

Use of Force

The goal of every encounter is to protect innocent bystanders, Phoenix Police Department (PPD) members, suspected offenders, and the broader community by bringing that encounter to a successful resolution. In some instances, force may be used to achieve these goals. PPD is continuously working to advance policy, training and tools in this area. The following are some of the proactive measures taken to ensure PPD is an industry leader in the use and evaluation of force.

- **2021** - Less-than-lethal use of force pilot program rolled out across two precincts to include 40 MM launcher and pepper ball systems. These tools provide patrol officers alternative options during high stress situations to reduce the use of deadly force.
- **2022** – Expansion of the less-than-lethal pilot program to include all city precincts.
- **2022** – De-escalation training:
 - Implemented time, distance, and cover training to promote de-escalation.
 - Techniques geared to teaching officers to respond to non-lethal situations.
- **2022**—Major draft revision of use of force policy:
 - Based on need for all uses of force to be reasonable, necessary, and proportional.
 - Created three levels of force to facilitate review and evaluation.
 - Establishes that employees have an absolute duty to report all misconduct including but not limited to the use of excessive force.
- **2022** – Updated process for revising major policies:
 - Includes gathering input from community, staff, and other industry leaders.
 - Updated process first utilized to update Phoenix PD’s Use of Force policy.
- **2022** – Pilot program to transform use of force investigations and evaluations.
 - Expanded and implemented in 2023.
- **2022** - Duty to intervene policy added to use of force policy:
 - Requires police employees to intervene in order to prevent or stop misconduct and/or other detrimental behavior without fear of retaliation.

- **2022** - Duty to provide medical assistance policy added to use of force policy.
 - Outlines the need for police employees to provide medical attention consistent with their training as soon as possible when there is a visible injury, complaint of an injury, signs of medical distress, or when medical attention is requested.

- **2023** – Expanded the less-than-lethal program—deployed 400 new tools and training officers for use.

- **2023** – Draft use of force policy released for public comment and input:
 - More than 800 comments received through public portal; input was also received from DOJ.

- **2023** – Use of Force policy draft approved:
 - Training curriculum developed.
 - Training began for trainers of the new policy.

- **2023** – Integrating Communications, Assessment and Tactics (ICAT) training launched department-wide:
 - Gives police officers tools for defusing critical incidents, especially those that do not involve subjects with guns.
 - Developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).
 - Nationally recognized as an industry best practice scenario-based training in de-escalation.

