

# La Plata Police Department-General Orders

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1. **PURPOSE:** To provide Departmental guidelines to officers in the use and carry of less-lethal weapons, as well as when medical attention is needed after the use of such weapons.
  
2. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the La Plata Police Department to regulate the types of authorized less-lethal weapons officers are issued and permitted to carry and use, both on and off duty. It is imperative that the Department's officers are properly trained and qualified in the use of all authorized weapons, and that proper inspections and maintenance are conducted to ensure that they meet minimum safety requirements.
  
3. **LESS-LETHAL PHILOSOPHY:** A concept of planning and applying force which meets operational objectives while lessening the potential for death or serious injury.
  
4. **AUTHORIZED LESS-LETHAL WEAPONS:** The Department provides the following less-lethal weapons to officers to ensure that they have options available to them.
  - a. Less-Lethal Shotguns (Future)
  - b. ASP Baton/Straight Stick
  - c. Riot Baton (Future)
  - d. OC Chemical Agent/Pepper Spray
  - e. Pepper Spray Fogger (Future)
  - f. Taser
  
5. **LESS-LETHAL SHOTGUNS: (FUTURE)** Shotguns issued by the Department for the sole purpose of discharging less-lethal projectiles. All less-lethal shotguns will be distinctively marked with a bright orange stock and fore end.
  - a. Training and Inspections:
    - i. Only those officers who are qualified and authorized by the Department can carry and use a less-lethal shotgun during the course of his/her duties.

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- ii. Prior to being authorized to carry the less-lethal shotgun, an officer must successfully complete less-lethal shotgun course with a minimum score of 90%.
  - iii. Officers assigned to carry and use the less-lethal shotgun must maintain their certification by successfully completing the re-certification course annually.
  - iv. Officers who fail to re-qualify with the less-lethal shotgun will be subject to remedial training before being allowed to carry the weapon.
  - v. Supervisors will conduct inspections of the less-lethal shotgun assigned to their Squad/Unit.
- b. Ammunition:
- i. Less-Lethal Projectiles which are intended to incapacitate a subject and have less potential for causing death or serious injury than conventional projectiles. Twelve-gauge flexible baton rounds shall be carried in Less-Lethal Shotguns.
  - ii. With the exception of initial training and annual qualification, only the less-lethal rounds issued by the Department will be loaded into the less-lethal shotgun.
- c. Assignment of Less-Lethal Shotguns:
- i. Each Patrol Squad will be assigned a less-lethal shotgun.
  - ii. The Squad Supervisor shall ensure, when able, that more than one officer on his/her shift is approved to carry the less-lethal shotgun.
  - iii. Squad Supervisors shall assign properly trained officers to carry less-lethal shotgun during the tour of duty.
- d. Pre-Deployment:
- i. Lethal cover will always be present to protect the less-lethal shotgun operator.
  - ii. All officers should remain cognizant of the “21 foot safety circle,” where a subject’s action is faster than an officer’s reaction.
  - iii. Prior to each tour of duty, officers who are assigned and authorized to carry less-lethal shotguns shall inspect the ammunition to ensure only less-lethal ammunition is in the weapon.
- e. Deployment, Acceptable Uses and Restrictions of Less-Lethal Shotgun:
- i. The deployment and/or discharge of the less-lethal shotgun will be consistent with the training provided.

