

**LITTLETON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

2 Union Street  
Littleton, New Hampshire 03561  
(603) 444-7711

**PROCEDURE #: 1.3-A****SUBJECT: Oleoresin Capsicum (O.C.) Spray****CALEA STANDARDS: 1.3.4, 1.3.5, 1.3.6,**

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 hand-held canister Oleoresin Capsicum Spray, hereinafter referred to as OC spray.

**POLICY**

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

**PROCEDURE**

Effective immediately, all officers shall carry OC spray while assigned to field duty as an alternative but not a substitute for other components of the force continuum. Department issued OC Spray may be carried off duty in the State of New Hampshire at the officer's discretion. When not in use in the home, officers shall take reasonable precautions to prevent OC spray from being accessible to small children.

**Characteristics**

- OC, unlike tear gas, is a highly concentrated form of peppers or other natural substances, therefore, is biodegradable. OC acts as an inflammatory to the mucous membrane of humans and animals.
- When applied to the face, it typically causes swelling of the mucous membranes, involuntary closing of the eyes, gagging, coughing, shortness of breath, and an intense feeling of burning on the exposed areas.

- Officers shall maintain close observation of sprayed individuals until it is determined that the effects of OC are wearing off.
- If any unusual effects appear other than what is considered OC effects; i.e. unconsciousness, unusual swelling of facial area, hives, itching or bleeding shall be medically treated immediately.
- All individuals who have been exposed to OC shall be transported in the upright seated position at all times. Subjects will not be hog-tied.
- Officers should be made aware that subjects sprayed by OC who are obese, extremely drug/alcohol intoxicated, hypertensive, excited, aggressive or have exerted more than normal amounts of physical activity or have other known medical problems are at greater risk of positional asphyxia. A second officer shall sit in the rear seat with the affected person, if there is a known medical problem.
- A medical questionnaire related to OC spray to determine if the exposed subject is predisposed to medical problems due to intoxication/drug or other medical issues will be completed by the officer, and signed by the effected person.

#### **Decontamination**

- Undertake decontamination as soon as practicable once an attacker has been sprayed.
- Instruct him/her to calm down and relax, handcuff him/her and tell him/her to try and breathe normally.
- Move him/her to fresh air if possible.
- Flushing the affected area with cool water will speed recovery time. May dab affected areas with dry or wet towels. Soap of a non-perfume or oil base may also be used. **DO NOT RUB.**
- In training, dipping the head in a bucket of water can sometimes re-contaminate as the face clears the water. Make sure there is fresh water each time a bucket is used.
- All symptoms should disappear within 15-45 minutes. If not, obtain medical attention immediately.
- If subject requests medical attention the officer shall provide medical assistance **IMMEDIATELY.**

#### **Placement on the Force Continuum**

- OC is considered “intermediate weapon”, as a separate tactic on the force continuum.

- The Deputy Chief of Police shall record the issue and replacement date of each OC container and replace unused containers in accordance with the manufacturers recommended expiration date.

### **Training**

- No officer shall be issued or use OC spray until he/she has been trained in its use by a certified training officer or the Police Standards and Training Council or a similar course in this or another state.
- OC training shall include actual exposure to a brief burst of OC so the officer will realize its effects and that it should never be deployed indiscriminately or as a prank.
- OC recertification will occur annually, however will not require re-exposure.
- OC instructors shall submit Use of Force training report for each officer trained within 1 business day of course completion.

### **Reports**

- A Use of Force Report shall be filed within 24 hours of the incident whenever an officer deploys OC spray against a human being or animal other than in an officially scheduled training session.

### **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 by the Deputy Chief of Police and to the Use of Force Supervising Instructor or his designee for review in accordance with O-120, Use of Force.
- 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.
- Each year, during January, the Deputy Chief of Police will prepare a summary report of all incidents involving the use of force during the preceding calendar year. The Chief of Police will review this report.