



**Baltimore County Sheriff's Office
Towson, Maryland**

**Sheriff
R. Jay Fisher**

General Order

Subject: Electronic Control Devices	Effective Date 3/16/15	Number B-12
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Purpose:

The purpose of this directive is to establish procedures and policies for carrying and utilization of electronic control devices.

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I. Definitions

- A. Electronic Control Device (ECD)** – A non-lethal device that emits an electronic energy charge, which causes an electro-muscular disruption that affects the sensory and motor functions of the central nervous system.
- B. TASER®** – An electronic control device that projects two (2) small probes up to thirty-five (35) feet. These probes are connected to the device by insulated wires. When contact is made with a subject, they transmit an electrical pulse along the wires and into the body. The probes do not have to penetrate the flesh to be effective.
- C. TASER® Cam HD** - An optional accessory to be used with the Taser X26P. The Taser® Cam HD is a rechargeable light sensitive camera with video and audio recording capabilities.
- D. Probe Mode** – Discharging the TASER®, which deploys the two probes at the subject. This is the preferred option for utilizing the TASER®.
- E. Drive Stun Mode** – When the TASER® is discharged as a contact device with or without the use of the cartridge. The drive stun mode should be considered as a secondary option. Close proximity may require a drive stun.

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- F. Data Port** - Each time the TASER® is fired, it stores a downloadable time and date on the data port.
- G. AFID Cartridge Tracking** - Each time a cartridge is fired; a quantity of small confetti-like microdot ID tags called AFIDs are ejected. Each AFID is printed with the serial number of the cartridge fired; allowing the member to identify which TASER® fired the cartridge.
- H. Non-Lethal Force** – Force that is not intended, nor reasonably likely to, result in death or serious physical injury.
- I. Biohazard Sharps** – Items that are capable of puncturing the skin and may contain contaminated bodily fluids. Caution should be exercised in the handling and packaging of the sharps to avoid possible injury/exposure to the member.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Sheriff's Office that members shall only utilize electronic control devices when necessary and reasonable. Additionally, the use will fall within the guidelines of the Use of Force policy and matrix.

III. Authorized Electronic Control Devices

The only authorized electronic control devices are the office issued TASER® and Stun Cuff®. **No other electronic control device may be utilized by members.**

IV. Training

- A.** Members desiring to be certified to use the TASER® should submit an Administrative Report Form 125 requesting consideration to his/her immediate supervisor. Members approved by Command will be scheduled for training. The below criteria will be utilized in the selection process.
 - 1. Performance ratings
 - 2. Firearms training
 - 3. Demonstrated ability to exercise good judgment
 - 4. Disciplinary history
 - 5. Assignment
- B.** Prior to being issued or authorized to carry and utilize a TASER® members must successfully complete an approved user certification course.

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- C. In addition to the initial certification, members must successfully complete a re-certification course annually.
- D. A certified ECD Instructor must monitor all certification and re-certification courses.
- E. All certification and re-certification course records must be forwarded to the Sheriff's Designee and are to be maintained in file.

V. Assignment of the TASER®

- A. Carrying the TASER® – A limited number of TASERs® will be available to certified members.
 - 1. TASERs® and replacement cartridges will be stored in a secure area within the Sheriff's Office. Members desiring to carry a TASER® may sign one out utilizing the TASER® Logbook. TASERs® will be available on a first come first served basis.
 - 2. Members signing out a TASER® will be held accountable for the proper care, custody, and use of the TASER®.
 - 3. TASERs® must be returned to the TASER® cabinet at the end of the member's tour of duty.

(Exception: Deputies permanently assigned a TASER®)

VI. Carrying the TASER®

- A. All members carrying a TASER® must carry it in the issued holster only, and must wear it on the opposite side of the body from their handgun.
- B. Upon signing out a TASER®, members must inspect it for readiness. This inspection must include:
 - 1. Checking for proper charge
 - 2. Conducting a spark test
 - a. The cartridge must be removed prior to the spark test.
 - b. The spark test will be conducted in a Firearm's Inspection Box.
 - 3. Checking for any damage or malfunction

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- a. In the event the TASER® is damaged or malfunctioning, the member must fulfill the reporting requirements in Section X. of this directive.
4. Only an ECD Instructor may make adjustments to a TASER®.

