



**Ohio Attorney General's Office
Bureau of Criminal Investigation
Investigative Report**



2025-3711

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 1363 State Route 534
NW, Braceville Township, OH 44470, Trumbull County

Investigative Activity: Braceville Police Department Use of Force Policy Received
Involves: Braceville Police Department (O)
Activity Date: 12/01/2025
Activity Location: BCI Boardman – 760 Boardman-Canfield Road, Boardman,
OH 44512
Authoring Agent: SA Joseph Lamping #184

Narrative:

On Friday, November 21, 2025, Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) Special Agent (SA) Joe Lamping received the Use of Force Policy utilized by the Braceville Police Department at the time of this incident. The document received is attached to this investigative report for further review.

References:

None

Attachments:

1. Braceville Police Department Use of Force Policy

This document is the property of the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and is confidential in nature. Neither the document nor its contents are to be disseminated outside your agency except as provided by law - a statute, an administrative rule, or any rule of procedure.

18. Use of Force and Deadly Force

A. Standard for Use of Force

Police officers may only use the force which is reasonably necessary to affect lawful objectives including: affecting a lawful arrest or overcoming resistance to a lawful arrest, preventing the escape of an offender, or protecting or defending others or themselves from physical harm.

B. Standard for Use of Deadly Force

The preservation of human life is of the highest value in the State of Ohio. Therefore, officers must have an objectively reasonable belief that deadly force is necessary to protect life before the use of deadly force. Deadly force, including but not limited to, the use of a choke hold or vascular neck restraint, may be used only under the following circumstances:

1. To defend themselves from serious physical injury or death; or
2. To defend another person from serious physical injury or death; or
3. In accordance with United States and Ohio Supreme Court decisions, specifically, *Tennessee v. Garner* and *Graham v. Connor*.

C. Firearms

1. All officers are prohibited from displaying or using their township issued firearms and non-lethal defensive tools except in the performance of their official duty.
2. All officers are prohibited from the use of warning shots and are prohibited from shooting from a moving vehicle.

D. Chokeholds/Vascular neck restraints

1. A chokehold is any intentional physical maneuver that restricts an individual's ability to breathe for the purposes of incapacitation.
2. Vascular neck restraint (also known as lateral neck restraint) is a technique that can be used to incapacitate individuals by restricting the flow of blood to their brain.
3. Chokeholds and vascular neck restraints may be used ONLY in those situations where the use of deadly force is allowed.

E. Use of Restraints/Handcuffs

The following rules apply to the use of handcuffs:

1. Except under exceptional circumstances do not handcuff a prisoner to a fixed object (i.e. posts, vehicles, buildings, etc.).
2. Always handcuff a prisoner with the handcuffs behind the prisoner's back unless circumstances prevent such positioning, or if prisoner is physically unable.
3. Never handcuff yourself to prisoner.
4. Do not use handcuffs as a "come along".
5. Finger gapped and double-locked cuffs (GDL) must be used.
6. Transport officer can use belly chain and ankle shackles if necessary.

F. Use of Batons, Nightsticks and Flashlight

1. The flashlight, baton and nightstick are to be primarily used as defensive weapons. Striking a person with the flashlight, baton or nightstick is justified when an officer is:
 - Protecting himself/herself from an assault.
 - Attempting to stop an individual's aggression or to overcome resistance or violent behavior where lesser means of physical force are ineffective.

2. The primary target areas for applying non-lethal force with the flashlight, baton or nightstick are large muscle groups or bones.

G. Taser

Purpose and Scope:

The TASER device is intended to control a violent or potentially violent individual while minimizing the risk of serious injury. It is anticipated that the appropriate use of such a device will result in fewer serious injuries to officers and suspects.

Policy:

Personnel who have completed department-approved training may be issued the TASER for use during their current assignment. Officers shall use the TASER and cartridges that have been issued by the Department. Officers may use personally owned TASER's in combination with department issued cartridges at the discretion of the Chief. Uniformed officers who have been issued the TASER shall wear the device on their vest or on their duty belt on their non-dominant hand side.

