

Taser/Conducted Energy Weapon

304.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the issuance and use of conducted energy weapons, "Taser" devices.

304.2 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

- A. Taser - Tasers, models X26 and X26P, are the only authorized less lethal force Conducted Energy Weapons (CEW) or Electronic Control Device (ECD) to be used by members of the Sahuarita Police Department.
- B. Taser Cartridge - A cartridge that contains Taser probes, wire and inner workings that are used to deliver Taser probes (small barbed probes) to a target area.
- C. Test Arc - An audiovisual display of the electronic current of the Taser when the Taser cartridge is removed and the trigger is pulled.
- D. 5-second Cycle - The activation of the Taser in a cycle of activity for 5 seconds by depressing and immediately releasing the trigger.
- E. Continuous Cycle - The activation of the Taser in a continuous cycle of activity by continuous compression of the trigger.
- F. Probe Deployment - Firing of probes from a Taser cartridge at or into a target.
- G. Stun Drive Deployment - Application of using a Taser without a cartridge by placing the contact points mounted on the Taser against a target.

304.3 POLICY

- A. Conducted Energy Weapon - X26, X26PTASER or TASER 7
 - 1. The X26, X26P Tasers and the Taser 7, yellow in color, are the only authorized Conducted Energy Weapons to be used by officers of the Sahuarita Police Department, outside of training, during a law enforcement duty or function.
 - 2. Members shall only use the Taser in accordance with this policy and the Department's Use of Force Policy (Lexipol 300).
 - 3. Members shall only use a Taser and Taser cartridges issued by the Department and only after being trained and certified as a Taser operator by a Department Taser instructor or by a Department - approved Taser instructor.
 - 4. Department - approved Taser instructors shall successfully complete a Taser International instructor training course and be currently certified by Taser International as a Taser instructor prior to instructing Department personnel.
 - 5. Members authorized to use a Taser must attend Taser update or re-familiarization training annually. The SPD Training Sergeant and/or

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Administrative Services Lieutenant shall assure update or re-familiarization training is provided annually to all members authorized to use a Taser.

6. The department approved Taser shall be carried by members working patrol or working a uniformed assignment on their duty belt or outer carrier vest utilizing a department-issued or department-approved Taser holster. The department approved Taser shall only be worn on the support side of the members's body (opposite side of the members primary duty handgun.) This is done to make the drawing of the Taser less likely to be confused with the drawing of the member's primary duty handgun, forcing the member to cross draw (across their body) for their Taser. Members who elect to carry a Taser during a plainclothes assignment shall carry the Taser on the opposite side of their primary duty handgun, also forcing them to cross draw (across their body) for the Taser.
 - (a) Additional clarification: Support side of the member's body means the side opposite of the member's primary duty handgun.
 - i. Example: Right handed members using their right hand to draw their primary duty handgun from their right hip must carry their Taser on the left side of their body, with the entire Taser and holster completely left of their vertical center line (i.e., belly button, sternum, spine).
 - ii. Example: Left handed members using their left hand to draw their primary duty handgun from their left hip must carry their Taser on the right side of their body, with the entire Taser and holster completely right of their vertical center line (i.e., belly button, sternum, spine).
7. In accordance with the SPD Use of Force Policy, Lexipol 300; 300.3 (a), to better assure that weapons of different types are not confused and possibly misapplied, members shall only, for the purpose of deployment, physically handle one weapon (lethal, less lethal, etc.) at a time. What is meant by purpose of deployment is the handling of a weapon for use, threatened use, or readying for use against another person.
8. A Department Firearm & Alternate Equipment approval form must be completed and signed by the Chief of Police or a Division Commander prior to a member carrying a Taser in a different manner or method as described in 304.3(f). Members in a plainclothes assignment, who elect to carry a Taser, shall carry it in a secure manner and in such a way as to avoid accidental mishandling or loss during strenuous activity.

304.4 APPLICATION OF THE TASER

- A. The Taser should be used only when its operator can safely approach a subject within the operational range of the Taser. The Taser may be used when circumstances known to the individual member using or deploying the Taser, at the time of use or deployment, indicate the application of the Taser is reasonable to subdue or control a person who is violent, threatening violence, assaultive, combative or vigorously (strongly or actively) resistive to an member or other person.

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- B. The use of a Taser should largely be avoided in the following situations unless the totality of the circumstances indicate that other available options reasonably appear ineffective, impractical, or would present a greater danger to the member, the subject, or others, and the member reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the risk of using the Taser:
 - 1. Females who are known to be pregnant.
 - 2. Elderly individuals or small, young children.
 - 3. Individuals who are handcuffed or otherwise restrained.
 - 4. Subjects resisting only through passive or minor resistance.
 - 5. Individuals who have been recently sprayed/contaminated with or are in close proximity to a flammable chemical or material.
 - 6. Individuals whose position or activity may result in collateral injuries (e.g. handling certain objects, falls from height or into water or onto a dangerous object or those operating, in control of or inside, vehicles or machinery).
 - 7. The operational range (too close or far from a subject) creates a safety issue for either a probe or stun drive deployment.
- C. When circumstances permit, members should give a verbal warning prior to the discharge of the Taser. This may gain compliance from the subject or prevent other members on scene from applying additional force or force options.
- D. The Taser shall not be deployed on animals unless there is an immediate serious threat posed to the member or other individuals and other means of resolving the issue are not practical, immediately available, or have failed.
- E. Mere "display" or "pointing" of the Taser during an incident does not require documentation as a use of force incident.