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- ii. The less-lethal shotgun may be deployed in circumstances including, but not limited to the following:
  - 1. Suicidal subject (where a weapon is displayed).
  - 2. Subject armed with a knife or impact weapon.
  - 3. Subject violently resisting arrest.
  - 4. Hostage or barricade situations.
- iii. The less-lethal shotgun should not be deployed as follows:
  - 1. When lesser force will accomplish the task.
  - 2. Against a subject with a handgun or other firearm.
  - 3. Against a person already in handcuffs.
- iv. Target Areas: The less-lethal shotgun operator will aim the weapon at the suspect's body area as is consistent with training. The Less-Lethal Shotgun will never be aimed at a subject's head unless lethal force is justified.
- v. Weapon Discharge: Prior to discharging a less-lethal shotgun, the operator will announce his/her intent to discharge the weapon to warn other officers with the warning "**Bean Bag.**" Once the operator has stopped firing the weapon, the operator will announce that he/she has ceased firing.
- f. Medical Attention and Documentation:
  - i. Anytime an individual is struck with a less-lethal round, he/she will be transported to a medical facility for a physical examination of the impact site.
  - ii. The Shift Supervisor or his/her designee shall respond to the scene or the hospital to photograph the individual and the impact site.
- g. Post Deployment:
  - i. The spent less-lethal round(s) shall be collected and submitted into evidence.
  - ii. The Operations Commander will issue replacement less-lethal rounds.
  - iii. Following deployment, the less-lethal shotgun will be returned to the car in a car safe position and returned to its case.

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- iv. Following the discharge of a less-lethal round(s), the deploying officer shall ensure that the less-lethal shotgun is field stripped and cleaned as soon as practical.
- v. During annual firearm re-qualifications, the Department's Range Master will conduct inspections of each less-lethal shotgun to ensure proper cleaning and maintenance.
- h. Reporting: Whenever an officer deploys a less-lethal round in the course of his/her duties, the deployment shall be documented on the Incident Report and Subject Management Report. A copy of the Subject Management Report and photographs will be forwarded via the chain of command, with supervisory endorsement to the Office of the Chief of Police for review. A copy of the Subject Management Report will also be forwarded, by the office of the Chief of Police to the Operations Commander once review is completed.
  - i. Storage and Transportation:
    1. When not in use, the less-lethal shotgun will be carried and transported in the carrying case at all times.
    2. The less-lethal shotgun shall remain loaded in a car safe position at all times, while the officer is on duty.
    3. Each officer will be issued five (5) additional less-lethal rounds to be carried in the stock carrier in addition to the five (5) rounds loaded into the less-lethal weapons car safe position.
    4. The less-lethal shotgun will be stored and transported in the storage compartment of the officers' vehicles while on duty.
    5. The less-lethal shotgun will be stored in the squad/unit storage area/locker at the end of each tour of duty.

### 6. ASP BATON/STRAIGHT STICK/FLASHLIGHT:

- a. Training and Inspection:
  - i. The ASP Baton/Straight Stick shall be used only after demonstrating proficiency with it and in accordance with the training provided to the officer.
  - ii. Officers will train with the ASP Baton/Straight Stick bi-annually and will demonstrate their proficiency with the weapon. During this training, the certified instructor will inspect each baton for defects which would render the baton unsafe to use.

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- iii. Any officer who cannot successfully demonstrate the proper techniques and use will be subject to immediate remedial training before being allowed to carry the weapon.
- b. Acceptable Use and Restrictions:
  - i. The ASP Baton/Straight Stick may be deployed in circumstances including, but not limited to the following:
    - 1. Subject who is violently resisting arrest.
    - 2. Subject who is actively fighting or injuring another individual.
    - 3. When lesser force would not complete an arrest or stop an active assault.
    - 4. If at all possible, striking the subject's head, sternum, groin and neck areas shall be avoided. Intentionally striking such area is only authorized if the officer is justified in using deadly force.
  - ii. The ASP Baton/Straight Stick normally would not be deployed under the following circumstances:
    - 1. Against a handgun or other firearm.
    - 2. Against a knife.
    - 3. Against a person already handcuffed.
  - iii. The ASP Baton/Straight Stick will not be used when lesser force will accomplish the task.
- c. Availability of ASP Baton/Straight Stick: All officers who have demonstrated proficiency shall keep the ASP Baton/Straight Stick readily available. All patrol officers in the field shall carry at least two less-lethal weapons on their person at all times (Taser, ASP/Straight stick baton and/or pepper spray).
- d. Reporting: Whenever an officer strikes a subject with the ASP Baton/Straight Stick in the course of his/her duties, the deployment shall be documented on the Incident Report and Subject Management Report. A copy of the Subject Management Report and photographs will be forwarded via chain of command, with supervisory endorsement to the Office of the Chief of Police for review. A copy will also be forwarded, by the office of the Chief of Police, to the Operations Commander once review is completed.
- e. Medical Attention and Documentation:

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- i. After a subject has been struck with an ASP Baton/Straight Stick, the subject will be transported to a medical facility for medical attention if:
    1. The individual has obvious signs of injury that requires medical attention.
    2. The individual complains of shortness of breath or chest pains.
    3. The individual requests medical attention.
    4. Anytime an individual is struck in the head, sternum, groin, or neck.
  - ii. The Shift Supervisor or his/her designee shall photograph the subject and the site of the ASP Baton/Straight Stick strike.
- f. Use of a Flashlight: In no event should a flashlight be carried in lieu of the ASP Baton/Straight Stick. It is not as versatile as the ASP Baton/Straight Stick and, in fact, may cause severe injury. It is recognized, however, that some situations may escalate very quickly and an officer may need to use force under circumstances where the ASP Baton/Straight Stick is not readily available. Use of the flashlight as a weapon under such circumstances may be necessary and should be consistent with the training received with the ASP Baton/Straight Stick. Medical Attention, Documentation and Reporting will be the same as the ASP Baton/Straight Stick.
7. **RIOT BATON:** Only officers who are assigned to the Charles County Special Emergency Response Team will be issued a riot baton.
- a. The use of the riot baton is restricted to large crowd control situations and civil disobedience gatherings. The riot baton will only be utilized at the direction of a supervisor. The riot baton is best used in riot formation operations where officers are deployed in unison.
  - b. This riot baton shall only be used by an officer after demonstrating proficiency in its use and in accordance with the training provided.
  - c. Riot Baton Reporting, Medical Attention and Documentation shall be the same as the ASP Baton/Straight Stick.
  - d. Officers shall store the riot baton in the storage area of his/her cruiser with his/her riot helmet, helmet shield and gas mask.
8. **OC CHEMICAL AGENT (PEPPER SPRAY):** Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) is an inflammatory agent that occurs naturally in cayenne pepper and, when deployed into the face of a violent, resistant or uncooperative subject, results in the swelling of the eyes and airway, yet should cause no permanent injury to the individual.

**NOTE:** A small portion of the population will not have a reaction to Pepper Spray.

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## a. Training and Inspection:

- i. Only those officers who are qualified, demonstrated proficiency, and are authorized by the Department can carry and use Pepper Spray during the course of his/her duties.
- ii. Officers assigned to carry and use Pepper Spray must maintain their certification by successfully completing the re-certification course bi-annually.
- iii. Officers who fail to re-qualify with the Pepper Spray will be subject to immediate remedial training before being allowed to carry Pepper Spray.
- iv. Supervisors will inspect their subordinates' Pepper Spray on a quarterly basis to ensure there are no defects or leaks and to check the expiration date. Any canisters deemed defective will be given to the Operations Commander for disposal and the officer will be issued a new canister.

## b. Acceptable Use and Restrictions:

- i. Pepper Spray may be deployed, but not limited to the following circumstances:
  1. When necessary to defend the officer or others.
  2. To prevent the commission of a crime.
  3. When lower levels of force would be ineffective or inappropriate, and an arrest of the subject is the officer's objective.
- ii. Pepper Spray normally would not be deployed under the following circumstances:
  1. Against a handgun or other firearm.
  2. Against a knife.
- iii. Pepper Spray shall not be deployed under the following circumstances:
  1. When lesser force will accomplish the task.
  2. In an emergency room, nursing home, or other places where people may be having breathing difficulty.
  3. When deployment could create a mass stampede evacuation.