Verbal and Visual Warnings:

When safe and practicable to do so, a verbal warning of the intended use of the TASER should precede its application. The purpose of the warning is for the following: (a) Provide the individual with a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply. (b) Provide other officers and individuals with a warning that a TASER may be deployed. The aiming laser should never be intentionally directed into the eyes of another as it may permanently impair his/her vision. The fact that a verbal and/or other warning was given or reasons it was not given shall be documented by the officer deploying the TASER.

Use of Taser:

As with any law enforcement equipment, the TASER has limitations and restrictions requiring consideration before its use. The TASER should only be used when its operator can safely approach the subject within the operational range of the TASER. Although the TASER is generally effective in controlling most individuals, officers should be alert to the potential for failure and be prepared with other options.

Factors to Determine Reasonableness of Force:

The application of the TASER is likely to cause intense, but momentary, pain. As such, officers should carefully consider and balance the totality of circumstances available prior to using the TASER including, but not limited to, the following factors: (a) The conduct of the individual being confronted (as reasonably perceived by the officer at the time). (b) Officer/subject factors (i.e., age, size, relative strength, skill level, injury/exhaustion, number of officers vs. subject(s)). (c) Influence of drugs/alcohol (mental capacity). (d) Proximity of weapons. (e) The level of active resistance and active aggression to which the subject has been effectively restrained and his/her ability to resist despite being restrained. [examples: someone simply pulling away while handcuffed typically would not be a reason to deploy a taser, however if a handcuffed subject is attempting to assault someone, it may be reasonable to deploy the TASER] (f) Time and circumstances permitting, the availability of other options (what resources are reasonably available to the officer under the circumstances). (g) Seriousness of the suspected offense or the reason for contact with the individual. (h) Training and experience of the officer. (i) Potential for injury to citizens, officers and suspects. (j) Risk of escape. (k) Other exigent circumstances.

Application of the Taser:

Certified officers may use the TASER when circumstances known to the individual officer at the time indicate that such application of the TASER is reasonable to control a person in any of the following circumstances: (a) The subject is violent or actively resisting [a handcuffed subject can still be considered violent/actively resisting]. (b) A subject who, by words or action, has demonstrated an intention to be violent or to physically resist and who reasonably appears to present the potential to harm officers, him/herself or others.

Special Considerations:

The use of the TASER should generally 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 officer, the subject or others, and the officer reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the risk of using the TASER: (a) Pregnant females; (b) Elderly individuals or obvious juveniles; (c) Individuals who are handcuffed or otherwise restrained; (d) Individuals who have been recently sprayed with a flammable chemical agent or who are otherwise in close proximity to any flammable material; or (e) Individuals whose position or activity may result in collateral injury (e.g. falls from height, operating vehicles). Because the application of the TASER in the drive-stun mode (i.e. direct contact without darts) relies primarily on pain compliance and requires close proximity to the subject, additional caution should be exercised. The application in drive-stun mode should be limited to brief applications in which pain compliance would reasonably appear necessary to achieve control. The TASER shall not be used to torture, psychologically torment, elicit statements or to punish any individual.

Targeting Considerations:

While manufacturers generally recommend that reasonable efforts should be made to target lower center mass and to avoid intentionally targeting the head, neck, chest and groin, it is recognized that the dynamics of each situation and officer safety may not permit the officer to limit the application of the TASER darts to a precise target area. As such, officers should take prompt and ongoing care to monitor the condition of the subject if one or more darts strikes the head, neck, chest or groin until he/she is released to the care of paramedics or other medical personnel.

Additional Target Use Guidelines:

Officer shall not draw a TASER outside of the justification, except under the following circumstances: (a) Testing the TASER in a discreet location if it was not tested within the police facilities; (b) Presentation to a supervisor for inspection; or (c) Securing weapons at the Trumbull County Jail or other custodial facility. Justifiable drawing of the TASER from its holster shall be thoroughly documented in an Incident or Arrest Report.

Multiple Applications of the Device:

If the first application of the TASER appears to be ineffective in gaining control of an individual and if circumstances allow, the officer should consider the following before additional applications of the TASER: (a) Whether the probes or darts are making proper contact. (b) Whether the application of the TASER is interfering with the ability of the individual to comply. (c) Whether verbal commands, other options or tactics may be more effective. This, however, shall not preclude any officer from deploying multiple, reasonable applications of the TASER on an individual.

