

LITTLETON POLICE DEPARTMENT

**2 Kittridge Lane
Littleton, New Hampshire 03561
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POLICY #: 20-5

SUBJECT: Expandable Baton

Last Revision Date: July, 2020

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Littleton Police Department, and as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the training requirement circumstances, deployment and after-action practices regarding the use of the expandable baton.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Littleton Police Department to equip its officers with those tools necessary to defend themselves or third persons from the use of force; the expandable baton is no exception. Littleton Police Officers shall only use that force which is both reasonable and necessary to accomplish lawful objectives.

PROCEDURE

- When not in use in the home, officers shall take reasonable precautions to prevent the expandable baton from being accessible to small children.
- The expandable baton shall only be used in accordance with training.

Authorized Weapons

- Expandable Baton – 21” or 24” for officers assigned to patrol duties
- Expandable Baton – 16” – for plain clothes.
- Each officer will be issued a “side break” scabbard.
- No modifications to the expandable baton or the scabbard are authorized.

Tactics

- The expandable baton is a metal collapsible, straight baton, to be used as an intermediate impact weapon.

- The expandable baton will be carried in accordance with department uniform wear and appearance policy. If the officer chooses to carry his/her baton, a keeper shall be placed in between the firearm and baton.
- Due to the close range of the encounter, it is extremely important for the officer to strike, create space, and assess whether a subsequent strike is needed or to transition.
- Only 7 trained and acceptable strikes may be delivered using a full grip weapon hand:
 1. Weapon strike
 2. Reaction strike
 3. Straight strike
 4. Closed mode weapon strike
 5. Closed mode reaction strike
 6. Closed mode straight strike
 7. Emergency strike
- A maximum effective strike lands 2-3 inches from the tip of the weapon.
- When the expandable baton is used, officers shall make strikes to the following areas as outlined by the Monadnock Baton chart:
 1. Green areas (Go) Shoulder, Shoulder Blade, Upper Arm, Forearm, Inside of Wrist, Back of Hand, Lower Abdomen, Buttocks, Thigh, Shin, calf, Instep and Achilles tendon.
 2. Yellow areas (caution) Collarbone, Upper Abdomen, Rib Cage, Groin, Knee Joint, and Elbow Joint.
 3. Opponents weapon delivery system
- Unless deadly force would be authorized, officers shall not deliberately make strikes to the Red areas:
 1. The face
 2. The head
 3. The neck
 4. The spine
 5. The sternum
- Strikes shall be made in the open mode. Strikes should be delivered at a 45-degree angle assisted by proper hip rotation. To make a strike, the officer will need to be within 4 feet.
- Reaction hand is used to redirect, create distance, and check subjects attack.

Precautions

- The expandable baton is only to be used for defensive purposes and in overcoming hostile resistance, which includes multiple assailants or situations when the officer loses physical control of a suspect.
- Use reasonable caution prior to striking subjects who are physically engaged with other officers or not isolated from bystanders.
- Recognize that the expandable baton is a less-lethal weapon and may be an inappropriate level of force against an attacker armed with a firearm, knife or other deadly weapon.
- When two officers are engaged in subduing an aggressive subject, it is the contact officer who shall determine if the expandable baton is to be used.
- Once the suspect is in custody, if the expandable baton has been used against the suspect, the arresting officer shall immediately call an ambulance to medically evaluate the suspect.

Placement on the Force Continuum

- The expandable baton is considered an “intermediate weapon,” as a separate tactic on the force continuum.
- The expandable baton is a force option that may be employed at any time as appropriate and as dictated by:
 - (a) Threat levels
 - (b) Relative capability of officer, such as physical exhaustion, martial arts skills, multiple suspects, etc.
 - (c) Special circumstances which may require you to escalate quickly to the expandable baton skipping other steps on the force continuum.
- The EXPANDABLE BATON shall NEVER BE USED ON A PASSIVELY RESISTING SUBJECT. It shall only be used against ACTIVE AGGRESSIVE RESISTANCE or a credible threat of aggressive resistance coupled with an apparent present ability to carry it out.
- STRIKES SHALL NOT CONTINUE ONCE THE SUBJECT HAS CEASED RESISTING.

Use Against an Officer

- If a suspect gains control of an officers expandable baton, disengage and consider other use of force options. If the suspect attempts to gain control of the expandable baton, the officer shall employ weapon retention techniques.
- Your response to being threatened to be struck with a blunt instrument may include deadly force if you are unable to disengage and you reasonably believe you are about to be rendered completely vulnerable and are in immediate danger of death or serious bodily injury.

Care and Maintenance

- After each use, report to the expandable baton instructor to see if the expandable baton has been damaged.
- If you do not use your expandable baton regularly, test it at least every other month to be sure it is still clean and functions properly.
- If the expandable baton becomes wet or dirty, it needs to be wiped down to clean it and remove moisture. However, do not disassemble this weapon; consult the expandable baton armorer. DO NOT apply oil to the expandable baton.
- The expandable baton instructor shall inspect each expandable baton annually at the scheduled training and shall prepare a weapon inspection report.

Training

- No officer shall be issued or use the expandable baton until he/she has been trained in its use by the Department expandable baton Instructor or the Police Standards and Training Council or a similar course in this or another state.
- The basic training course shall consist of approximately two- (2) hour classroom instruction and four- (4) hours' practical instruction. Only certified expandable baton instructors are authorized to instruct in the use of the expandable baton.
- Expandable baton instructors shall submit a training report for each officer trained within 1 business day of course completion.
- Each officer will receive a minimum of two (2) hours on the use of the expandable baton annually.

Reports

- A Use of Force Report shall be filed within 24 hours whenever an officer uses his/her expandable baton against a human being or animal other than in an officially scheduled training session. Photographs should be taken of the areas the subject was struck with the baton whenever possible.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

- All reported use of force, deadly and non-deadly, will be reviewed by the department to determine whether this policy, or any other rules or procedures, were violated. Consideration will also be given to whether the policy was clearly applicable in the circumstances in question, and whether it was effective to cover the situation.
 1. All Use of Force Reports, and Arrest/Investigation Reports that detail a use of force by other than a tool, shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police or his designee for review.
- All findings of training inadequacies or policy violations will be referred to the Deputy Chief of Police through the chain of command for resolution or disciplinary action. Inadequacies in the structure or content of the policy will be referred to the Deputy Chief of Police for resolution. Modifications may be made with the approval of the Chief of Police.
- All reports related to a use of force incident will be retained as required by state law.

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Chief Paul Smith

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