

Control Devices

302.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the use and maintenance of control devices that are described in this policy. For guidance relating to Tasers, see the Taser policy.

302.2 POLICY

To control individual subjects who are violent or who demonstrate the intent to be violent, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office authorizes deputies to use control devices in accordance with the guidelines in this policy and the Use of Force Policy. Deputies deploying or discharging control devices will ensure any subjects affected by the device's usage are provided with subsequent medical care as appropriate.

302.3 ISSUING, CARRYING AND USING CONTROL DEVICES

Control devices described in this policy may be carried and used by members of the office only if the device has been issued by the Office or approved by the Sheriff or the authorized designee.

Only those members who have successfully completed office-approved training in the use of any control device are authorized to carry and use the device.

Control devices may be used when a decision has been made to control, restrain or arrest a person who is violent or who demonstrates the intent to be violent and the use of the device appears reasonable under the circumstances. When reasonable, a verbal warning and opportunity to comply should precede the use of these devices.

302.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

302.4.1 SHIFT SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Shift Supervisor may authorize the issuance of a control device to members who have successfully completed the required training. Each control device that is issued to an employee will be inspected monthly and documented via Blue Team.

302.4.2 ARMORER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Armorer shall control the inventory and issuance of all control devices, with the exception of the ASP baton and OC spray, and shall ensure that all damaged, inoperative, outdated or expended control devices or munitions are properly disposed of, repaired or replaced. Every control device will be periodically inspected by the Armorer or supervisor. The inspection shall be documented.

302.4.3 USER RESPONSIBILITIES

All normal maintenance, charging or cleaning shall remain the responsibility of personnel issued the various devices.

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Any inoperative, outdated or expended control devices or munitions, shall be returned to the Armorer or Police Services Coordinator for disposition. An Equipment Loss/Damage Blue Team entry will be completed for any damaged control devices, and forwarded through the officer's chain of command.

302.5 ASP BATON GUIDELINES

The need to immediately control a suspect must be weighed against the risk of causing serious injury. The head, neck, throat, spine, heart, kidneys and groin should not be intentionally targeted except when the deputy reasonably believes the suspect poses an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or death to him/herself or others.

When carrying the ASP baton, uniformed personnel shall carry the baton in its authorized holder on the belt or outer carrier. Plainclothes and non-field personnel may carry the baton as authorized and in accordance with the needs of their assignments or at the direction of their supervisors.

The Police Services Coordinator will be responsible for the issuance of ASP batons requiring replacement.

302.6 CHEMICAL MUNITIONS GUIDELINES

Chemical munitions may be used for crowd control, crowd dispersal or against barricaded suspects based on the circumstances. Only officers of the Emergency Services Team and Civil Disturbance Unit are authorized and trained to dispense chemical munitions for crowd control purposes or in situations where other options are not desirable. All training is conducted by a certified instructor. During prolonged emergency operations, the Sheriff or Assistant Sheriff may designate additional personnel to deploy chemical munitions.

When practicable, fire and emergency medical services personnel should be alerted or summoned to the scene prior to the deployment of chemical munitions to control any fires and to assist in providing medical aid or gas evacuation, if needed.

302.7 OLEORESIN CAPSICUM (OC) GUIDELINES

As with other control devices, OC spray and OC projectiles may be considered for use to bring under control an individual or groups of individuals who are engaging in, or are about to engage in, violent behavior. OC projectiles and OC spray should not, however, be used against individuals or groups who merely fail to disperse or do not reasonably appear to present a risk to the safety of office members or the public.

302.7.1 OC SPRAY

Uniformed members carrying OC spray shall carry the device in its holster on the equipment belt or issued outer carrier. Plainclothes and non-field members may carry OC spray as authorized, in accordance with the needs of their assignments or at the direction of their supervisors.

When the agent is utilized, the officer must exercise caution not to contaminate himself or other officers.

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The Police Services Coordinator will be responsible for issuing replacement OC canisters.

OC canisters will not be stored in direct sunlight or in places where the temperature may reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit, such as in the trunk of a car.

302.7.2 TREATMENT FOR OC EXPOSURE

Persons who have been sprayed with or otherwise affected by the use of OC spray should be monitored post deployment for any obvious after-effects. Additionally, they should be monitored post-deployment for any obvious after-effects. Those who complain of further severe effects shall be examined by appropriate medical personnel. Any officer utilizing the OC Chemical Agent will adhere to the decontamination procedures as dictated through their qualified training.

