



CITY OF AKRON, OHIO
POLICE DIVISION
BRIAN HARDING, CHIEF OF POLICE

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| SUBJECT Public Order Procedure | | ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief Brian Harding |

I. POLICY

This policy establishes guidelines for managing crowds, protecting individual rights, and preserving peace during demonstrations and civil disturbances. This agency's policy is to protect individual rights related to assembly and free speech, effectively manage crowds to prevent loss of life, injury, or property damage, and minimize disruption to non-involved persons.

Most of the assemblies within the City of Akron are peaceful and do not require direct police intervention. The balance between enforcement actions and de-escalation should always be considered during an assembly. Tactics used should allow for the continuance of the assembly and exercise of First Amendment rights when possible, while addressing public safety and criminal behavior as safely as possible.

The Akron Police Department follows national best practices for crowd monitoring, intervention, and control. Absent immediate safety concerns, the department begins by monitoring the crowd, prioritizing engagement of event participants, and encouraging crowd self-regulation.

While the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, it does not protect criminal acts. The department's goal is to protect public safety and maintain peace and order. It recognizes that a police response that impedes otherwise protected speech must be narrowly tailored to serve a significant governmental interest. Events may simultaneously involve persons lawfully assembling and expressing speech and persons unlawfully committing crimes. The department must assess the totality of the circumstances to determine whether and to what extent police action is needed.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Active Aggression: Includes a threat or overt act of an assault (through physical or verbal means), coupled with the present ability to carry out the threat or assault, which reasonably indicates that an assault or injury to any person is imminent.
- B. Active resistance: A suspect's physical motions or movements, physical force, or show of force to counteract an officer's legal attempts to effect an arrest, or verbal hostility coupled with failure to comply with police orders.

- C. Aggravated Riot: Per the Ohio Revised Code Section 2917.02, four or more people with the purpose to commit or facilitate the commission of a felony, or with the purpose to commit or facilitate the commission of any offense of violence, or when the offender is in control, uses or intends to use a dangerous weapon or ordnance.
- D. Arrest Teams: Personnel assigned to arrest duties during public order events.
- E. Chemical Munitions: Any chemical that can rapidly produce sensory irritation or disabling physical effects in humans, which disappear within a short time following termination of exposure. For purposes of this policy, the term includes but is not limited to 2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile gas, commonly known as tear gas or CS gas, and items commonly referred to as Pepper Balls, pepper spray, or oleoresin capsicum, commonly known as OC spray or chemical defense spray. Chemical munitions are intended to achieve a strategic objective by changing or influencing the individual actions of a crowd member or the collective behavior of multiple crowd members.
- F. Civil Disobedience: An unlawful and non-violent action involving a planned or spontaneous demonstration by one or more person(s).
- G. Civil Disturbance: A gathering that constitutes a breach of the peace or any assembly of persons with a threat of collective violence, destruction of property, or other unlawful acts. Such a gathering may also be referred to as a riot or unlawful assembly. Collective violence in protest contexts is typically oriented toward goals participants view as meaningful—such as changing policies, expressing outrage over injustice, protecting community spaces, or challenging authority. Participants act not just as individuals but as representatives or members of a perceived group. They see property damage or violence as being done on behalf of or in defense of this collective identity.
- H. Command Post: A temporary, centralized location established at or near an emergency scene for managing and coordinating the response. It serves as the headquarters for the incident commander and their staff to direct planning and tactical operations, ensuring communication and resource management among all responding agencies.
- I. Commander's Intent: The commander's intent is a broad description and definition of what a successful mission will look like in its end state. The commander's intent helps communicate the vision clearly.
- J. Crowd Control: Techniques used to address civil disturbances, including a show of force, crowd containment, dispersal equipment and tactics, and preparations for mass detention or mass arrests.
- K. Crowd Intervention: Implementing strategies and tactics to mitigate and remove unlawful behavior during public gatherings so as not to disrupt an otherwise lawful assembly. Intervention strategies and tactics include communicating with crowd

factions and utilizing resources to identify, prevent, locate, and remove unlawful behavior.

