



NEWS RELEASE

Chicago Police Department

John Escalante
Interim Superintendent

Anthony Guglielmi
Director

For Immediate Release
December 30, 2015

Contact: Office of News Affairs
312-745-6110

Mayor Emanuel, Superintendent Escalante Announce Overhaul of Policy Guiding Police Response, and Use of Force

Major Taser Expansion Also Announced as Another Tool to Help Reduce Lethal Confrontations

CHICAGO – Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Interim Police Superintendent John Escalante today announced a major overhaul of the policy regarding how officers respond to incidents and the use of physical and lethal force, as well as a significant expansion in the number of officers trained and equipped with Tasers. The policy changes center around de-escalation tactics to reduce the intensity of a conflict or a potentially violent situation at the earliest possible moment, emphasizing that the foremost goal is to protect the safety of all involved.

"These policy changes are part of our ongoing effort to completely reform the system and policing culture in Chicago to ensure the safety of every resident and restore the trust that is necessary for our police officers to do their jobs safely and effectively," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "Our police officers operate in dangerous and difficult circumstances every day. It is essential that they have the right guidance, training, and tactics to ensure the safety of our residents and themselves."

While recent events have brought this issue to the forefront, for far too long Chicago – like cities around the country – has faced too many incidents where officers have shot and killed people who were not armed with guns. There need to be fundamental changes because even when force may be legally justified, it doesn't mean it's necessary. In some cases, there were missed opportunities to reduce tension, to slow things down, or to call in specially trained teams in the minutes before the shootings occurred.

Additionally, at the Mayor's direction CPD will launch a major expansion of access to and training on Tasers.. The goal is to expand alternatives to deadly force. Tasers can, when used properly and with the right training, provide such an alternative. By June 1, 2016, every officer responding to calls for service will be equipped with a Taser and trained to use it properly. This will include: 1) adding 700 Tasers, enough to equip every CPD officer who responds to calls for service on every shift and increasing the total number of Tasers available to officers to 1,481; 2) training every officer who responds to calls for service in the use of Tasers; and 3) implementing and enforcing procedures to ensure all trained officers are issued a Taser at the start of their shift.

"These enhancements will ultimately equip Chicago Police officers with the necessary tools and training to gain control of fast-changing situations and help create the safest environment possible for police officers and the citizens we serve," said Interim Superintendent John Escalante. "In the end, we must use every resource at our disposal to uphold our goal of ultimately resolving incidents with the highest possible regard

for the preservation of human life and the safety of all persons involved.”

Together, these new policies make it clear CPD expects officers to develop and display the skills and abilities that allow them to regularly resolve confrontations without resorting to deadly force. Officers should de-escalate and use Force Mitigation principles at the earliest possible moment. Officers will continually assess the situation and will need to ask themselves a series of key questions as an event unfolds, such as:

- What exactly is happening?
- How serious is the risk or threat?
- What is the full range of options for how to respond?
- Do I need to take action immediately or can I slow the situation down and buy more time?
- Can I create more distance to make the situation safer?
- Can I de-escalate the tension by talking to the offender?
- Am I the best person to deal with this or should I request assistance from Specialized Units such as a Crisis Intervention Team?”

Starting next week, the Police Department will immediately begin training on the new Force Mitigation policy with a presentation to command staff, a streaming video for all officers, and roll call training. In the very near future more intensive, in-service and scenario-based training will also be conducted. Continuance training on improving de-escalation tactics and Crisis Intervention strategies for dealing with mentally ill persons, homeless persons, and other challenging situations will also be provided.

Chicago Police officers will continually assess any situation to which they are responding to evaluate force options, including whether force is necessary, appropriate, and able to be modified based on changing circumstances. Chicago Police officers are expected to adhere to all Department policies and procedures to ensure a dignified and effective response in critical incidents.