302.7.3 POST-APPLICATION NOTICE

Whenever chemical munitions (CS or CN) or OC has been introduced into a residence, building interior, vehicle or other enclosed area, the owners or available occupants should be provided with notice of the possible presence of residue which could result in irritation or injury if the area is not properly cleaned. Such notice should include advisement that clean-up will be at the owner's expense.

302.8 KINETIC ENERGY PROJECTILE GUIDELINES

This office is committed to reducing the potential for violent confrontations. Kinetic energy projectiles, when used properly, are less likely to result in death or serious physical injury and can be used in an attempt to de-escalate a potentially deadly situation.

302.8.1 DEPLOYMENT AND USE

Only office-approved kinetic energy munitions shall be carried and deployed. Approved munitions may be used to compel an individual to cease his/her actions when such munitions present a reasonable option. Approved munitions are direct impact, with payloads of OC, CS, marking or payloads specifically for kinetic impact.

Deputies are not required or compelled to use approved munitions in lieu of other reasonable tactics if the involved deputy determines that deployment of these munitions cannot be done safely. The safety of hostages, innocent persons and deputies takes priority over the safety of individuals engaged in criminal or suicidal behavior.

Circumstances appropriate for deployment include, but are not limited to, situations in which:

- (a) The suspect is armed with a weapon and the tactical circumstances allow for the safe application of approved munitions.
- (b) The suspect has made credible threats to harm him/herself or others.
- (c) The suspect is engaged in riotous behavior or is throwing dangerous projectiles at deputies, other office members and/or other people.
- (d) There is probable cause to believe that the suspect has already committed a crime of violence and is refusing to comply with lawful orders.

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302.9 SINGLE SHOT LESS LETHAL IMPACT MUNITION (LLIM) LAUNCHER

- (a) The Single Shot LLIM Projectile Launcher is designed to launch personnel impact rounds. A projectile striking an offender will deliver kinetic energy in an attempt to modify or control threatening behavior.
- (b) The Single Shot LLIM Launcher is categorized as less-lethal force and may be used to control a dangerous or violent subject when:
 - 1. Lethal force does not appear to be justified; attempts to control the subject by other conventional tactics have been ineffective; and
 - 2. The deploying officer reasonably believes the use of alternative devices/ weapons/techniques would unnecessarily endanger the safety of the officer, other involved officers, or citizens.

For related procedures see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [318.1 SINGLE SHOT LESS LETHAL IMPACT MUNITION \(LLIM\) LAUNCHER OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES](#)

302.9.1 AUTHORIZED USER

- (a) Only deputies who have received the required training and certification with the single shot LLIM Launcher are authorized to carry or deploy the weapon. This training must be documented and monitored by the training coordinator.
- (b) 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.

302.9.2 STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE

- (a) The Single Shot LLIM Launchers will be stored in their accompanying carry cases 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.
 - 4. Officers issued a Single Shot Launcher will be responsible for the maintenance of the equipment. The Launcher will be inspected monthly by the Shift Supervisor during monthly inspections and documented using Blue Team "Monthly Inspections" incident report. The inspections will be forwarded to OPR and maintained in the IAPRo database. A copy of the incident report will be forwarded to the Armorer. Officers must:
 - (a) Ensure the overall condition of the weapon is satisfactory.
 - (b) Ensure sufficient supply of impact rounds are available.
 - (c) Ensure proper operation of all sighting systems.

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5. Officers authorized to deploy the Single Shot 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.

302.10 FN-303 PROJECTILE LAUNCHER

The FN 303 Projectile Launcher is designed to launch a Fin stabilized projectile by the means of compressed air to a maximum effective range of 55 yards. A projectile striking a subject will first deliver kinetic energy in an attempt to modify or control threatening behavior. The same projectile will also contain a payload of liquid Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) chemical agent as a secondary effect to the kinetic energy strike.

The FN 303 may be used to control a dangerous or violent subject when:

- (a) Deadly force does not appear to be justified; attempts to control the subject by other conventional tactics have been ineffective
- (b) There is reasonable expectation it is unsafe for officers to approach within contact range of the subject.

A subject who has sustained a direct strike from an FN 303 Projectile will be transported to the nearest medical facility for examination and treatment.