- L. Crowd Management: Techniques used to manage lawful assemblies before, during, and after the event for the purpose of maintaining lawful status through event planning, pre-event contact with event organizers, issuance of permits when applicable, information gathering, personnel training, and other means.
- M. De-escalation – Using non-confrontational verbal skills, empathy, and active listening to stabilize the incident. De-escalation may also incorporate the use of additional time, distance, and resources, as well as persuasion, command presence, repositioning, and warnings to reduce the intensity of a potentially violent situation and decrease the potential need to use force.
- N. Dispersal Order: Lawful order communicated by law enforcement personnel commanding individuals assembled unlawfully to disperse. Provide a reasonable opportunity and sufficient time for protesters to comply. Specify how and where protesters should exit. Provide a clear, unobstructed exit path for participants.

Failure to Disperse: Per the Ohio Revised Code Section 2917.04, where five or more persons are participating in a course of disorderly conduct, and there are other persons in the vicinity whose presence creates the likelihood of physical harm to persons or property or of serious public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm, a law enforcement officer or other public official may order the participants and such other persons to disperse. No person shall knowingly fail to obey such order.

- O. Grenadier: Specifically designated officers trained and certified to deploy less-lethal impact munitions and/or chemical munitions in a public order environment.
- P. Incident Action Plan (IAP): A written document containing general management objectives that reflect the overall incident strategy and specific plans for using personnel and resources. Depending on the kind and size of an incident, IAPs will vary in content and form.
- Q. Incident Commander (IC): A supervisor who coordinates the activities of a major incident. The commander may operate out of the Incident Command Post.
- R. Incident Command System (ICS): A standardized, modular emergency management model for management of emergencies. ICS is specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single and multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries.
- S. Less-lethal Impact Munition (LLIM): Any type of device designed as less-lethal, to be launched from any device as a projectile that may cause bodily injury through the transfer of kinetic energy and blunt force trauma. LLIMs are known by several interchangeable terms: specialty impact munitions, kinetic energy projectiles, kinetic impact weapons, extended range batons, sponge rounds, baton rounds, beanbags, and

kinetic rounds. Modern less-lethal impact munitions are typically made of foam, plastic, or a flexible sock. They are designed to deliver blunt impact to the large muscle groups without risk of penetration. When used properly, they allow police to deliver force on a specific individual while maintaining a safe distance.

- T. Mass Arrest: The tactic of simultaneously arresting, in one action, numerous people in a short amount of time during a public order event, with the intent of taking them into custody or issuing them criminal citations when there is individualized probable cause.
- U. Mass Detention: The tactic of simultaneously detaining, in one action, numerous people during a crowd management event for an investigation when there is individualized reasonable suspicion.
- V. Mobile Field Force (MFF): A platoon of police officers and sergeants led by a commander. It consists of three to five squads and may be supplemented by the SWAT team.
- W. Passive resistance: A suspect's nonviolent opposition to an officer's commands that does not involve physical resistance or verbal hostility.
- X. Public Order Event: A lawful assembly of a large number of people. Generally, persons primarily organize to exercise their First Amendment right to express political or social views and influence public opinion; however, these events may include assembling people to participate in a social, sporting, or community event. Events can be planned or spontaneous and may include, but are not limited to, distributing literature, displaying banners, assembling, marching, picketing, participating in festivals or concerts, or other similar activities. Public order events can devolve into unlawful assemblies or riots.
- Y. Riot: Per the Ohio Revised Code Section 2917.03, four or more people engaged in disorderly conduct with the purpose of committing or facilitating a misdemeanor, intimidating a public official, hindering government functions, or interfering with an educational institution.
- Z. Unlawful Assembly: A gathering of persons who engage in trespass or intentionally cause, or with reckless disregard, create a risk of causing, public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm by engaging in one or more of the following activities, which may include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Fighting or violent, tumultuous, or imminently threatening behavior;
 - 2. Making unreasonable noise;
 - 3. Disturbing any lawful assembly of persons without lawful authority;
 - 4. Obstructing vehicular or pedestrian traffic on a public way;
 - 5. Initiating or circulating a report, knowing it to be false, concerning an alleged or impending fire, explosion, crime, catastrophe, or other emergency;
 - 6. Damaging property; or

7. Creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act that the person is not licensed or privileged to do.

AA. Unified Command: In ICS, unified command is described as a unified team effort that allows all agencies responsible for an incident, geographical or functional, to manage it by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies. It maintains agency authority, responsibility, and accountability. In most instances, unified command will require co-locating commanders in one command post.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Core Principles

