

**SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY  
PROBATION DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE**

**TASER/CONDUCTED ELECTRICAL WEAPON (CEW)**

**Authority:**

Michelle Scray Brown, Chief Probation Officer

**Purpose:**

To establish a guideline for the training, use, storage, etc of the CEW. This procedure applies to all officers authorized by the Chief Probation Officer to carry a CEW. It is the responsibility of all armed officers to remain thoroughly familiar with this procedure at all times and to always handle CEW's in the safe manner required herein. The use of the CEW is a moderate level of force utilized to control violent or potentially violent individuals who pose an immediate threat to themselves, officers or members of the community.

**Definitions:**

Cartridge: The cartridge houses the probes and wires and attaches to the front of the Taser.

Drive Stun: The electronic charge delivered from the Taser against a target area with enough force to maintain solid contact, with or without the probes deployed.

Probe: A dart propelled forward out of the cartridge when the Taser is deployed and must make contact with skin to deliver an electronic charge.

Spark Test: A non contact function test completed with the Taser prior to the start of each shift.

TASER®: The term Taser as used in this procedure refers to the CEW manufactured by the TASER® Company and issued by the Department.

**Roles:**

Range/Force Options Supervisor (SPO):

- A. Develop a Taser training program, which includes, but is not limited to:
  - 1. Ensuring initial and annual training is conducted.
  - 2. Ensuring Taser instructors are certified.
  - 3. Maintaining training/proficiency records.
- B. Maintain an inventory of all Tasers, cartridges, batteries and other related equipment.
- C. Coordinate an annual inspection of all Tasers, to include ensuring the most current data download has been completed.

Taser Instructors:

- A. Successfully complete a certified Taser instructor course.
- B. Conduct initial and annual Taser training.
- C. Assist the Range Master in the development of Taser training programs.

**Responsibilities:**

I. Authorization:

- A. Probation Officers may only carry a Taser when authorized by the Chief Probation Officer, in accordance with current departmental training and in compliance with the Department's Use of Force policy.
- B. Officers issued firearms shall be issued Tasers.

II. Required Training:

- A. Officers must successfully complete department provided training to be issued a Taser. Training consists of, at a minimum:
  - 1. An eight (8) hour initial training.
  - 2. One (1) hour of annual training.

III. Storage:

- A. Taser security is the responsibility of the officer to whom it is assigned.
- B. While on duty, when not carrying the Taser on the officer's person, the Taser is to be stored in a department issued/approved securable storage container (i.e., lock box, gun locker, etc).
- C. Tasers shall not be stored overnight in any vehicle.
- D. Tasers shall not be stored in a department facility overnight, unless it is stored in a locked safe designed for storing firearms.
- E. When storing the Taser at the officer's residence, it is the responsibility of the officer to keep the Taser in a safe and secure place (e.g., gun lock box, gun safe, etc).
- F. Officers shall make every attempt to store and transport the Taser in the holster.

IV. Stolen or Lost Tasers:

- A. Officers shall immediately, upon discovery of a stolen or lost Taser:
  - 1. Notify their immediate supervisor/on call supervisor.
  - 2. File a report with the appropriate law enforcement agency.
  - 3. Complete an Incident Report (IR) by the end of shift, or the next business day if not on duty, unless otherwise directed by a supervisor.
  - 4. Provide their supervisor with a copy of the law enforcement report upon its completion.
- B. Supervisors shall, immediately upon notification of a stolen or lost Taser, notify their immediate supervisor and the Range/Force Options Supervisor.

V. The Taser:

- A. Officers shall only utilize department issued Taser equipment.
- B. Care, storage and maintenance of the Taser, holster, cartridges, etc are the responsibility of the officer to whom they are assigned.
- C. Tasers shall be clearly marked by color to differentiate them from the duty weapon or any other device.
- D. The Taser shall be carried in a department issued holster, rigidly attached to the duty belt at waist level on the officer's support side (non-gun side) in a butt-forward, cross draw position.
- E. Officers shall carry the Taser in conjunction with their firearm while conducting fieldwork.
- F. The Taser shall be spark tested at a designated area within the office before each shift to ensure operability. Those officers assigned to off site locations shall ensure their Taser's are spark tested in a safe manner in accordance with department training.
- G. The Taser shall be loaded with a cartridge when worn on duty.

VI. Application:

- A. Tasers are a moderate level of force and are to be applied in accordance with current departmental training and in compliance with existing Use of Force policies and procedures.
- B. When practical, a verbal announcement of the intended use of the Taser shall be given prior to the application of the Taser. No verbal announcement is required prior to the application of the Taser if making such an announcement would endanger officers or others, or if an announcement is otherwise impractical. The verbal announcement serves to:
  - 1. Provide the individual with a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply with the officer's direction.
  - 2. Provide other officers and individuals with the warning that a Taser may be applied.
- C. Each application of the Taser (probe/drive stun) is considered a separate and distinct use of force and the situation must be evaluated before applying any subsequent cycles.
  - 1. If an application of the Taser is ineffective in gaining control of an individual, the officer should consider certain factors before additional applications of the Taser:

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- a. Whether the probes are making contact.
- b. Whether the individual has the ability and has been given a reasonable opportunity to comply.
- c. Whether verbal commands, other options or tactics may be more effective.