For procedures related to the FN-303 Projectile Launcher, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [FN-303 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES](#)

302.10.1 STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE

- (a) The FN 303 will be stored in their accompanying carry cases 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
- (b) Officers issued a FN 303 will be responsible for the maintenance of the equipment. The FN 303 will be inspected monthly by the Shift Supervisor during monthly inspections and documented using Blue Team "Monthly Inspections" incident report. The inspections will be forwarded to OPR and maintained in the IAPRO database. A copy of the incident report will be forwarded to the Armorer. Officers must:
 1. Ensure air reservoir is charged
 2. Ensure sufficient supply of OC rounds are available
 3. Dry fire the system
 4. Ensure the overall condition of the weapon is satisfactory
- (c) Officers authorized to deploy the FN 303 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.

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302.10.2 AUTHORIZED USER

- (a) Only deputies who have received the required training and certification with the FN 303 Projectile Launcher are authorized to carry or deploy the weapon. This training will be documented by a certified instructor and monitored by the training coordinator.
- (b) User recertification will occur annually and be documented by a certified instructor. Personnel who cannot maintain the training requirements will not be authorized to use the weapon.

302.11 TACTICAL MULTI-ROUND PROJECTILE LAUNCHER

- (a) The Tactical Multi-Round Launcher is a tactical weapon capable of delivering less-lethal chemical agents, and potentially lethal personnel rounds.
- (b) The weapon is exclusively used by trained members of EST (Emergency Services Team).
- (c) Use of the Tactical Multi-Round Launcher will be authorized by the On-Scene Commander.
- (d) Situations that may call for the use of the Tactical Multi-Round Launcher may include but are not limited to: barricades, suicidal subjects, and crowd control.

For related procedures see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [318.3 TACTICAL MULTI-ROUND PROJECTILE LAUNCHER OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES](#)

302.11.1 AUTHORIZED USER

Only deputy sheriffs assigned to EST who have received the required training and certification with the Tactical Multi-Round Launcher are authorized to carry or deploy the weapon. This training must be documented by a certified instructor and monitored by the Training Coordinator.

- (a) Initial training is completion of a Multi-Round Launcher Operator course. This course is provided by in-house certified instructors.
- (b) A 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.
- (c) Certified instructors must successfully complete an authorized Less Lethal Impact Munition Instructor Course, and maintain certification as required.

302.11.2 STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE

The Tactical Multi-Round Launcher will be properly stored with other EST weapons and maintained in a state of operational readiness.

- (a) Basic maintenance and cleaning can be accomplished by operators and instructors;
- (b) Malfunctions or detailed maintenance will be done by a certified Armorer or if needed, sent back to the manufacturer.
- (c) The EST team supervisor or designee will be responsible for the maintenance and inspection of the Tactical Multi-Round Launcher. These launchers will be inspected quarterly and documented using Blue Team. The inspections will be forwarded to OPR

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and maintained in the IAPRo database. A copy of the incident report will be forwarded to the Armorer.

- (d) Officers authorized to deploy the Tactical Multi-Round Launchers will not disassemble or tamper with the internal mechanisms. Any repair for malfunction, damage, or parts replacement will be completed by an authorized Armorer.

302.11.3 AMMUNITION

All standard 40mm Less Lethal Ammunition types, up to 4.8" cartridge length are authorized to be utilized with this launcher.

- (a) Maximum effective range for this launcher will be dependent on the specific munition being deployed.
- (b) The Tactical Multi-Round Launchers will primarily be used to deploy chemical agents with non-personnel rounds.
- (c) Barricade penetrating rounds are not designed to be shot at people/animals and will not be used for this purpose; except as a last option when deadly force is authorized to protect the life of an officer or citizen. Personnel rounds are available but will only be utilized by properly certified operators.

302.12 TRAINING FOR CONTROL DEVICES

The Training Coordinator shall ensure that those members who are authorized to carry a control device have been properly trained and certified to carry the specific control device and are retrained or recertified as necessary.

- (a) Proficiency training shall be administered and documented by a certified, control-device weapons or tactics instructor, and monitored by the Training Coordinator.
- (b) OC and ASP training will be conducted and documented at least biennially by a certified instructor.
- (c) FN 303 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.
- (d) All training for control devices will be documented in Blue Team.
- (e) Members who fail to demonstrate proficiency with the control device or knowledge of the Use of Force Policy will be provided remedial training. If a member cannot demonstrate proficiency with a control device or knowledge of the Use of Force Policy after remedial training, the member will be restricted from carrying the control device and may be subject to discipline.

302.13 REPORTING USE OF CONTROL DEVICES

Any application of a control device shall be documented in Blue Team, pursuant to the Use of Force Policy.