VII. Use of the TASER®

- A. The TASER® provides a non-lethal alternative use of force; therefore, the TASER® is not intended to replace the use of firearms when deadly force is necessary. The TASER® may be used:
 1. To control a dangerous or violent subject when deadly force is not justified and attempts to control the subject by other tactics has been ineffective or there is a reasonable expectation that it is unsafe for members to approach within contact range of the subject.
 2. To subdue individuals who pose an immediate risk to themselves or others or to safely affect an arrest.
 3. To stop a threatening animal.
- B. In determining whether to discharge the TASER®, members must consider the reasonableness of its use to include:
 1. The level of force being confronted.
 2. The subject's position and the possibility of secondary injuries. Some situations may include:
 - a. At a fleeing individual who may fall and be injured.
 - b. At an individual on an elevated structure who may fall a considerable distance.
 - c. At an individual operating a vehicle or machinery.
 - d. At an individual in water who could possibly drown.
 3. The subject's age (very young or elderly).
 4. The subject is frail.
 5. If the subject has any known medical conditions, i.e. pregnancy or heart problems.

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6. The subject is physically handicapped.
 7. A handcuffed individual.
- C. The TASER® must not be intentionally aimed at the head, face, neck, chest, groin, hands or feet of a subject in Probe or Drive Stun modes.
 - D. The TASER® shall not be used in a punitive or coercive manner.
 - E. The TASER® shall not be discharged more than three (3) consecutive times on an individual without immediate exigent circumstances.
 - F. The use of the TASER® near any flammable liquids or fumes, including alcohol based OC Spray, is prohibited.
 - G. The TASER® shall not be discharged into the operator of a vehicle that is in motion or capable of being placed into motion.
 - H. If practical, prior to discharging the TASER®, members should:
 1. Have a backup member available to assist with the arrest.
 2. Have a second cartridge or TASER® ready to discharge in case the probes miss the subject or the TASER® or cartridge malfunctions.
(Tasers equipped with a camera will not have a second cartridge.)
 3. If feasible and tactically appropriate, announce “*TASER®*” to the other members on the scene prior to discharging the TASER®.
 - I. A member shall not allow a non-certified member to utilize his/her TASER®.
 - J. In the event the TASER® is discharged, the discharging member must:
 1. After securing the individual, ensure that he/she is placed in a position that does not interfere with breathing, i.e. place the subject on his/her side or in a sitting position.
 2. All individuals who have been tased shall be taken to a hospital for evaluation and appropriate treatment.
 3. Visually inspect the contact site. **Medical personnel at a hospital must remove probes imbedded in the skin.** Every effort should be made to keep the probes, probe wires and cartridge intact for possible forensic examination.
 4. If the probes are not imbedded in the individual’s skin the member may recover the probes.

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5. Report the discharge, including any accidental discharges of the TASER® to a supervisor as soon as possible.
6. Collect the expended cartridge, a limited number of AFIDs (microdots) and the probes and submit them to the Property Custodian per Section X. Subsection A. of this directive.
7. Ensure that photographs are taken of the probe penetration points any secondary injuries and the location of occurrence.
8. Fulfill the reporting requirements in section X. of this directive.
9. If TASER® is equipped with a camera, TASER® must be submitted to a Taser administrator for the video to be downloaded. If an administrator is not available, the TASER® shall be submitted to a supervisor to be secured until the video can be downloaded.
10. The TASER® shall not be placed back into service until a TASER® Administer has downloaded the video and inspected the TASER®.

VIII. ECD Instructor Responsibilities

- A. The ECD Instructor is responsible for:
 1. Receiving, inspecting, and ensuring the maintenance of the TASERs®.
 - a. The ECD Instructor must check the TASER® cabinet and remove any unsafe or damaged TASER® from usage until repairs can be made or it is sent back to the manufacturer for replacement.
 2. Conducting quarterly inspections and data downloads on all TASERs® and Tag and Label data for upload.
 3. Removing a TASER® from service and conduct an inspection, firing data download and video upload each time a TASER® is deployed or discharged. The spark test is not considered a discharge.
 4. Completion of a TASER® Inspection Form each time a TASER® is inspected.
 - a. The ECD Instructor will maintain TASER® Inspection Forms for a period of five (5) years.
 5. Coordinating the training required by Section IV of this directive with the Sheriff's Designee.