Report of Use:

All TASER discharges shall be documented in the related Incident Offence Report (IOR) and a Use of Force Report. Accidental discharges of a TASER cartridge will also be documented as an IOR. Any report documenting the discharge of a TASER cartridge will include the cartridge serial number and an explanation of the circumstances surrounding the discharge. Photographs of probe sites should be taken, Anti-Felon Identification (AFID) tags should be collected and the expended cartridge along with both probes and wire should be submitted by the officer collecting the cartridge into evidence for future reference. The cartridge serial number should be noted and documented on the evidence paperwork. The evidence packaging should be marked "Biohazard" if the probes penetrated the subject's skin.

Medical Treatment:

Absent extenuating circumstances or unavailability, only qualified, trained personnel should remove TASER darts from a person's body. Used TASER darts shall be considered a sharp biohazard, similar to a used hypodermic needle. Universal precautions should be taken accordingly. Probes placed in preferred target areas may be removed by officers. (Officers shall receive training annually on removal of TASER probes as part of TASER re-certification.) If the TASER darts have penetrated a sensitive area (head | neck | groin | breast), they should be removed only by trained medical personnel. Additionally, any such individual who falls under any of the following categories should, as soon as practicable, be examined by paramedics or other qualified medical personnel: (a) The person is suspected of being under the influence of controlled substances and/or alcohol. (b) The person may be pregnant. (c) The person reasonably appears to be in need of medical attention. (d) The TASER darts are lodged in a sensitive area (e.g., groin, female breast, near the eyes). (e) The person requests medical treatment. Persons who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond their physical characteristics, imperviousness to pain (sometimes called "excited delirium"), or who require a protracted physical encounter with multiple officers to be brought under control, may be at an increased risk of sudden death and should be examined by qualified medical personnel as soon as practicable. Any individual exhibiting signs of distress after such an encounter shall be medically cleared prior to booking. If any individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal should be witnessed by another officer and/or medical personnel and shall be fully documented in related reports. If an audio recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included if possible. The transporting officer shall inform any person receiving custody or any person placed in a position of providing care that the individual has been subjected to the application of the TASER.

H. Use of Chemical Repellent or Mace

The department may issue to officers, after successfully completing the required training in Chemical Aerosol Sprays, a non-lethal CS/OC repellent. When used as a non-lethal weapon this issued equipment is primarily designed for self-defense measures. However, its use is justified in certain circumstances where resistance or violent behavior cannot be controlled by lesser degrees of verbal or physical force.

I. Training on Use of Force and Deadly Force

1. Sworn Officers: – Following release of a revision to this policy all sworn officers are required to review this policy, and document review through a read and sign.
2. Annual Training: –
 - a. At least annually each officer shall demonstrate proficiency in the use of all approved lethal weapons and electronic control weapons. Any officer failing to qualify with department-approved lethal weapons shall immediately begin the remedial training process in accordance with the policy.

- b. Training shall also include documented testing on the officer's knowledge of the department's Use of Force policy.
- 3. Annual Review: – All sworn officers will review this policy, in its entirety, at annual firearms qualification.
- 4. New Hires: – All new hires shall be provided with specific training on the scope and contents of this policy.

J. Reporting Use of Non-Deadly Force

Whenever non-deadly force is used the officer will complete a use of non-deadly force form along with the arrest report before the end of the officer's shift and submit it to the Chief of Police through the shift supervisor. The shift supervisor shall review the incident and submit to the Chief of Police.

