



WESTWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT

4700 RAINBOW BLVD • WESTWOOD KANSAS 66205

Gregory J. O'Halloran
Chief of Police



After receiving a few inquiries regarding our use of force and video recordings policy we thought it was important we put out our response to some commonly asked questions. Hopefully it will give you a sense that having good policy is valued by your department.

Issues Regarding the Use of Force and Recordings
Body Cameras: in use since 2015 and a policy regarding expected usage
Vehicle Cameras: in use since approximately 2006 – each car has 2 cameras
Ban chokehold and strangleholds: policy – "chokehold" which is respiratory restraint and is not trained or an accepted practice.
De-escalation: policy – "When circumstances reasonably permit, officers should use non-violent strategies and techniques to decrease the intensity of a situation, improve decision-making, improve communication, reduce the need for force, and increase voluntary compliance (e.g., summoning additional resources, formulating a plan, attempting verbal persuasion)."
Require Warning Before Shooting: policy – "a verbal warning should precede the use of deadly force, where feasible."
Require Exhausting Other Means Before Shooting: Officers are not "required to use force in a chronological order or ranking order when affecting an arrest, protecting the officer or another from bodily harm." They are justified in using that force reasonably necessary as defined in policy based on the circumstances they are facing.
Duty to Intervene: policy – "Any officer present and observing another law enforcement officer or a member using force that is clearly beyond that which is objectively reasonable under the circumstances shall, when in a position to do so, intercede to prevent the use of unreasonable force." They have an obligation to report the incident to a supervisor.
Ban Shooting at Moving Vehicles: policy - noted as "rarely effective" and language to discourage – but notes exceptions like "lone wolf" attacks related to use of a vehicle in terrorist situations
Has Use of Force Continuum: policy – "officer presence, verbal commands/direction, less-lethal techniques and devices, less-lethal impact weapons and deadly force. This continuum does not imply that an officer is required to use force in a chronological order or ranking order when affecting an arrest, protecting the officer or another from bodily harm."
Require Comprehensive Reporting of Use of Force: policy & practice and required internally and the state level.
Independent Video Recording of Officers: No one has an expected right to privacy out in public from having their picture taken – officers are no different.
Independent Investigation of Officer Involved Shootings: Jo Co law enforcement developed an independent Officer Involved Shooting Incident Team (OISIT) in 2005 – detectives from outside agencies investigate and report findings directly to the District Attorney's office. No one from the involved agency actively investigates it.

The Westwood Police Department has a strong history of interacting with all members of our community and those that visit and travel through it (please review our [Facebook](#) history as you have time; [example](#)). Over the years, with purposeful intention we have reached out to various members of traditionally underrepresented communities to engage and learn more (NAACP, LGBTQ...). We will continue to seek opportunities to grow, learn and partner with others as we build our core culture of inclusion and compassion in our efforts to serve and protect. We wish you and your family all the best,

Greg

Greg O'Halloran, Chief of Police