technique listed within this section shall be documented pursuant to Use of Force Policy sections 4 and 5.