



## Use of Force Policy and Training Overview

### Section One: Use of Force

Police officers are regularly confronted with situations requiring varying levels of force to effect a lawful detention or arrest, ensure public safety, or protect themselves or others from harm. Because of their law enforcement and peacekeeping role, police officers are, at times, required to use physical force to carry out their responsibilities. Whether the degree of force used is reasonable depends on the facts surrounding the situation. A reasonable use of force can only be intended to maintain or establish lawful control over a situation. Control is reached when a person either complies with an officer's direction, is restrained or apprehended, and no longer presents a direct threat to the officer or another person. Once lawful control is established and maintained, the use of additional force is unlawful. Below are important excerpts from the GPD policy.

Section 5.2, **Levels of Control**, paragraph 9, **Lethal Force** states: *“Lethal force is any manner of force that is reasonably likely to cause death or serious bodily harm and may only be used against subjects who are engaged in Aggravated Active Aggression upon an officer or another person. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of a firearm, striking the head, neck or clavicle (collarbone) area with an impact weapon, or the **choking of a suspect.**”*

**Aggravated Active Aggression** is defined as *“physical actions which may or may not involve a weapon, which are likely to result in death or serious physical injury to an officer or another person.”*

Another reference which speaks to Professional Police Presence can be found in **General Order 200A13, “Use of Force by Police Officers”** Section 6, RESPONDING TO RESISTANCE OR THREATS, sub-section 6.1, which states:

*“Officers will at all times endeavor to overcome a subject's resistance to their lawful authority without the use of force. Appropriately applied and managed, professional police presence and demeanor, and clear, calm, controlled communication may defuse potentially volatile situations. When these approaches are ineffective or their use is insufficient for a circumstance, an officer may need to respond with physical force. **In such circumstances, an officer shall use only that force which is reasonably necessary to overcome the level of resistance to control a subject, or to stop a direct threat of harm posed by a subject.** Officers shall take reasonable measures to protect uninvolved individuals from the effects of using force.”*

**General Order 200A13, “Use of Force by Police Officers”, Section 7, DUTY TO INTERVENE**, sub-sections 7.1 and 7.2, which state:

*“Any officer who is present in a situation, and who reasonably believes another officer is using force in violation of the law or Departmental policy, has a duty to intervene to stop the unlawful or inappropriate use of force. Any on-duty or off-duty officer who witnesses or learns of an instance of excessive, unlawful or inappropriate use of force by another officer of any agency, has an obligation to report that situation to a supervisor or Professional Standards Commander as soon as practicable for further investigation.”*

In addition, a mechanism exists within the City of Greenville’s Human Resources policy, H.R. 1.2, **Equal Employment Opportunity** that provides an anonymous “hotline” which is available 24 hour-a-day, 7 days a week for any employee to report misconduct by a fellow employee.

Greenville Police are required to report any use force on or against a civilian. **General Order 200A13, “Use of Force by Police Officers”, Section 8.3** states:

*“Situations requiring an investigation by a field supervisor and review by an employee’s chain of command include: Use of Hard Empty-Hand Control, OC Spray, CEW, and/or Impact Weapons, regardless of whether a subject was injured, any time an in-custody subject appears to be injured or complains of an injury associated with an encounter with officers or the actions of officers, uses of less-lethal or lethal force against an aggressive animal or to euthanize a seriously injured animal, or any discharge of firearms that does not occur within a controlled training environment. Supervisors will notify the Professional Standards Commander to convey known facts related to an unintentional firearms discharge incident. The notification will occur as soon as possible. The use of lethal force toward an animal will require a Critical Incident Notification to be completed.”*

## **Section Two: Officer Training**

It is important to point out that the Greenville Police Department has one of the most comprehensive training programs in the state, not only for new recruits, but also for seasoned officers.

All GPD officers are required to complete the Basic Law Enforcement Training from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. The academy training is 12 weeks, eight weeks in person, and four weeks of online courses. There are weekly tests and a cumulative final exam. The academy includes eight days of Scenario Based Training and Simulation Training.

**What types of bias training are required?** In addition to academy requirements, GPD has supplemental bias training with programs such as “Fair and Impartial Policing” which focuses on implicit biases and how to overcome them. “Community Oriented Policing” focuses on the diversity in our community and the importance of building relationships.

**What kind of de-escalation training do officers undergo?** GPD requires three types of de-escalation training. They include:

ICAT (Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics): This system is integrated into response trainings and represents ideals of creating distance and time to allow better force decisions, when immediate action is not required to protect life.

Surviving Verbal Conflict: Focuses on de-escalation and use of communication skills.

CIT (Critical Incident Team): NAMI training focused on responding to mentally ill persons in crisis, but heavily integrates de-escalation to reduce the need for use of force.

**Is GPD considering new training or changing any current practices?** GPD began working on a new “Bias Based Policing and Diversity” curriculum in February of 2020. COVID closures slowed that process. GPD regularly looks at national events to ensure it is preparing officers for success. National events have always provided opportunity to review the training curriculum, training development and policies. Failure to reflect and re-evaluate would be detrimental to our officers and community.

GPD is currently integrating a three-part online series focused on implicit bias and racial profiling for all officers. Lesson plans are being developed for ongoing training to ensure proper treatment of our diverse citizenry.

**What kind of training courses are South Carolina officers required to complete?**

The 4-week online training topics at the academy include, but are not limited to:

*(in alphabetical order)*

Active Shooter Response  
Arrest Strategies  
Basic Patrol  
Child Abuse  
Civil Rights  
Courtroom Procedure  
Crime Scenes and Physical Evidence  
Diversity, Prejudice  
Domestic Violence  
Drug Enforcement  
Firearms  
First Amendment Rights  
Gangs  
Harassment and Stalking  
Mental Illness Response  
Mind Armor  
OC (Pepper) spray  
Officer Survival  
Probable Cause  
Searching and Handcuffing  
Sexual Assault  
Traffic Law  
Use of Force  
Victimology

The eight-week in person academy training includes, but is not limited to:

*(in alphabetical order)*

Advanced Firearms  
Baton Tactics  
Community Policing  
Confessions, Interrogation, and Miranda Warnings

Crimes against Persons  
Crimes against Property  
Crisis Communication  
De-escalation  
Defensive Countermeasures  
Evidence  
Ethics and Misconduct  
Ground Defense  
Joint Manipulation  
Knife Defense  
*Lateral Neck Restraint (see note below)*  
Searches  
Team Tactics  
Use of Force Survival Principals  
Weapon Retention and Disarming

*Important note: Lateral neck restraint has been part of the required curriculum at the SC Law Enforcement Academy since 2011 as one of several defensive tactics training courses. GPD does not use chokeholds or lateral neck restraints. The only exception would be if an officer's life is in jeopardy.*

**What pre and post academy training does GPD provide new officers and transfers from other SC departments?**

GPD-specific training includes:  
Body Worn Camera training  
CPR Certification  
Firearms  
NIMS (National Incident Management System)  
OC (Pepper Spray Exposure)  
Property and Evidence Procedure  
Strategic Planning and Analysis  
Taser  
Tourniquet application

The GPD then conducts "on the job" training prior to release as a solo officer. The training has four phases. Each phase is 3 weeks with an orientation period, a midterm evaluation, and final evaluation period. The academy and the GPD place annual training requirements on officers to maintain certification. These include firearms and force review, firearms requalification, bias based policing review and peer support training.