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6. Maintaining a current list of all members certified to carry the TASER®.
 - a. A copy of this list must be kept in the TASER® Logbook and updated when changed.
 - b. A copy of the updated list must be provided to all supervisors.
7. In the event of death or serious injury from a TASER®, the TASER® will be examined to determine if the device was functioning properly. The device will then be removed from service and placed in the Property Room as evidence for a period of 5 years.
8. Maintain an accurate inventory of the TASERs® and cartridges.
9. Maintain the “Evidence.com” and “Evidence Sync” accounts.

IX. Medical Attention

- A. The TASER® is designed for temporary immobilization of a subject. It should not cause any significant injury. However, a subject may receive secondary injuries as a result of falling when the subject is immobilized.
- B. If the subject complains of medical problems, the member observes any injuries or medical problems to the subject, or the TASER® probes broken the skin or are imbedded in the subject, he/she must be sent to the hospital for evaluation and appropriate treatment. **Medical personnel at a hospital must remove probes imbedded in the skin.**
- C. The member shall notify medical personnel if the TASER® was deployed three or more times.

X. Required Reports and Notifications

- A. Members must comply with the reporting and notification requirements of General Order B-1, “*Use of Force*” when the TASER® is deployed.
 1. The narrative of the Use of Force Report must include the level of force encountered, the type of clothing worn by the individual, the range at which the TASER® was discharged as well the number of discharges and duration of each discharge.
 2. If the TASER® cartridge is utilized, the expended cartridge with wires and probes, and AFIDS (microdots) collected must placed in a biohazard bag and submitted with a copy of all reporting to the Property Custodian as evidence. The probes are to be treated as biohazard sharps

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and should be handled in such a manner as to minimize the potential for injury and/or contamination to the member. The biohazard bags will be available at the Desk Sergeants' area.

3. With the exception of the expended cartridge, AFIDS and sharps, all additional equipment must be returned to the TASER® cabinet.
- B.** If the TASER® is accidentally discharged, and no injuries result, the discharging member must notify the on-duty supervisor and complete and submit an Administrative Report Form 125.
1. A copy of the report, expended cartridge, and AFIDS must be turned in to an ECD Instructor as soon as practical.
 - a. All other equipment will be returned to the TASER® cabinet.
- C.** If the TASER® is damaged, the member must complete and submit an Administrative Report Form 125.
1. The member must turn the damaged TASER® over to an ECD Instructor as soon as practical.
 2. The ECD Logbook must be completed and indicate that the TASER® was turned over to the ECD Instructor because of damage.

XI. Supervisors' Responsibilities

- A.** In the event of a TASER® discharge, ensure that medical attention is requested if necessary.
- B.** Ensure that the appropriate detention facility is advised that the individual received a TASER® discharge.
- C.** In the event of a TASER® discharge, ensure that the member follows Section X. of this directive.
- D.** In the event of a TASER® discharge, in addition to required Use of Force reporting, the supervisor shall complete a TASER Supervisory Use Report. The form will be made available to all supervisors.
- E.** All reports and actions regarding the deployment of the TASER® will be conducted in accordance with the written directive "*Use of Force.*"

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XII. Property Custodian's Responsibilities

- A. In the event that a TASER® is discharged into a subject the Property Custodian shall retain the expended cartridge, the AFIDS (microdots) and the probes with a copy of the reporting in the Property Room for a period of five (5) years.
- B. If a TASER® is taken out of service due to death or serious injury, the Property Custodian shall retain same as evidence in the Property Room for a period of 5 years.

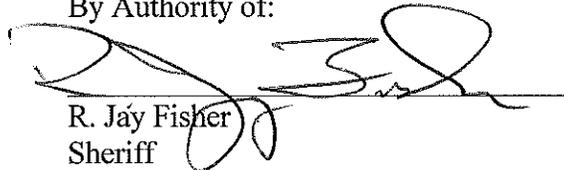
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R. Jáy Fisher
Sheriff