1. Protecting rights and freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution is a fundamental principle for law enforcement. This policy aims to ensure that all policing activities are conducted fairly, impartially, and effectively, while fully respecting the civil liberties of all individuals.
2. Law enforcement practices must be free from bias and discrimination. Officers shall treat all individuals equally, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, familial status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, military status, or socioeconomic status.
3. Officers shall respect the First Amendment rights of all persons, including the freedom to peacefully assemble, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and the freedom to redress government grievances.
4. Officers must evaluate the need to take enforcement action, balancing the benefits, risks, and consequences of action or inaction.
5. Any force used to effect an arrest, prevent escape, overcome resistance, defend an officer or another person, or disperse a riotous crowd shall be objectively reasonable based on the totality of circumstances.
6. Officers shall not target or harass anyone based on their political activity or participation in First Amendment-protected activity.

B. Management and Organization Principles

1. The government can impose specific time, place, and manner restrictions on free speech and assembly, but these restrictions must be narrowly tailored to serve a legitimate governmental interest. They shall not be based on the content of the speech, and whenever possible, an alternative means of expression should be offered. This agency will take steps to maintain public safety and order and, to the degree possible, facilitate uninhibited speech, commerce, and freedom of movement.

2. The Incident Command System (ICS) may be used during public order events to ensure control and unified command.
3. When ICS is implemented, the following roles may be assigned. Organization of responsibilities should be as follows:
 - a. The chief or a deputy chief shall designate an Incident Commander (IC) responsible for overall control of a public order event.
 - b. The IC may designate an Operations Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Planning Section Chief.
 - c. The Planning Section Chief creates the Incident Action Plan (IAP).
 - d. The Logistics Section Chief is responsible for providing all the support needs for an incident, including facilities, transportation, supplies, equipment, communications, food, and medical services for incident personnel.
 - e. The Operations Section Chief is responsible for managing all tactical operations during an incident to achieve the incident objectives, overseeing the implementation of the IAP, and reporting to the Incident Commander.
4. The IC will establish and maintain communication with the relevant stakeholders. The IC will communicate the commander's intent or desired end state to all assigned personnel via the chain of command. The primary objectives of the IC at a public order event are as follows:
 - a. Ensure the protection of constitutional rights.
 - b. Prioritize the protection of life safety and property.
 - c. Establish and maintain communication with crowd members to facilitate lawful protest activity.
 - d. Determine the mission objectives and consider what crowd tactics are objectively reasonable under the totality of the circumstances.
 - e. Establish rules of engagement and thresholds for using force and crowd dispersal.
 - f. Authorize the deployment of authorized less-lethal weapons when objectively reasonable.
 - g. Approve the use of authorized protective gear.
 - h. Ensure announcements communicated to the crowd are clear, consistent (non-conflicting), lawful, and appropriate for the circumstances. Document the content and timing of the announcement and, if feasible, audio record it.
 - i. Request additional resources to manage the event based on the available intel.
 - j. Arrest law violators, including those responsible for property damage, and remove or isolate individuals who incite violent behavior.
 - k. Disperse disorderly or threatening crowds to eliminate the immediate risks of continued escalation and further violence.
 - l. Determine the need for an After-Action Review (AAR) of the event that assesses the agency's response and squad actions in relation to the

IAP objectives and IC direction and considers lessons learned (e.g., effective vs. ineffective action). The AAR should inform future IC decision-making.

5. The primary objectives of Squad Leaders and/or field supervisors are as follows:
 - a. Verify that all assigned squad members have the proper equipment.
 - b. Ensure that squad members are briefed before the start of the event.
 - c. Communicate orders from the IC or the Operations Section Chief to their squad.
 - d. Only issue direction that conforms with the IAP and event objectives, and ensure that squad members act in accordance with the IAP.
 - e. By the end of the shift or, within a reasonable time period after the event, account for the type and number of munitions deployed.
 - f. If members need additional munitions during an event, the department is responsible for tracking their issuance.
 - g. At the end of the shift, notify the IC of any use of force and report on munition deployment (types and number) and any injuries to APD Officers or event participants (when known).
 - h. Officers shall be briefed on what to expect and appropriate responses. They shall be informed that the IC or their designee(s) will be responsible for ordering any appropriate response related to the large-scale operation.
 - i. Investigate uses of force in accordance with the Resisting Arrest/Use of Force Procedure.

