



CITY OF ROHNERT PARK DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

Tim Mattos, Director

Over the last several years, and especially with the death of George Floyd at the hands of former Minneapolis officers, renewed concerns have surfaced about how policing in America should be. Here at the Rohnert Park Department of Public Safety, we've heard those concerns, and we wanted to take a moment to provide additional information on the questions we're receiving regarding training, including topics such as implicit bias, crisis intervention and de-escalation, and use of force.

Guiding Principles:

We have received many inquiries from the community about our department's policies and how they may or may not meet some of the guidelines being advocated for by police reform organizations. We've re-examined our policies and feel that most, if not all, directly align with the spirit of what is being asked for in the recommendations, but there are nuances in verbiage. For example, this is how our policies compare to the 8cantwait.org website's recommendations:

- **Ban chokeholds and strangleholds** – No chokeholds or strangleholds are permitted.
- **Require de-escalation** – De-escalation is interwoven into the department's operations and is included in the department's **policies** (Lexipol 468) for crisis intervention, conducted energy devices (Tasers), mental illness, and civil disputes. De-escalation techniques are included in various continuing professional training topics.
- **Require warning before shooting** – In situations of a person fleeing who an officer reasonably believes will cause death or serious injury if not immediately apprehended, the officer, where feasible, will identify themselves and warn deadly force **may be used** (Lexipol 300).
- **Exhaust all other means before shooting** – Our **policy** (Lexipol 300) requires officers evaluate the use of other reasonably available resources and techniques when determining whether to use deadly force, and deadly force is only used when there is an imminent threat of death or serious injury to the officer or another person.
- **Duty to intervene and stop excessive force by other officers** – Our **policy** (Lexipol 300) mandates a duty to intercede if any officer observes another officer using force that is unreasonable.
- **Ban shooting at moving vehicles** – While our **policy** (Lexipol 300) does not ban shooting at moving vehicles, it is only allowed when the driver poses a deadly threat, and is close to the Campaign Zero's report, which provides a similar exception.
- **Require use-of-force continuum** – Law enforcement agencies vary whether they incorporate a use-of-force continuum. Continuums **do not** require officers start with one level of force before moving to another. Our policies require officers to use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary given the facts and totality of the circumstances.

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- **Require comprehensive reporting each time an officer uses forces or threatens to do so –**
All law enforcement actions are documented, to include uses of force and threats of force. The department provides data regarding all officer-involved shootings and incidents involving use of force resulting in serious bodily injury to the California Department of Justice.

For these reasons, we feel our policies are already very close to the recommendations being asked for. Your public safety department recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity without prejudice to anyone. Vesting officers with the authority to use reasonable force and to protect the public welfare requires monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests.

Our leadership has been, and will continue to discuss potential changes in verbiage to more closely align with the recommended practices.

We are more than happy to have further dialog on this, and we will continue to work to move forward with intention with our community.

Transparency and trust in our community with regards to how we protect and serve you is top of mind for us – we understand that the more we are able to open our doors to you on all levels, the more we can connect, communicate, and work together.

Yours In Service,

Tim Mattos, Director of Public Safety