### VII. Post Application:

- A. The individual to which the Taser was applied shall be restrained and taken into custody as soon as practicable.
- B. After a scene is declared safe, officers shall ensure the cartridge, wires and probes are handled in a safe manner, collected in a sharps container and booked into evidence. Probes shall be treated as a sharp biohazard and Universal Precautions should be used.
- C. Individuals who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond physical characteristics, tolerance to pain, or who require a physical encounter with multiple officers to bring under control, may be at increased risk of sudden death (Excited Delirium). Any subject displaying the above symptoms or any form of distress following a Taser application shall be examined by qualified medical personnel as soon as practicable.
- D. Removal of Probes:
  1. Generally, probes imbedded in an individual's skin shall be removed as soon as practicable by either trained department personnel or by licensed medical personnel. If a probe is embedded in a sensitive area of the body (i.e., eye, lip, neck, breast, genital area), the officer shall request immediate medical aid.
- E. Booking:
  1. A pre-booking medical clearance is not required to book an individual/youth into an adult or juvenile detention facility, unless:
    - a. Specifically requested by the facility
    - b. Requested by the individual to whom the Taser was applied
    - c. Other existing medical conditions require a pre-booking medical clearance
  2. Taser applications shall be documented on the booking application (juvenile and adult).
- F. When the Taser is applied to an animal, in addition to the required notification and documentation outlined in this procedure, officers must also notify the owner (if known) and contact Animal Control.

### VIII. Taser Application Documentation:

- A. Officers shall:
  1. Verbally report the application of the Taser to their supervisor as soon as practicable following the incident.
  2. Document the Taser use on the booking application.
  3. Complete an Incident Report (IR) by the end of shift pursuant to the Incident Report procedure, unless directed otherwise by a supervisor. Additional IR requirements for Taser applications include, but are not limited to:
    - a. Verbal warning or reasons a verbal warning was unable to be given
    - b. Cartridge serial numbers
    - c. Date and time of Taser download after application
    - d. Activation(s) (number of 5-second cycles and/or drive stuns applied)
    - e. Location of probe hits or drive stun contacts
    - f. Individual's response (i.e., individual "immediately stiffened up and fell backwards...")
    - g. Medical clearance documentation, if completed
  4. Photographs shall be taken following a Taser application and booked into evidence. The following shall be photographed unless it is unsafe to do so:
    - a. Full body photo
    - b. Injuries (visible and complaints of injury)
    - c. Probe/stun contact points

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- d. Spent cartridge and probes
- B. All officers on scene at time of a Taser application shall submit their Taser for download.

IX. Accidental Discharge:

- A. Officers shall document accidental discharges (ADs) of the Taser via verbal and written notification to their supervisor by way of a memo. Supervisors will place the memo in the employee's drop file and provide a copy to the appropriate Division Director and the Force Options Supervisor.
- B. Officers will make a copy of the memo and provide it to the Training Unit when exchanging their cartridge.
- C. The Training Unit will provide a brief verbal remediation that should consist of what to do to avoid similar situations.
- D. The Training Unit will document the remediation training in a memo and place the memo in the officer's training file.
- E. An officer will not receive a new cartridge from the Force Options Supervisor without a completed memo.

**Guidelines:**

- A. Additional consideration should be given to the following criteria when considering a Taser application:
  - 1. Pregnancy
  - 2. Age (elderly/children)
  - 3. Individuals with known medical and/or mental health issues
  - 4. Individuals displaying symptoms of medical or mental health issues
  - 5. Individuals who have received multiple discharges from a Taser
  - 6. When an individual is operating a moving vehicle
  - 7. When the individual is likely to fall from a precarious position, such as at the top of a staircase, on a balcony or ledge, in a tree, or in or next to a body of water
  - 8. Individuals who have been sprayed with alcohol based OC/Pepper Spray, or are in potentially flammable environments
  - 9. Handcuffed or otherwise restrained individuals
- B. The Chief Probation Officer has the authority to revoke the authorization to carry a Taser at any time.
- C. Administrators and Managers will be provided with an overview/familiarization of the Taser, however, are not required to be issued a Taser.
- D. Any deviation from this procedure must be approved by the Chief Probation Officer.

**Inspections:**

Refer to the Policy and Procedure Inspection Matrix.

**References:**

Procedures:

Force Options: Reporting Requirements and Training Guidelines


Use of Force-Administrative Review

Use of Force Training for Administrators and Sworn Managers

Policy:

Use of Force Guidelines

Issued by:

  
Michelle Scray Brown, Chief Probation Officer

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Date

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