C. Preparation and Planning

1. Planned events are those that the department is aware of in advance, either through the submission of a permit request or other means that allow for the advance planning of resources and response procedures. When large-scale, planned, or permitted events are anticipated, APD will use the following procedures:

Command staff shall be notified immediately of large or potentially disruptive public order events. APD shall proactively and repeatedly make reasonable attempts to establish and maintain communication and cooperation with the representatives or leaders of the public order event, regardless of whether a permit has been applied for or issued. APD shall not take retaliatory or adverse actions against a group because it has failed or refused to appoint a police liaison or establish lines of communication with APD.

Reasonable efforts should be made to gather the following necessary information about the event to ensure accurate assignment of personnel and resources:

- a. What type of event is involved, and when is it planned?

- b. Will the event coincide with other routine, large-scale events?
- c. How many participants are expected?
- d. Is opposition to the event expected?
- e. What are the assembly areas and movement routes?
- f. What actions, activities, or tactics are anticipated?
- g. What critical infrastructure is in the proximity of the event?
- h. Have other agencies, such as fire and EMS, been notified?
- i. Is there a need to request mutual aid?
- j. Has the appropriate level of properly equipped personnel been allocated?
- k. Will off-duty personnel be required?
- l. What is the history of conduct at such events?
- m. Are event organizers cooperative?
- n. Is there a history of violence between the group demonstrating and potential counter-protest groups?

2. Community Dialogue Team

Dialogue policing is a law enforcement method that focuses on communication and engagement with the public to manage social conflicts and maintain order effectively. It emphasizes building trust between police and community members by creating open communication channels, fostering collaboration, and promoting understanding. This approach aims to reduce tension, prevent conflict escalation, encourage group self-policing, and ultimately improve the relationship between law enforcement and the public. APD will use dialogue policing as a tactic and continue communication efforts throughout public order events.

3. Incident Command

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines an incident commander as an individual having the authority to establish objectives, make assignments, and order resources. The incident commander should have the training, experience, and expertise to serve in this capacity. Additionally, per NIMS, qualifications to serve as an incident commander should not be based solely on rank, grade, or technical knowledge.

The incident commander may designate a Planning Section Chief to prepare a written IAP subject to the approval of the chief of police or their designee. The plan should address the following and be distributed to all participating agencies.

- a. Command assignments and responsibilities
- b. Personnel, unit structure, and deployment considerations to include the need for special response teams (i.e., Mobile Field Force, SWAT, emergency medical personnel, and plainclothes officers)
- c. Regular communication with legal advisors

- d. Liaison with event planners, to include their legal advisors, where applicable
- e. Liaison with outside agencies
- f. A communications plan, including the release of information to the media.
- g. Pre-event intelligence analysis
- h. Weather and terrain at the event location
- i. Transportation, support, and relief of personnel
- j. Staging points for additional resources and equipment
- k. Traffic management, including perimeter security
- l. Coordination with emergency medical service providers
- m. Demonstrator devices, extrication teams, and equipment
- n. Transportation of prisoners
- o. Arrestee processing areas
- p. Any laws, ordinances, or administrative rules specific to the event.

4. Mutual Aid

The size, duration, and magnitude of an event/incident requiring law enforcement response will dictate the need for multi-agency coordination and cooperation to provide adequate mutual aid resources efficiently. Critical elements of applying mutual aid to an event should include pre-event planning (if possible), well-defined missions and objectives, specific uniform and equipment requirements, identified staging areas and incident facilities, adequate briefings, an incident action plan, use of force considerations, communication plan, arrest protocols, and logistical support.

The purpose of police mutual aid is to provide assistance and support to law enforcement agencies during emergencies, large-scale events, or situations that may overwhelm the resources of a single agency. It is a collaborative effort among different police departments or agencies to pool their resources, expertise, and personnel to respond to and manage critical incidents effectively. When a police agency faces an emergency that depletes its resources, the agency can request assistance from allied agencies in the region. In some instances, law enforcement agencies from other States may send resources. Akron PD has existing agreements with mutual aid agencies.

