



KENSINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Walt Schuld
Interim Chief of Police

Kensington Police Department Annual Use of Force Report 2020

Chief Message

The Kensington Police Department's Use of Force Report is submitted annually to identify:

- Any trends in the use of force by police officers
- Any training needs
- Any equipment needs, and
- Any policy recommendations

The Police Department's Use of Force Policy is available on the District website for viewing by the public at kppcsd.org. Our policy is updated throughout the year to conform to Federal, State and Local laws, rules, and regulations. We contract with Lexipol, a private company whose focus is on reducing liability risks and avoiding litigation. More than 90 percent of law enforcement agencies in California subscribe to Lexipol services.

The Kensington Police Department is committed to using the least amount of force that is reasonable to effect an arrest when performing their duties. Any force used by an officer in the course of their duties is thoroughly documented and reviewed by a supervisor and the Chief of Police.

Overview

I am pleased to report there were no Use of Force incidents by Kensington Police Officers in the calendar year 2020. Officers made 15 arrests 8 of which were for felony violations.

Training

Officers were trained on the Use of Force Policy five times during the year. They qualified with their firearms quarterly including one low light qualification. All officers are up to date with departmental firearm standards and with the Peace Officer Standards and Training (P.O.S.T.) recommendations.

In addition, all officers have met the minimum requirements for proficiency in Weaponless Defense and Baton. All Officers have also been updated and trained in AB392 (changes in Use of Force laws).

Recommendations

During my Use of Force review, I have concluded three deficiencies that need to be addressed:

1. Although officers meet the minimum state requirements for training in Weaponless Defense, more training in de-escalation procedures, methods of arrest, and control holds should be conducted on a regular basis. This additional training will enhance the officer's confidence and mental preparedness while lessening the chances of them having to resort to higher levels of force to affect an arrest.
2. Officers are not issued Tasers (conductive energy devices). The issuance of these devices are industry standard. Over 15,000 law enforcement agencies around the world deploy Tasers. A report by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) showed police departments that deployed Tasers saw a 76% decrease in officer injuries. Another study showed suspect injuries were reduced by 48%. There have been numerous documented cases where officers were able to subdue a violent suspect without deadly force because they were equipped with a Taser.
3. After action reports should be completed at the end of every training cycle. This thoroughly documents the training for later use. I will implement after action reports for all training cycles.

It is easy to dismiss equipment and training needs when the department has had no Use of Force incidents this past year, but that is when the unexpected occurs. Both increased training and the issuing of Tasers provide extra safety for the officers and the suspects that they encounter. It also significantly reduces the liability for the District.

Items #1 & #2 require unbudgeted monies and will be addressed through the budget process. Item #3 will be enacted by the police department immediately.



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