304.5 TARGETING CONSIDERATIONS

- A. The manufacturer generally recommends that reasonable efforts be made to target the lower center mass of a subject to avoid intentionally striking the head, neck, chest, or groin.
 - 1. However, it is recognized that the dynamics of each situation and member safety may not allow members to limit a shot or shoot Taser probes to a precise target area on a body.
- B. When firing the X26, X26P Taser or Taser 7, members should aim for the subject's back, if possible. If the subject's back is not available, the target area is the xiphoid process down to the mid-thigh, avoiding the groin area.

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304.6 MULTIPLE TASER APPLICATIONS

- A. If the first or a single application of the Taser appears to be ineffective in gaining control of a subject and circumstances permit, the member shall evaluate the following before additional applications of the Taser:
 - 1. Whether the probes have made proper contact to achieve the desired effect.
 - 2. Whether application of the Taser is interfering with the subject's ability to comply.
 - 3. Whether verbal commands or other force options may be more effective.
- B. However, this will not preclude an member from deploying multiple, reasonable applications of the Taser on an individual. Members shall continue to evaluate the effectiveness and necessity of each Taser application to assure it falls within the Department's Use of Force Policy (Lexipol 300) and this policy.
- C. Members shall try to minimize the number of Taser applications by working quickly to restrain the subject while also maintaining appropriate member safety.

304.7 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. When possible, supervisors shall respond to calls when they reasonably believe there is a likelihood a Taser may be used. A supervisor shall respond to all incidents where a Taser probe or stun drive deployment has been used by an member. A supervisor shall review each incident where a Taser probe or stun drive deployment has been utilized. Supervisors will enter, or cause to be entered, into the IA Pro/BlueTeam use of force tracking system all available information about the Taser deployment as soon as practicable.
- B. SPD Taser devices have built-in memory that records each use or deployment of the Taser device. Upon any non-training probe or stun drive deployment of a Taser, members shall cause the download of the Taser memory to be stored in a Department approved storage system as soon as practicable and no later than 72 hours from the date and time of the deployment. Members shall facilitate the download and storage of data through the Training Sergeant, Administrative Services Lieutenant, or a Department Taser instructor.

304.8 ACTIONS FOLLOWING A TASER DEPLOYMENT

- A. Members shall immediately notify a supervisor of any Taser probe or stun drive deployment, conducted outside Department approved training.
- B. Members shall not remove Taser probes that have penetrated the skin of a person.
- C. If the probes have penetrated the skin of a person or there is visible injury or complaint of pain from either a probe or stun drive deployment, members will cause the person to be promptly examined by an emergency medical technician or hospital medical staff for removal of the probes or examination or treatment of the injury or complaint of pain. Members shall administer First Aid when needed and able to provide it.

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- D. If the probes penetrate a sensitive/soft tissue area such as the face, neck, head, or genitalia, etc., members shall carefully evaluate whether to have the subject transported by law enforcement or EMS to a medical facility.
- E. Members shall document medical treatment or refusal of medical treatment in their police report.
- F. Members that deploy a Taser (probe or stun drive) shall inquire, or cause another member to inquire, with the person whether or not they are injured or in pain (Lexipol 300.10).
- G. Members shall have all injuries, visible or not, that are created or caused by a Taser probe or stun drive deployment photographed and thoroughly described in their police report (Lexipol 300.8).

304.9 DOCUMENTATION

- A. Evidence Preservation:
 - 1. Photographs of the probe impact or stun drive area(s) shall be taken to document any injury or lack of injury. The photographs shall be placed into evidence.
 - 2. The probes shall be collected and placed into the used cartridge (pointed ends first) and covered with a biohazard sticker/marker. The cartridge and probes will then be placed in an evidence bag, box, or approved container, marked with a biohazard sticker/marker, and placed into evidence.
 - 3. The serial number of the cartridge used will be included on the evidence form and in the narrative of the police report.
 - 4. All use of force applications of the X26, X26P Taser or Taser 7 will be documented in a police report and in accordance with the Department's Use of Force Policy (Lexipol 300). The report should include all pertinent information and justification associated with the use of force and the below information.
 - (a) Serial number of the Taser.
 - (b) Number of and duration of probe or stun drive deployments.
 - (c) Location on the body that the probes made contact with or where a stun drive was placed.
 - (d) Serial number(s) of any cartridge(s) deployed.

304.10 POLICY ISSUANCE OR REVIEW

03/25/2024 - Reviewed by Commander Kaleb Allred - SP009

04/10/2025 - Reviewed by Commander Manuel Amado - SP012