The requesting agency will inform responding agencies of any operational restrictions, the commander's intent, and rules of engagement. It will also establish an incident command post and provide responding agencies with the IAP and briefing. Responding agencies will assign a commander to the incident command post to establish a unified command. Responding agencies will follow their own training and policy.

APD shall not:

Use a proxy law enforcement agency to use crowd management or control measures that are prohibited by APD policy or that a court or statute has

barred the law enforcement agency from using or acting in concert with another law enforcement agency to engage in misconduct barred by court order, statute, or APD policy.

D. General Crowd Response

1. Crowd Behavior

Be aware of the various types of behaviors associated with crowds that may result in a public safety response. Crowds, at times, can be a blend of both lawful and unlawful conduct. Conduct can be lawful, individual, and or group criminal acts, civil disobedience, and rioting. During some events, individuals or groups may exploit a lawful assembly to help conceal or otherwise facilitate criminal acts. If feasible, law enforcement should identify, isolate, and attempt to address unlawful behavior while allowing the lawful assembly to continue.

2. This policy does not preclude individual commanders, supervisors, and officers from defending themselves or others from imminent danger within the confines of the law when requesting permission to take action would increase the risk of injury.
3. Officers who have been briefed and deployed to the field can take enforcement action when there is reasonable suspicion to make a detention or probable cause to make an arrest. Officers can engage in proactive policing that is consistent with the commander's intent and overall mission objectives.

4. Officer identification

Officers shall not intentionally obscure their identifying information and will ensure it is clearly visible. If practical, safe, and tactically feasible, members shall provide their name and identification number or, if applicable, their assigned unique identifier to members of the public upon request.

5. Officers should refrain from reacting in response to comments from demonstrators and maintain a professional and neutral demeanor.
6. Persons who reside, are employed, or have emergency business within the area marked off by a police line should not be prevented from entering unless circumstances suggest that their safety would be in jeopardy or their entry would interfere with law enforcement operations.
7. Individuals designated by the IC should attempt to establish and maintain communication with event organizers and relay information to the IC.
8. Supervisors should maintain close contact with their assigned officers to ensure compliance with orders, monitor behavior and disposition, and stay informed of any changes in crowd behavior or intent.

9. Audio and video recordings of agency crowd response should be considered for evidentiary purposes.
10. Mass arrests shall be avoided unless other reasonable options to restore order have been unsuccessful, or the threat to public safety is immediate and other reasonable options are unlikely to restore order.
11. When attempting to disperse a crowd, officers shall ensure that all individuals have a means of egress.

E. Response to Spontaneous Civil Disturbances

1. Unplanned events are events that the Department has no prior knowledge of. Such events may consist of spontaneous gatherings and large-scale demonstrations. Unplanned events are often peaceful and pose little problem for law enforcement. However, peaceful gatherings can turn violent, requiring contingency plans to be in place for members to respond as necessary to safeguard life and property.
2. The first officer to arrive on the scene of a spontaneous civil disturbance should:
 - a. Observe the situation from a safe distance to determine if the gathering is currently or potentially violent.
 - b. Notify communications of the nature and seriousness of the disturbance, including the availability of improvised or deadly weapons, the location and estimated number of participants, current activities (e.g., blocking traffic), the presence of protestor devices, the direction of movement, and ingress and egress routes for emergency vehicles.
 - c. Request a supervisor and necessary assistance.
 - d. Attempt to identify crowd leaders and if there are agitators engaged in criminal acts.
3. The first officer or supervisor in charge at the scene should:
 - a. Deploy officers at vantage points to report on crowd actions.
 - b. Establish a perimeter sufficient to contain the disturbance and prohibit entrance into the affected area.
 - c. Ensure that, to the degree possible, uninvolved individuals are evacuated from the immediate area of the disturbance.
 - d. Establish a temporary command post.
 - e. Provide ongoing assessment to communications.
 - f. When feasible, move and reroute pedestrian and vehicular traffic around the disorder.
 - g. Control unauthorized ingress and egress by participants.