## c. Availability and Deployment of Pepper Spray:

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- i. Pepper Spray is considered a low-level control and restraint technique that can be utilized whenever an officer is confronted with active aggression.
  - ii. All patrol officers who have demonstrated proficiency may carry Pepper Spray on their duty belts. All officers in the field shall carry at least two less-lethal weapons on their person at all times (Taser, ASP/Straight stick baton and/or pepper spray).
  - iii. When the agent is deployed, officers must exercise caution not to contaminate themselves or others.
- d. Special Attention Subjects: These persons shall be closely monitored after being sprayed:
- i. Elderly persons.
  - ii. Subject substantially impaired by alcohol or drugs.
  - iii. Very obese person with known medical conditions, such as diabetes or heart trouble.
  - iv. Known persons with chronic respiratory problems, such as asthma.
- e. Decontamination and Medical Attention:
- i. Officers deploying Pepper Spray will make every effort to relieve the subject's discomfort after exposure. Officers will provide contaminated subjects with fresh air and water. When practical, the officer will allow the subject a short decontamination period prior to transport.
  - ii. If normal breathing does not resume after the first five (5) minutes, emergency medical assistance shall immediately be requested. Officers shall immediately request medical assistance when an exposed person:
    1. Hyperventilates
    2. Loses consciousness
    3. Stops breathing
    4. Suddenly becomes incoherent

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5. Turns pale
    - iii. Officers shall notify ambulance personnel that the person was exposed to a chemical agent.
    - iv. Officers transporting individuals or causing an individual to be transported to a medical facility shall have Communications notify the medical facility to provide advanced notice of a contaminated individual coming to their facility for treatment and decontamination.
  - f. Handcuffing: Officers shall use caution when attempting to handcuff a sprayed individual. After handcuffing the individual, officers should avoid placing him/her on his/her back or stomach. To do so may prevent normal breathing and cause positional asphyxia. When possible, the individual should be placed on their side (recovery position) or in a sitting position. This condition can lead to death. (CALEA 70.1.2)
  - g. Post Deployment and Documentation:
    - i. If the officer exhausts his/her supply of Pepper Spray, the officer shall report, as soon as practical, to the Operations Commander for a new canister.
    - ii. The Shift Supervisor or his/her designee shall photograph the individual and the site of the Pepper Spray exposure.
  - h. Reporting:
    - i. Whenever an officer deploys Pepper Spray in the course of his/her duties, the deployment shall be documented on the Incident Report and Subject Management Report. A copy of the Subject Management Report along with photographs will be forwarded via chain of command, with supervisory endorsement to the Office of the Chief of Police for review. A copy will also be forwarded, by the office of the Chief of Police to the Operations Commander once review is completed.
  - i. Storage:
    1. Pepper Spray/Pepper Spray Fogger shall not be stored in direct sunlight nor in places where the temperature may reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit, such as in the trunk of a car.
    2. Officers, in their homes, shall store departmentally issued Pepper Spray out of the reach of children.
- 9. PEPPERBALL PROJECTILE LAUNCHER:** The Pepperball Projectile Launcher is designed to deliver a stabilized projectile by the means of compressed air to a maximum distance of 50 yards. A projectile striking an individual will first deliver kinetic energy in an

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attempt to modify or control threatening behavior. The same projectile will also contain PAVA Powder as a secondary effect to the kinetic energy strike.

