



Sheridan Police Department
Policies and Procedures
11.5 Replaces 103.4
Chapter 11 – Use of Force
Section 5 – Deadly Force Response and Reporting

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Signature:

The investigation of the use of deadly force by an officer requires complete information to be obtained in a timely manner. A thorough investigation is of critical importance to the officer, department and community.

11.5.1 Responsibilities Following the Use of Deadly Force

- A. Whenever an officer employs an amount of force likely to cause death or serious bodily injury, whether intentionally or accidentally, the officer shall immediately do the following:
 - 1. Determine the physical condition of any injured person and render first aid when appropriate;
 - 2. Request necessary emergency medical aid;
 - 3. Notify the dispatcher of the incident and location;
 - 4. Report the incident to the on-duty supervisor as soon as practical;
 - 5. The officer will remain at the scene (unless injured) until the arrival of the appropriate investigators. If the circumstances are such that the continued presence of the officer at the scene might cause a more hazardous situation to develop, the ranking officer at the scene shall have the authority to arrange for the officer to be transported to a more appropriate location;
 - 6. If the use of force involved a firearm, the officer will protect the weapon for examination and submit the weapon to the appropriate authority (investigating officer/command staff) when requested. Once the situation is stable, the officer will not alter, reload or otherwise affect the condition of the weapon other than to make the weapon safe or to continue to use the firearm if needed;
 - 7. The officer shall not discuss the case with anyone except supervisory staff, assigned investigative personnel, or legal counsel.
- B. The notified dispatcher shall:
 - 1. Dispatch requested medical aid;
 - 2. Notify the on-duty supervisor or other available ranking staff.
- C. The shift supervisor shall:
 - 1. Notify the chain of command;
 - 2. Proceed immediately to the scene; and
 - 3. Secure the scene.
- D. The special operations lieutenant or designee shall:
 - 1. Proceed immediately to the scene;

2. Conduct a preliminary field investigation to determine if the incident warrants criminal investigation;
3. The findings of such an initial inquiry shall be conveyed to the chief of police. The chief of police, or his designee, shall determine the scope of the investigation after conferring with the detective division supervisor and other relevant sources.

11.5.2 Investigation of the Use of Deadly Force

All use of deadly force incidents requires an administrative investigation. As a matter of general policy, those incidents requiring a criminal investigation will be investigated by another agency. Therefore, on scene response by members of the Sheridan Police Department should be directed to containing and preserving the scene for further investigation.

A. Criminal Investigations

1. The responsible agency will process the scene, collect evidence, conduct interviews with involved parties and witnesses, and complete all other investigative duties as appropriate to the incident.
2. If an outside agency is unavailable, the chief of police will assign the special operations bureau responsibility to complete the investigation. An outside agency will be requested to review the investigation and documentation. Outside agencies are preferred as they provide transparency and objectivity.
3. After the criminal portion of the investigation is completed, the chief of police shall turn over the acquired information to the appropriate Sheridan County Attorney for review and action as deemed necessary.

B. Administrative Investigations

The purpose of the administrative investigation is to determine if the conduct of the officer(s) involved in the use of deadly force conformed to the department policy.

1. Staff assigned to conduct the administrative investigation will conduct an independent investigation into all circumstances surrounding the shooting incident.
2. The scene commander and all personnel at the scene of the shooting will cooperate fully with the administrative investigator.
3. Those assigned to administrative investigations will take all appropriate actions necessary to ensure that the administrative investigation does not jeopardize any ongoing criminal investigation.
4. Upon conclusion of the administrative investigation, the chief of police will review all relevant details of the incident to determine if the use of force was within policy. In cases involving use of firearms, the chief may convene a shooting review board, composed of members as determined by the chief of police, to review the facts surrounding the incident to determine if the shooting was within policy.

11.5.3 Additional Reporting Responsibilities

- A. When an officer uses deadly force and the resulting investigation includes a recorded interview with an investigator, the officer will not be required to complete a written report regarding the incident. In any other case, the officer will file a written report detailing the incident. At a minimum, the following information is to be contained in the statement:

1. A detailed description of the words, actions and/or threat posed by the suspect warranting the need for force;
 2. A description of the force used; and
 3. Any subsequent actions taken by the officer.
- B. Officers are required to report any accidental discharge of firearms. A complete investigation will be conducted into any accidental discharge of a firearm.
- C. Any employee involved in a deadly force incident may be requested, as part of the criminal investigation, to submit to analysis of their blood or urine. If the employee asserts their right to refuse the test, they shall be required to submit to the test(s) as part of the administrative investigation. In such a case, the results will not be shared with the criminal investigators.

11.5.4 Relief from Field Duty

- A. When death or injury has resulted from the use of deadly force by an officer, that officer will, as soon as practical, be released from field duty by the supervisor pending a full investigation into the incident.
- B. During the period of time an investigation into the incident is being conducted, the chief of police may assign the officer involved to duty inside the building or place him/her on administrative leave. This leave shall be without loss of pay or benefits, pending the results of the investigation. Such relief from duty will not be considered a disciplinary or corrective action taken against the officer, but rather an administrative course of action for the purpose of relieving the officer from further performance of field duties while undergoing the extreme emotional stress of having used deadly force, and permitting the police department time to conduct an objective investigation into the matter. While on administrative leave, the officer shall remain available at all times for official departmental interviews and statements regarding the incident, and shall be subject to recall to duty at any time. People on administrative leave are subject to the City of Sheridan's leave time policy.
- C. The period of time spent on administrative leave or inside duty will be determined by the chief of police.