

**CITY OF FERGUSON
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE**

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TASER – Electronic Incapacitation Device

Less than lethal weapons, TASER

Use of Force, TASER

TASER – ELECTRONIC INCAPACITATION DEVICE

499.00 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to clarify the use of the X26 TASER, less-than-lethal electronic incapacitation device and establish policy and procedure for use. The X26 TASER is considered a Conducted Energy Weapon; an electronic incapacitation device. It is an intermediate weapon designed to overcome active aggression or overt actions of assault and is listed as an impact weapon in the force continuum. The Use of Force Continuum is found in General Order 410.00. The X26 TASER functions in two ways:

- A. It uses compressed nitrogen to project two probes a maximum of 25 feet. An electrical signal is then sent to the probes, via small wires, which disrupts the body's ability to communicate messages from the brain to the muscles and causes motor skill dysfunction.
- B. Acts as a touch stun system when brought into immediate contact with a person's body.

499.01 POLICY:

Only officers that are trained as described in General Order 499.02 are authorized to use the X26 TASER.

The decision to use the X26 TASER is based on the same criteria an officer uses when selecting to deploy O.C. spray, or a baton. The decision must be made dependent on the actions of the subject(s) or threat facing the officer(s), and the totality of the circumstances surrounding the incident. In any event; the use of the X26 TASER must be reasonable and necessary.

The X26 TASER is not meant to be used in deadly force situations. The X26 TASER should not be used without firearm backup in those situations where there is a substantial threat towards the officer(s) or others present.

The X26 TASER provides a force option in which the officer does not have to get dangerously close to a threat before deploying the tool. Using the X26 TASER may greatly reduce the need for other types of physical force by the officer(s) resulting in serious or potential deadly injury to the offender, officer, or others present.

Any use of an electronic incapacitation device contrary to the direction of this order can result in the revocation of the officer's right to use such product and may subject the officer to disciplinary action.

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499.02 TRAINING:

All members who are authorized and use the X26 TASER must first successfully complete a 6-hour TASER User Certification Program, to include written and practical tests. A certified instructor shall conduct all training and all training shall be documented in accordance with Missouri P.O.S.T. standards.

All personnel authorized to use the X26 TASER will be issued a copy of this order and shall be responsible for knowledge of the Use of Force Continuum defined in General Order 410.00 before being authorized to use the weapon.

499.03 PROCEDURE FOR USE:

The X26 TASER may be used in those situations where:

- A. A subject is threatening himself, an officer, or another person with physical force and other means of controlling the subject are unreasonable or could cause injury to the officer(s), the subjects(s) or others.
- B. In cases where officer / subject factors indicate the officer(s), offender(s) or others would be endangered by the use of physical force.
- C. Other means of lesser or equal force have been ineffective and the threat still exists to the officer(s), subject(s), and others.

The lower center mass of the body should be the target area for frontal discharges when firing the X26 TASER, although back shots remain the preferred area when practical; as clothing tends to be tighter on this part of the body. The head, face and heart area should not be specifically targeted unless the appropriate level of force can be justified.

499.04 LIMITATIONS:

- A. The X26 TASER will never be deployed punitively or for purposes of coercion. It is to be used as a way of averting a potentially injurious or dangerous situation. The X26 TASER has an effective range of 3 to 13 feet with a 15-foot cartridge; and 3 to 23 feet with a 25-foot cartridge. Ranges fewer than 3 feet may not provide adequate distribution of the probes to allow the unit to function properly.
- B. The X26 TASER has the ability to ignite flammable liquids. It will not be deployed at subjects who have come in contact with flammables or in environments where flammables are obviously present.
- C. Proper consideration and care should be taken when deploying the X26 TASER on subjects who are in an elevated position or in other circumstance where a fall may cause substantial injury or death. Officers must be prepared to justify such a deployment.

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499.05 POST DEPLOYMENT PROCEDURE:

- A. Immediate action should be taken to care for the injured, to apprehend any subjects, and to protect the scene.
- B. Once the subject is restrained or has complied; the X26 TASER should be turned off.
- C. A X26 TASER will not be left unattended except in exigent circumstances as when an officer is forced to act alone in taking custody of an immediate threat.
- D. Upon the event of an X26 TASER deployment, the officer, who is trained on probe removal, will remove the barbs, and the EMT's will then evaluate the subject. If further intervention is necessary, either the police or the ambulance will transport, and in the case of the latter, an officer will accompany the suspect in the ambulance. Officers may remove probes only when in the presence of another officer. Officers shall always use medical gloves when removing the probes. If the subject has been struck in the neck, face, female breast or groin areas, the subject shall be transported to a medical facility to have the probes removed. If the probes break off or are embedded, they should be removed by medical personnel.
- E. Probes that have been removed from skin will be treated as biohazard "sharps". They should be placed point down into the expended cartridge bores and secured with tape.
- F. Officers will attempt to locate the yellow, pink and clear colored "micro-dots" dispersed at the time of the cartridge firing. These will be collected and placed into evidence with any expended cartridges.
- G. Involved personnel will attempt to locate and identify any witnesses to the incident and refrain from discussing the incident. The use of the X26 TASER will be documented in the Use of Force report in accordance with department policy.
- H. The supervisor of the officer deploying the X26 TASER will issue the officer a new cartridge to replace the expended cartridge before the end of their tour of duty for that day.

By order of:



COLONEL THOMAS JACKSON
Chief of Police

Distribution

All Sworn Police Department Personnel