- a. The Pepperball Launcher is categorized as less-lethal force and may be used to control a dangerous or violent subject from a distance. The Pepperball Launcher may be deployed when:
  - i. Lethal force does not appear to be justified; attempts to control the subject by other conventional tactics have been ineffective;
  - ii. There is reasonable expectation it is unsafe for the officer to approach within contact range of the subject.
- b. Operational Guidelines:
  - i. When feasible, a loud verbal warning will be given prior to deploying the weapon. The warning will fulfill two (2) purposes:
    1. Provide aggressive individual a final warning their actions are dictating the use of the device; and,
    2. Notification to officers and bystanders at the scene the device is about to be deployed.
  - ii. The preferred target area when deploying the Pepperball Launcher due to the actions of one individual should be center of the body. The head, neck, spine, face, groin or other sensitive areas are to be avoided, if possible.
  - iii. The preferred target area when deploying the Pepperball Launcher for crowd control should be the ground or other object that would cause the PAVA Powder cloud to affect a larger number of individuals.
  - iv. The deploying officer will be responsible to direct the actions of any other on-scene personnel concerning the restraint of the subject. Assisting personnel should allow a few moments, if practical, for the chemical agent to take effect prior to making any arrest.
- c. Special Attention Subjects: These persons shall be closely monitored after being subjected to a Pepperball Launcher projectile:
  - i. Elderly persons.
  - ii. Subject substantially impaired by alcohol or drugs.
  - iii. Very obese person with known medical conditions, such as diabetes or heart trouble.

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- iv. Known persons with chronic respiratory problems, such as asthma.
- d. Decontamination and Medical Attention:
- i. Officers deploying Pepperball Launcher projectile(s) will make every effort to relieve the individual's discomfort after exposure. Officers will provide contaminated individual with fresh air and water. When practical, the officer will allow the individual a short decontamination period prior to transport.
  - ii. If normal breathing does not resume after the first five (5) minutes, emergency medical assistance shall immediately be requested. Officers shall immediately request medical assistance when an exposed person:
    - 1. Hyperventilates
    - 2. Loses consciousness
    - 3. Stops breathing
    - 4. Suddenly becomes incoherent
    - 5. Turns pale
  - iii. Officers shall notify ambulance personnel that the subject was exposed to a chemical agent.
  - iv. Officers transporting subjects or causing a subject to be transported to a medical facility shall have Communications notify the medical facility to provide advanced notice of a contaminated subject coming to their facility for treatment and decontamination.
  - v. Handcuffing: Officers shall use caution when attempting to handcuff a sprayed individual. After handcuffing the individual, officers shall not place him/her on his/her back or stomach. To do so may prevent normal breathing and cause positional asphyxia. When possible, the individual should be placed on their side (recovery position) or in a sitting position. This condition can lead to death. (CALEA 70.1.2)
- e. Authorized Users:
- i. Only officers who have received the required training, demonstrated proficiency and are certified with the Pepperball Launcher are authorized to carry and/or deploy the device. This training must be documented and monitored by a certified instructor.

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- ii. Recertification will occur and be documented annually by a certified instructor and those who cannot maintain the training requirements will not be authorized to use the weapon.
- f. Storage and Maintenance
- i. The Pepperball Launcher will be stored in its accompanying carry case except:
    - 1. When being deployed in the field or during training;
    - 2. During maintenance or cleaning;
    - 3. During inspection by a supervisor or other authorized person.
  - ii. Officers issued a Pepperball Launcher will be responsible for the maintenance of the equipment. The Pepperball Launcher will be inspected quarterly by the Range Master. The documented inspections will include:
    - 1. Ensuring air reservoir is charged;
    - 2. Ensuring sufficient supply of PAVA rounds are available;
    - 3. Dry firing the system;
    - 4. Ensuring proper overall condition of the weapon.
  - iii. Officers authorized to deploy the Pepperball Launcher will not disassemble or tamper with the internal mechanisms. Any repair for malfunction, damage or parts replacement will be completed by an authorized agency armorer.
- g. Post Deployment and Documentation:
- i. If the officer exhausts his/her supply of Pepperball projectiles, the officer shall report, as soon as practical, to the Operations Commander for a new supply.
  - ii. The Shift Supervisor or his/her designee shall photograph the subject and the site of the exposure.
- h. Reporting:
- i. Whenever an officer deploys Pepperball Launcher in the course of his/her duties, the deployment shall be documented on the Incident Report and Subject Management Report. A copy of the Subject Management Report along with photographs will be forwarded via chain of command, with supervisory endorsement to the Office of the Chief of Police for review. A copy will also be