K. Use of Deadly Force

Whenever an officer discharges a firearm, either accidentally or officially, or otherwise uses deadly force, the officer shall immediately:

- 1. Determine the physical condition of any injured person and render first aid when appropriate.
- 2. Request necessary emergency medical aid.
- 3. Notify Trumbull County 911 radio dispatcher of the incident and of the location. 911 shall dispatch requested medical aid and notify the Chief of Police, who will notify the appropriate agencies as necessary. The officer will remain at the scene (unless injured himself/herself) until the arrival of the appropriate investigators. The ranking or senior officer at the scene shall have the discretion to instruct the officer to respond to another location.
- 4. The officer shall protect his/her weapon for examination and submit said weapon to the appropriate investigator.
- 5. The officer(s) involved shall be removed from the scene and transported to a location where they can be medically evaluated and monitored. The officer(s) involved shall be accompanied by another Braceville Township Police Department officer and/or EMS personnel at all times.
- 6. The officer shall not discuss the case with anyone except:
 - a. Supervisory and assigned investigative personnel.
 - b. The assigned prosecutor.
 - c. The officer's attorney, psychologist, clergy or immediate family.
- 7. If any firearm that an officer has qualified with and/ or a department-issued firearm is discharged off-duty under any circumstance other than firearms practice, a written report (administrative investigation and/or case report) will be completed.

L. Investigation and Administrative Response

- 1. The Chief of Police shall request the Trumbull County Prosecutor's office, BCI, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol to investigate any on duty discharge of a firearm or use of force which results in serious physical injury or death.

2. Where an officer's use of force results in serious physical injury or death, the officer shall be placed on administrative leave (with pay) pending completion of a preliminary administrative review of the incident. While on administrative leave, the officer shall remain available during business hours for official interviews and statements regarding the incident. The preliminary administrative review shall involve an examination of the available information in order to arrive at a preliminary opinion as to whether or not the incident is believed to be in conformance with Department Policy and Procedures and State and Federal Laws. The review shall be made by the Chief of Police, the Township Administrator and the Township's Legal Advisor.
3. Upon completion of the preliminary administrative review, if a finding is made that the incident is believed to be in conformance with Department Policy and Procedures, State and Federal Laws, the officer shall be returned to duty once a medical examination determines that the officer is mentally and physically prepared to return to active duty. If a finding is made that the incident is not in conformance with Department Policy and Procedures or State and Federal Laws, the Department may take action to place the officer on unpaid leave, terminate the officer, or take other appropriate action.
4. The Township shall provide psychological evaluation and counseling to the involved officer should it be requested.
5. Upon a receipt of the final report of the investigation the Township shall take action in accordance with the findings of the report.

M. Use of Force Report Form

Braceville Township Police Department Officers shall complete an Use of Force Report by the end of the officer's shift. The Use of Force Report will be submitted to the supervisor, which who will review the incident and bodycam video to investigate that the proper use of force was applied. Once the supervisor has approved the Use of Force Report, the report will then be submitted to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police then shall investigate the Use of Force incident to verify that the proper use of force was applied. The Chief of Police shall determine whether or whether not the proper use of force was used. When the Use of Force reviewed and signed off on by the Chief of Police, the form will be added to the initial incident RMS report and be filed in the Use of Force Report files.

Braceville Township Police Department Officers will complete a Use of Force Report when:

1. When a subject is handcuffed.
2. When any Force is used.

N. Use of Knives

Knives are primarily to be used as emergency cutting tools. Knives may be used as a defensive weapon.

1. **General Use** – the use and deployment of knives or tactical folding knives for routine uses by on- and off- duty officers shall be done as unobtrusive as possible so as not to alarm any bystanders. The officer should take care not to exhibit the knife in a careless manner. It is the individual officer's responsibility to use the knife or the tactical folding knife as a tool in a safe and responsible manner.
2. **Defensive Use** – It is recognized that the officer, in the course of his or her duties, may require the use of his or her knife or tactical folding knife as a weapon of defense under extraordinary circumstances. The Braceville Township Police Department requires any use of force by its officers to be objectively reasonable and comply with the requirements of applicable sections of the Ohio Revised Code and the Use of Force Policy.

O. Rendering Aid After Use of Weapons and/or Force

When it is safe to do so, the Braceville Township Police Department will render immediate medical aid to any individual who sustains injury by a lethal, less-than-lethal weapon and/or any force. Aid may include:

- First aid administered by sworn Departmental personnel.
- Treatment on the scene by medics or squads.
- Transportation to a medical facility by squad or medic.
- Decontamination of a subject that has been contaminated with chemical irritant.