4. Once an IC is assigned, the IC should also ensure that:
 - a. Adequate security is provided to fire and EMS personnel in performing emergency tasks.
 - b. Support and relief for personnel are available.
 - c. A secure staging area for emergency responders and equipment is designated.
 - d. Liaison and staging points for media representatives are established, and available information is provided by the Police Information Officer (PIO) as appropriate.
 - e. The IC event log ICS (214) and dispatch call log are maintained to document the activities and actions taken during the incident.
 - f. Photographic or video evidence is preserved of crowd actions and officer response.
 - g. Photographs or videos are taken of any injuries sustained by law enforcement officers or the public.
 - h. The need for full mobilization of sworn officers and the recall of off-duty officers is determined.

F. Use of Force

1. Officers shall follow the Resisting Arrest and Use of Force Procedure P-13.
2. Whenever it is safe and feasible, officers shall implement de-escalation strategies and tactics in all crowd management scenarios. De-escalation may also involve using additional time, distance, and resources, as well as persuasion, command presence, repositioning, and warnings, to reduce the intensity of a potentially violent situation and decrease the need to use force.
3. Officers should not use expired less-lethal munitions.
4. During public order events, the following restrictions and limitations on the use of force should be observed: Lethal and non-lethal weapons should be carried and deployed only by trained and authorized officers.
 - a. Water shall not be used as a force option.
 - b. Motor vehicles may be used to contain, control, and direct persons as appropriate. Still, they shall not be intentionally brought into contact with any person unless the use of deadly force is authorized.
 - c. Bicycles may be used to control and move people as appropriate.
 - d. Impact projectiles shall not be fired indiscriminately into crowds.
 - e. Direct-fired less lethal impact munitions (LLIM) may be used against a specific individual;
 - (1) When an individual poses an immediate threat of harm to any person; or
 - (2) When public safety interests dictate that an individual needs to be taken into custody, and the level of resistance presented by the subject is likely to cause injury to the officer; or

- (3) if hands-on control tactics or other force options would be likely to cause greater injury to the subject than the use of Less Lethal Impact Munition (LLIM).
- (4) When an individual is engaging in the destruction of property, which creates an immediate risk to the lives or safety of other persons.
- f. Officers shall avoid targeting the head, neck, chest, groin, or spine with LLIM unless deadly force is authorized.
 - g. APD will inventory all munitions deployed or used at an event.
 - h. A verbal warning should be given before using impact projectiles when reasonably possible.
 - i. Officers are responsible for every LLIM they launch and should be aware of the foreground and background of the targeted individual.
 - j. Conducted Energy Weapons (CEWs) should be used during civil disturbances in accordance with Conducted Energy Weapon Procedure P-57.
 - k. Aerosol restraint spray, known as oleoresin capsicum (OC), may be used against specific individuals engaged in unlawful conduct, or actively resisting arrest, or to defend an officer or another person. However, OC spray shall not be used indiscriminately to disperse a crowd, against groups of people where bystanders would be unreasonably affected, or against passively resistant individuals engaged in civil disobedience. Whenever reasonably possible, a verbal warning should be issued before using OC.
 - l. CS (2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile) shall be used with the utmost caution. CS may be deployed when there is an imminent threat of physical harm to a person or destruction of property (broken windows, looting, arson) when lesser force options are either not available or would likely be ineffective. Such munitions shall be deployed at the direction of the IC and only when avenues of egress are available to the crowd. The goal of using CS gas is to prevent serious harm, disperse a riotous crowd, and restore and/or maintain public order. If the IC determines that a crowd no longer poses a risk of serious harm, the IC will re-evaluate tactics and strategies and will adjust the response as time and circumstances permit. When reasonably possible, officers shall warn crowd members in advance using an acoustic hailing device.
 - m. A baton or similar device can be used to stop, control, or neutralize resistance, to show force, or to contain or disperse a crowd.
 - n. All uses of force shall be reported and investigated per the use of force policy.

G. Crowd Dispersal

- 1. Before ordering forced dispersal of a civil disturbance, the IC should determine whether lesser alternatives may be effective. These alternatives include the use of targeted arrests and dialogue, as follows:

