

1. Does the Amarillo Police Department ban chokeholds & strangleholds?

This question is addressed In the Amarillo Police Department Use of Force Policy, which was revised on February 20th of 2020. The use of the carotid restraint is considered a last resort in the prevention of serious bodily injury to an officer or another person, only when other less-lethal methods have failed , or when circumstances prevent the officer from employing other control techniques. However, the carotid restraint is to be used only by those officers who have been properly trained in its use by instructors of the department. The use of a stranglehold is not a law enforcement technique and is not taught or authorized.

2. Does Amarillo Police Department policy require de-escalation?

De-escalation is taught within the department every two years as a requirement for Texas Best Practices as part of being a Recognized Agency by the Texas Police Chief's Association. De-escalation is a part of use of force training and is the philosophy of the Amarillo Police Department's use of force policy. Re-deployment and de-escalation are articulated in the policy as a tool for potential use of force incidents. The supervisory review of incidents has "Verbal Commands / De-escalation techniques used" as one of the eleven elements used for supervisory review of use of force incidents.

3. Does the Amarillo Police Department require warning before shooting?

The use of a firearm is the last resort taught and used by officers in the department. Warning shots are strictly prohibited. Verbal warnings are given as part of the use of force when practical. However, it is not practical or safe for officers or citizens to require warnings before shooting in all circumstances. The vast majority of federal, state, and local agencies do not require such a warning standard in all circumstances.

4. Does the Amarillo Police Department policy require officers to exhaust all alternatives before shooting?

The use of a firearm is the last resort of the Amarillo Police Department by policy directives and training.

5. Does Amarillo Police Department policy have a duty to intervene?

Amarillo Police Department policy states that officers have a duty to intervene to prevent the use of excessive force. It is the policy of the department to use only that level of force that reasonably appears necessary to control or otherwise subdue violent or potentially violent individuals. The use of these control methods under specific circumstances is permitted by law and is an affirmative duty and responsibility of all officers of the department. The department by policy prohibits unnecessary or excessive force use. The policy states that all officers may face civil or criminal liability and disciplinary action if excessive or unnecessary force is used.

6. Does the Amarillo Police Department ban shooting at moving vehicles?

In keeping with Texas Best Practices and Department of Justice recommendations, officers shall not discharge a firearm at a vehicle unless the situation meets the criteria of deadly force. This means that only when the operator of the vehicle is immediately threatening the life of the officer or another person with deadly force. Only in those circumstances, the officer may use deadly force against the driver of the vehicle. Repositioning is articulated in policy and instruction to avoid this risk when possible.

7. Does the Amarillo Police Department have a use of force continuum?

The Amarillo Police Department has, by policy directives and instruction, a use of force continuum. The continuum starts from presence and verbal commands, to soft-empty hand techniques, hard-empty hand techniques, the use of non-lethal tools such as OC Spray, batons, tasers, and to deadly force when absolutely necessary. The continuum is consistent with Texas Best Practices and the Department of Justice guidelines.

8. Does the Amarillo Police Department require comprehensive reporting?

Yes, any use of force by an officer greater than empty soft hands must be documented and submitted to supervision for review. The Amarillo Police Department requires by policy and practice a detailed comprehensive report of the circumstances surrounding the use of the force. All reports are tracked and reviewed as well as photographs and camera recordings. The Use of Control (Force) reports are reviewed through the command structure of the department and provided to the Chief of Police for review, comments, and appropriate action.