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forwarded, by the Office of the Chief of Police to the Operations Commander once review is completed

- i. Specialized Equipment Inspections/Storage:
  - i. Pepperball Launchers require the use of compress air. The Department's SCUBA tank will be visually inspected annually by the Range Master. A hydrostatic inspection will take place every 5 years.
  - ii. The SCUBA tanks will be securely stored in the Department's armory.

## 10. FIRE EXTINGUISHER STYLE PEPPER SPRAY SYSTEMS: (FUTURE)

- a. Fire Extinguisher Style Pepper Spray Systems provides a method of delivering a large amount of Pepper Spray safely and quickly during, but not limited to the following situations:
  - i. Large fights;
  - ii. Civil disturbance;
  - iii. Riots; and,
  - iv. Crowd control situations.
- b. Assignment of Fire Extinguisher Style Pepper Spray Systems:
  - i. Each Patrol Squad will be assigned a Pepper Spray Fogger from the Operations Commander.
  - ii. The Squad Supervisor shall assign properly trained officers to carry the Pepper Spray Fogger during the tour of duty.
- c. Deployment, Decontamination and Medical Attention, Storage, Reporting and Documentation of the Pepper Spray Fogger will be consistent with the OC Chemical Agent/Pepper Spray section of this order.

**11. TASER:** Consistent with the Department's philosophy to use the minimum amount of reasonable force, the use of the Departmentally owned and issued Taser is approved for officers with proper training, appropriate equipment and situational considerations. The purpose of the Taser is to provide a less-lethal alternative use of force. The Taser is not intended to replace the use of firearms when deadly force is necessary.

The Taser may be used to control an active aggressor when attempts to control the subject by other tactics have been ineffective or there is reasonable expectation that it is unsafe for officers to approach within contact range of the subject. The Taser may be used to subdue

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individuals who pose an immediate risk to themselves, others or to safely effect an arrest. A Taser should not be used to compel compliance when a subject is exhibiting only passive resistance.

## a. Definitions:

- i. Taser: A conducted energy weapon using propelled wires to conduct energy that affects the sensory and motor functions of the central nervous system through electro-muscular disruption. It is a direct involuntary contraction of the muscles that disrupts neuro-motor control.
- ii. Dataport: Every time the Taser is fired, it stores the downloadable time and date of every discharge internally on a chip which is located at the back of the unit. This information cannot be erased or tampered with.
- iii. Drive Stun: Contact is made by pressing the front of the Taser with the cartridge removed or after the probes have been deployed into the body of a subject and activating the Taser. The drive stun causes localized pain in the area touched by the Taser. The drive stun does not incapacitate a subject but may assist in bringing a subject under control when warranted, e.g. when a subject is posing an immediate risk of danger to the officer or others. If a Taser is fired using the cartridge, at a distance of less than three feet, the effect will be similar to a drive stun.
- iv. AFID Cartridge Tracking: Every time an air cartridge is fired, up to 40 small confetti-like microdot ID tags called AFID's are ejected. Each AFID is printed with the serial number of the cartridge fired allowing the Department to identify which cartridge was fired.
- v. Probes: The Taser is most effective when the cartridge is fired and the probes/darts make direct contact with the subject. Proper application should result in temporary immobilization of the subject.
- vi. Spark Display: A non-contact demonstration of the Taser's ability to discharge electricity. This is conducted only when the cartridge has been removed from the weapon. The purpose of this display is to convince the subject to comply with a lawful order and avoid the Taser being deployed in the drive stun or probe mode.

## b. Training and Inspections:

- i. The authorization to carry and/or deploy the Taser is granted by the Department to officers based upon completion of specified training course and demonstrated proficiency under hands-on testing that has been monitored by a certified Taser instructor.

