Allegany College of Maryland

SPECIAL POLICE USE OF FORCE POLICY

Drafted & Reviewed by Board 11/2018
Officially Approved by Board of Trustees September 16, 2024
Implementation Date September 17, 2024
Type of Policy - Mandated

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Promoting and maintaining a safe campus environment for students, employees, and visitors is a primary function of the Allegany College of Maryland Special Police. To maintain a safe, welcoming campus environment conducive to student learning and success, Allegany College of Maryland is adopting the following policy and definitions of use of force. This shall be implemented by each ACM Special Police Officer to ensure a proper use of force and to determine when use of deadly force is the appropriate action.

DEFINITIONS

As used in the context of these policies, guidelines, and procedures, the following definitions apply:

DEADLY FORCE: The use of force, which is intended to, or likely to cause death or serious physical injury. Deadly force will also include intentional striking with any vehicle.

NON-DEADLY FORCE: The use of force which is applied to effect an arrest or protect the officer or others from attack, physical resistance, harm, or death but is not intended or expected to cause death.

SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY: Bodily injury which causes death, creates a substantial risk of death, serious or permanent disfigurement, or results in the long term or permanent impairment of an organ or limb.

PROPER USE OF FORCE BY ACM SPECIAL POLICE

I. USE OF LEAST AMOUNT OF FORCE

It is the policy of Allegany College of Maryland Special Police that officers use the least amount of force that is reasonably necessary to control an incident, to effect an arrest, or to protect themselves or others from personal harm or death. The degree of force used by the officer should be progressive along a continuum that spans from verbal commands to deadly force. When circumstances allow, officers should communicate to the suspect their identity, purpose, and intention of using force.

II. USE OF DEADLY FORCE

It is the policy of Allegany College of Maryland Special Police that the use of deadly force is authorized **only** under the following circumstances:

1. Defense of self or another when the officer has reasonable cause to perceive an immediate threat of death or serious physical injury; or

2. To prevent the escape of a suspect of a violent felony whom the officer has probable cause to believe will pose a significant threat of death or serious physical harm to other officers or the public.

Use of deadly force in apprehending violent felony suspects should only be used after all other reasonable means of capture have been exhausted; however, in some situations, it may not be prudent for an officer to impose each distinct level of force.

III. USE OF FIREARMS:

It is the policy of Allegany College of Maryland Special Police to train and qualify sworn personnel in the use of any firearm and other tools used to apply force (e.g., police batons, mace or pepper spray, stun guns, etc.).

Officers of the Allegany College of Maryland Special Police are prohibited from using firearms to fire warning shots.

IV. REPORTING USE OF FORCE:

Officers of the ACM Special Police shall report the following to their immediate supervisor and to the President:

A. Any use of deadly or non-deadly force by an officer, including reports by another member of the agency who witnessed the force used by an officer.

B. Any application of a tool used to apply force.

    1. Any discharge of a firearm by an officer while on-duty or acting as an officer of the law while officially off-duty. (Reports are not required for the discharge of firearms during training or authorized practice.)

C. Any use of force where the suspect claims to be injured.

Reports shall be in written form, signed by the officer, and submitted prior to leaving the shift.

V. REVIEW OF USE OF FORCE ACTION:

Every use of force and discharge of firearm shall be investigated and reviewed to determine if an unwarranted use of force was applied. Authority for delegating the investigation work and review should be at the discretion of the President. The reasonableness of an officer's use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight. Discipline will be handled by the Director of Campus Safety and Special Police according to Human Resources policies depending on the findings of the investigation.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

The Director of Campus Security & Special Police along with the Vice President for Finance & Administration are responsible for implementation, administration, and oversight of this policy.

POLICY CHANGES

Substantive changes to this policy require approval by the Board of Trustees; editorial changes, title/position changes, and/or changes to its implementation procedures may be made as required by Federal or State mandate and/or institutional need with timely notice to employees.