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FACT SHEET: ONGOING WORK TO RESTORE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY IN CHICAGO

Through ongoing work with public safety, community, religious and elected leaders, Mayor Rahm Emanuel is leading a citywide effort to restore accountability and trust in the Chicago Police Department (CPD). While recent events have brought this issue to the forefront, Chicago – like many cities around the country – has faced too many incidents where officers shoot and kill people who were not armed with guns.

In the last month, the Mayor has announced a number of reforms to restore the bonds of trust between Chicago police officers and the communities they are sworn to protect.

Focus on de-escalation

On December 30, the Mayor announced major policy changes centered around de-escalation tactics to reduce the intensity of a conflict at the earliest possible moment, emphasizing that the foremost goal is to protect the sanctity of life and the safety of all involved.

CPD will train officers to develop and display the skills and abilities that allow them to regularly resolve confrontations without resorting to deadly force. Starting next week, CPD will immediately begin training on this new policy with a presentation to command staff, a streaming video for all officers, and roll call training. In the very near future more intensive, in-service and scenario-based training will also be conducted. Continuance training improving de-escalation tactics and Crisis Intervention strategies for dealing with mentally ill persons, homeless persons, and other challenging situations will also be provided.

Expanded availability and use of Tasers and new training

To help ensure officers can resolve confrontations using the least amount of appropriate force, by June 1, 2016, every officer responding to calls for service will be equipped with a Taser and trained to use it properly to ensure officers can resolve confrontations by using the least amount of appropriate force. This will include adding 700 Tasers, enough to equip every CPD officer who responds to calls for service on every shift.

New policies affecting officers involved in shootings

On December 27, the Mayor directed the CPD to work with the city's Independent Police Review Authority on a series of changes that will help strengthen the work of the police department and increase transparency. As part of this effort, CPD will ensure any officers involved in shootings will have separation from field duties while training and fitness for duty requirements can be conducted. The officers involved will be placed on routine administrative duties for a period of 30 days. Going forward, this will be the Chicago Police Department's standard protocol following all officer-involved shootings.

Expanded use of body cams

The police department is expanding the use of body-worn cameras to six police districts, covering a third of the City of Chicago. This builds on a recent pilot program by the Chicago Police Department that launched in early 2015. Starting in 2016, uniformed officers and supervisors on all three watches will be wearing next-gen cameras in six police districts. The updated camera technology will be able to record up to 72-hours on a single charge in high-definition. The cameras will be a self-contained audio and video recording device and will help improve overall usability.

Diverse leadership at the Chicago Police Department

Interim Police Superintendent John Escalante recently announced a new leadership team that brings record diversity to the department's senior command ranks. Now, fifty percent of police chiefs and deputy chiefs are African-American and more women are serving in executive leadership roles.

New leadership at the Independent Police Review Authority

As part of his efforts to dramatically improving the system of police accountability, Mayor Rahm Emanuel appointed Sharon Fairley as the new Chief Administrator of the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA). Ms. Fairley is currently First Deputy and General Counsel of the city's Office of the Inspector General after having served as an Assistant United States Attorney for eight years.

Formation of an independent task force on police accountability

Mayor Emanuel directed the formation of an independent task force to review the system of accountability, oversight and training that is currently in place for Chicago's police officers. The Task Force on Police Accountability will recommend reforms to the current system to improve independent oversight of police misconduct, ensure officers with repeated complaints are identified and evaluated appropriately, and establish best practice for release of videos of police-involved incidents. The task force will actively engage community, victims' rights, law enforcement, youth, religious and elected leaders to ensure the recommendations are based on input from all parts of the city. Its recommendations will be presented to the Mayor and City Council by March 31, 2016. The task force is co-chaired by five respected leaders in criminal justice.

Welcome the DOJ investigation into the police department

Mayor Emanuel has welcomed the Department of Justice's investigation into the Chicago Police Department and pledged the City's complete cooperation. The mutual goal is to create a stronger, better Police Department that keeps the community safe while respecting the civil rights of every Chicagoan.