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- ii. Officers assigned to carry and deploy the Taser must maintain their certification by successfully completing the re-certification course annually.
  - iii. Officers who fail to re-qualify with the Taser will be subject to remedial training before being allowed to carry the weapon. Each officer who has successfully completed and shown proficiency will be assigned a Taser from Operations Commander upon availability.
- c. Discharge Considerations:
- i. When practical, use verbal commands and point the laser sight at the subject prior to discharging the Taser.
  - ii. Have a backup officer available to assist with the arrest.
  - iii. Have a second cartridge for the Taser ready to discharge in case the first deployment of probes missed the subject or the Taser fails to function properly.
  - iv. The Taser will be deployed consistent with the officer's training and shall never be aimed at the head or face of the subject.
  - v. Prior to the deployment of the Taser, the officer must consider the reasonableness of its use to include the subject's position where a secondary injury could occur.
  - vi. Officer should use due caution around children, and women who are known to be pregnant, who are in close proximity to a Taser deployment.
- d. Pre-Deployment:
- i. The Taser's digital powered magazine will be replaced when the central information display indicates a battery life of 20% or less.
  - ii. Lethal cover, when practical, will be present to protect the Taser operator.
  - iii. Prior to each tour of duty, officers who are assigned and authorized to carry the Taser shall inspect the cartridge and weapon.
- e. Acceptable Uses for the Taser are as follows:
- i. A person is displaying active resistance or aggression.
  - ii. Other force options have been ineffective.
  - iii. A person poses a threat from a distance and closing the distance places an officer at risk of injury.

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- iv. In stun mode on individual(s) displaying passive resistance only if the individual is also posing an immediate safety risk to others in consideration of the totality of the circumstance.
- f. A Taser shall not be deployed under the following circumstances:
  - i. Near flammable liquids and fumes.
  - ii. In conjunction with alcohol based pepper spray.
  - iii. Use on an individual when an allied agency has deployed pepper spray.
  - iv. For punitive or coercion purposes or when an individual is displaying only passive resistance or non-compliance.
- g. Taser normally should not be deployed under the following circumstances unless there are compelling reasons to do so which can be clearly articulated: (None of the items below are “strictly” prohibited).
  - i. When the subject is operating a motor vehicle.
  - ii. When the subject is holding a firearm.
  - iii. When the subject is at the extremes of ages or physical disability.
  - iv. When a prisoner is handcuffed, absent overtly assault behavior that cannot be reasonably dealt with in any other less intrusive fashion.
  - v. When a female is known to be pregnant.
  - vi. When the subject is in an elevated position.
- h. Deployment:
  - i. When practical, use verbal commands (shouting “Taser”) and point the laser sight at the individual prior to discharging the Taser. The shouting of “Taser” provides a final warning to the individual and warns officers and bystanders that the device is about to be deployed. Give the subject a reasonable time to comply before deploying the Taser.
  - ii. When available, have a backup officer available to assist with the arrest. The deploying officer will direct the actions of other assisting officer(s) on the scene in handcuffing the subject.
  - iii. When discharging the Taser, officers will only use the minimum number of activations necessary to carry out a lawful purpose.