- a. Contact event organizers or crowd leaders to assess their intentions and motivations and attempt to develop a mutually acceptable plan for de-escalation and dispersal.
 - b. Inform the participants that their assembly violates the law and that the agency wishes to resolve the incident peacefully, but acts of violence will be dealt with swiftly and decisively.
 - c. Target specific violent or disruptive individuals for arrest.
2. Prior to issuing dispersal orders, the IC should ensure that law enforcement, fire, and EMS equipment and personnel are on hand to carry out tactical operations successfully, and logistical needs for making mass arrests are in place.
3. When the IC has determined that crowd dispersal is required, they shall declare an unlawful assembly and direct the mobile field force commander, where time and circumstances permit, to issue warnings before taking action to disperse the crowd.
 - a. The warning shall include an announcement declaring an unlawful assembly, an order to disperse, a force warning detailing what kind of force may be used if crowd members fail to disperse, and designated dispersal routes.
 - b. A second and third warning should be issued at reasonable time intervals before other actions are taken to disperse the crowd, if feasible.
 - c. Where possible, the warnings should be audio or video recorded, and the time and the names of the issuing officers should be recorded in the event log.
4. After crowd members have been given a reasonable time to disperse, specific crowd dispersal tactics should be ordered as necessary. These include, but are not limited to, any one or combination of the following:
 - a. Display of forceful presence to include police lines combined with law enforcement vehicles, mounted units, bicycle units, and mobile field force.
 - b. Use of crowd-control chemical agents or less-lethal munitions.
 - c. Law enforcement formations to initiate crowd movement and arrests.
5. Unlawful Assembly Dispersal Order

Dispersal Order Example: "I am (rank and name) of the Akron Police Department. I hereby declare this to be an unlawful assembly and, in the name of the State of Ohio, command all persons so assembled at (specific location) to immediately and peaceably disperse (give direction of travel and clear egress routes). If you do not do so, you will be arrested."

BELOW INSERT REQUIRED WHEN LLIM AND/OR CHEMICAL AGENTS TO BE DEPLOYED TO DISPERSE A RIOTOUS CROWD AND RESTORE ORDER.

You may also be subject to other police action, including the use of less-lethal impact munitions and chemical agents, which include: _____

(Insert here the type to be used, e.g., plastic bullets, beanbag rounds, foam-tipped plastic rounds, tear gas, CS, pepper balls, pepper spray, or OC).

The use of these devices could result in serious injury. The following routes of dispersal are available (routes). "You have (state the current time and the reasonable amount of time to disperse, e.g., it is now 9:30 pm, and you have ___ minutes to leave the area) to disperse."

After each subsequent dispersal order, the time to disperse will be reduced and communicated to the crowd.

If exigent circumstances exist, officers may take actions to disperse the crowd prior to issuing multiple dispersal orders.

6. Mass Arrest- During a civil disturbance, it may be necessary to arrest numerous individuals in a relatively short period of time. The Mass Arrest Procedure P-08 must be followed to ensure that this process is handled efficiently, safely, and legally.
7. Legal observers and media members have a constitutional right to observe, document, and report on public order events; however, they may not interfere with police action or impede a lawful objective.
8. Officers shall consider anyone identifying themselves as a media member, journalist, broadcaster, or legal observer, or displaying any indicia of those as mentioned above, to be an authorized legal observer or member of the media.
9. Officers shall not detain or arrest legal observers or members of the media solely for their role in observing, capturing, and/or reporting on events.
10. Officers shall not arrest members of the media or legal observers for curfew violations or failure to disperse unless they are physically obstructing lawful efforts to disperse the crowd or arrest a person engaged in criminal activity. Officers can arrest media or legal observers when there is probable cause of other criminal violations.

H. Deactivation

When the disturbance has been brought under control, all personnel involved in the incident shall be accounted for, and injuries shall be assessed and documented.

1. Witnesses, suspects, and others should be interviewed or questioned.
 2. All necessary personnel should be debriefed as required.
 3. Any equipment utilized by officers should be replaced.
 4. All body worn camera equipment should be charged and data uploaded.
 5. All written reports shall be completed as soon as possible after the incident.
 6. The IC should determine whether an AAR is needed. When required, an AAR detailing the incident response, training needs, equipment needs, personnel needs, uses of force, munitions used, arrests made, related expenses, personnel deployed, and policy recommendations shall be completed and forwarded up the chain of command to the Chief of Police.
- I. Training- Officers should receive initial and ongoing training on appropriate responses to crowd control and management.
- J. APD Officers will follow their current Body-worn camera policy P-2023-031 (Mobile Recording Device Procedure) when deployed to public order events.

By Order Of,



Brian Harding, Chief of Police

Date

2.23.26