



Tulsa Police Department

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Policy # 101D

Policy Name Use of OC Spray

Approved by Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police

Effective Date 01/28/2025

Approved Date 01/27/2025

Previous Date 10/01/2021

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

To change verbiage, add definitions, and add regulations regarding maintenance.

POLICY:

Officers will use only that force which is objectively reasonable and necessary. The use of OC spray enhances an officer's ability to neutralize resistance and/or aggression without the additional escalation of force. This decreases the chance of injury to officers, suspects, and others.

The use of OC spray is not meant to replace tactics or training and should only be viewed as an additional tool or option available to the officer. OC spray is considered an intermediate force weapon and should be handled with care.

SUMMARY: Procedures for the use of OC spray.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel

DEFINITIONS:

OC (OLEORESIN CAPSICUM) SPRAY – an organically based biodegradable aerosol derived from a natural food ingredient (the oil of the cayenne pepper).

FIELD OC CANISTER – OC canister issued to and carried by officers in field assignments.

LARGE OC CANISTER – 16-ounce or larger OC canister primarily utilized for crowd control, civil disturbance, and multiple subject applications. Additional training is required to utilize the large OC canister.

UNDERCOVER OC CANISTER – a compact OC canister carried by officers in undercover, plainclothes, or administrative assignments.

PROCEDURES:

1. Whenever practical, and to warn assisting officers of an impending discharge, officers should use the phrase "STAND CLEAR" prior to discharging OC spray. Officers should only use the amount of spray necessary to bring the subject under control.
2. Once the subject is in custody, if feasible officers will place the subject in a side-lying or seated position. Officers will closely monitor the person for signs of respiratory distress and positional asphyxia. If respiratory distress or positional asphyxia is observed, officers will request paramedics to the scene for medical attention and render immediate medical aid if necessary.

3. When feasible, officers should assist the subject in rinsing his/her face and hands with clear water to relieve discomfort. If symptoms persist without any relief after 45 minutes, officer should obtain medical attention.
4. Other than during the required annual testing, officers will notify a supervisor as soon as possible after discharging OC spray.

REGULATIONS:

1. Officers shall only carry OC spray after successful completion of appropriate departmental training. Officers shall only carry OC spray that has been approved and issued by the department.
2. Uniformed personnel shall wear the field OC canister in a department-approved holster on the duty belt or external vest carrier.
3. Plainclothes officers shall carry the undercover OC canister in such a manner that it is readily accessible. Officers working undercover assignments are not required to carry the field or undercover OC canister on their person.
4. Officers may only be issued the large OC canister after completion of additional training.
5. Officers should remain aware of the expiration date of their OC canister. Upon expiration, all OC canisters shall be turned in to the divisional equipment officer and exchanged for a new one. Equipment officers shall forward the expired OC canisters to the Training Division Lieutenant
6. Officers should not apply more than three (3) applications of OC to one subject during an incident. If the subject has not been controlled after three (3) applications of OC, officers should transition to a different reasonable and appropriate force option.
7. Officers shall not leave or hold a sprayed person lying face down after the person is restrained and under control.
8. Officers shall use OC spray only in the manner established by departmental training and this policy.
9. When feasible, officers should assist the person in rinsing their eyes, face, and hands with clear water as soon as possible.
10. Officers shall monitor a person for forty-five (45) minutes after being sprayed with OC spray.
11. If a sprayed person complains of respiratory distress or if the symptoms persist without relief for more than forty-five (45) minutes, officers shall obtain medical attention for the subject.

REFERENCES:

101A, *Use of Force*

Security Equipment Corporation SABRE *Law Enforcement & Corrections Division Instructor Manual*