

DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 16-09

OFFICE of the CHIEF OF POLICE
REPLACES: General Order 11-10

DATE: November 10, 2016

PEPPER SPRAY

I. PURPOSE.

In the search for options to employ within the Use of Force continuum, pepper spray has been authorized as an instrument of less lethal force. Therefore the following guidelines will govern its use and associated treatment considerations.

II. GENERAL.

Pepper spray has been approved for use by the department's sworn personnel as an instrument of less lethal force. It shall be up to each individual officer to decide whether or not to carry pepper spray on their duty belt. Should pepper spray be used it must conform to the requirements of the department's "Use of Force" policy.

III. TECHNICAL AND TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS.

Officers are not to spray a sustained burst directly into the individual's mouth, nor are they to repeatedly spray an individual once their initial resistance has been overcome. High Capacity Pepper Spray may also be used as authorized as an instrument of less lethal force. Officers need to assess the effect of impact the use of these devices will have on subjects in the general area due to the larger volume of agent that will be dispersed.

Once a subject has been subdued via the use of pepper spray, the individual should be handcuffed in accordance with department procedure and then immediately placed in an upright or sitting position to prevent **POSITIONAL ASPHYXIA**. In the event that the subject who has been sprayed continues to struggle, officers are not to sit on their back or otherwise initiate any action where the subject's breathing might be further impaired. The suspect will then be conveyed back to this agency and allowed to rinse their eyes and face with cold water to alleviate the effects of the spray. Should the individual be wearing soft contact lenses, the officer shall contact paramedics to remove the lens in order to avoid damage to the eyes and subsequently discard them as contaminated material. The officer will then complete such processing as necessary and handle the

disposition of the individual as circumstances warrant. In any event, an Investigative and Use of Force report will be completed.

If an allergic reaction or difficulty in breathing occurs as a result of the utilization of pepper spray, officers shall seek immediate medical attention for the individual and will be required to obtain a "Fit for Confinement" authorization prior to lodging the suspect in the St. Louis County Justice Center.

IV. DUTY BELT POSITIONING.

Each canister of pepper spray shall be carried in its holster with the firing button located next to the body. The holder itself may be positioned on the duty belt in accordance with personal preference.

BY ORDER OF:

KEVIN R. MURPHY
Chief of Police

KRM:mj