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- iv. Have a second cartridge for the Taser ready to discharge in case the first deployment of probes missed the subject or the Taser fails to function properly.
  - v. If available, have a second officer with a Taser available in case the first deployment of probes missed the subject or the Taser fails to function properly. No more than one Taser will be deployed at a time unless exigent circumstances exist.
  - vi. Taser target areas should be center of body mass below the heart and the legs.
  - vii. Officer(s) must consider the reasonableness of deploying the Taser to include the subject(s) position where a secondary injury could occur.
- i. Post Deployment and Medical Attention:
- i. The discharging officer shall visually inspect the contact site. Individuals who have come into contact with a Taser will be transported to a medical facility for medical evaluation.
  - ii. Officers should also attempt to identify secondary injuries to the subject (e.g. falling to the ground).
  - iii. Once the probes have been removed from the subject, they will be treated as biohazard sharps.
  - iv. The discharging officer will ensure that the expended cartridge with the probes are logged into evidence. The serial number(s) of any spent cartridges will be included in the Subject Management Report and the contact points of the probes will be marked on the Taser Use Report diagram.
  - v. The Shift Supervisor or his/her designee shall photograph the subject and the site of the penetration and any secondary injuries.
  - vi. Officers transferring custody of an individual who has been subject to Taser deployment to another officer or the Charles County Detention Center will notify the receiving officer of the incident. The notification will be documented in the officer's report to include the name of the officer notified, as well as the date and time.
  - vii. After the deployment of a TASER, the officer shall contact the Taser Coordinator or a Taser instructor in order for the recorded data to be downloaded. The information from the download will be forwarded to the Operations Commander, Investigative Commander and the Office of the Chief of Police.

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- j. Accidental Discharges: Accidental discharges of a TASER, where no one was stuck or effected by the device, will be documented on a La Plata Police Department Administrative Report. The report will be titled “Accidental Discharge-Taser.” The report will include the date, time, location and circumstances of the discharge. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the Taser Coordinator and the Office of the Chief of Police.
- k. Reporting: Whenever an officer deploys the Taser in the course of his/her duties, the deployment shall be documented on the Incident Report and Subject Management Report. A copy of the Subject Management Report along with any photographs will be forwarded via chain of command, with supervisory endorsement to the Office of the Chief of Police for review. A copy will also be forwarded, by the office of the Chief of Police, to the Operations Commander once review is completed.
- l. Storage and Transport:
  - i. The Taser may be worn on the officer’s gun belt or in a thigh holster on the opposite side of the officer’s firearm.
  - ii. The Department strongly encourages officers assigned a Taser to carry the Taser on their person when on-duty.
  - iii. Qualified and properly trained officers may be assigned the Taser by the Operations Commander and the Taser Coordinator.
  - iv. When off-duty the Taser is to be treated as a firearm and stored in a locked container in the same manner as the officer’s firearm(s).
- m. Taser Coordinator’s Responsibility:
  - i. The Operations Commander shall appoint a Coordinator.
  - ii. The Coordinator will be responsible for the following:
    - 1. Schedule annual Taser certification and re-certification training.
    - 2. Downloading the data from the Department’s Taser after each deployment.
    - 3. Inspect the Taser for damage and malfunctions.
    - 4. Inspect cartridges and make sure the cartridges have not expired.
    - 5. Inspect cartridges for damages, expiration and usability.
    - 6. Change batteries as needed.

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7. Document inspections and send a report to the Accreditation Manager.

## 12. MAINTENANCE OF LESS-LETHAL WEAPONS:

- a. Officers shall keep their less-lethal weapons clean, in good working order, and maintain an acceptable power source when required.
- b. Officers shall make no attempts to alter or repair their less-lethal weapons. If the less-lethal weapon is in need of repair or is dysfunctional, the officer will notify his/her supervisor as soon as practical and return the item to the Operations Commander for repair or replacement.

## 13. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITY:

- a. Squad/Unit Supervisors shall ensure that each officer on their Squads/Units is certified to carry the less-lethal weapon issued to them
- b. Squad/Unit Supervisors shall ensure that subjects that have less-lethal force used against them are provided proper medical assistance.
- c. Squad/Unit Supervisors shall ensure that all incidents where use of less-lethal force has been used is properly photographed and documented in Incident and Subject Management Reports.
- d. Squad/Unit Supervisors shall ensure that documentation of incidents of less-lethal force are forwarded via the chain of command by the end of his/her tour of duty.
- e. Squad/Unit Supervisors shall ensure that officers under their command adhere to the Department's Policy on Use of Force.