The Durham Police Department Promise

The officers of the Durham Police Department are committed to protecting and serving all members of our community. To better enhance this relationship, we are providing clarification and information on our Use of Force policy.

AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

Ban Chokeholds & Strangleholds

The Durham Police Department does not train its officers in the use of chokeholds and strangleholds. Our policy provides that these are NOT authorized use of force techniques.

Require De-Escalation

In an effort to achieve a positive outcome, officers of the Durham Police Department are required to utilize verbal de-escalation techniques whenever feasible.

Require Warning Before Shooting

Prior to using any type of deadly force, officers of the Durham Police Department are required to provide a warning, if reasonably possible. It is the Department's goal to provide every possible opportunity to reach a peaceful resolution.

Exhaust All Alternatives Before Shooting

Durham Police Department policy only allows an officer to use deadly force when no other alternatives are reasonably available. Our primary purpose is to protect and serve and the use of deadly force is always a last resort.

Duty to Intervene

Durham Police Department policy requires officers to intervene to prevent or stop excessive force if witnessed. Any officer who witnesses excessive force must promptly report the conduct through their chain of command. City policy protects an employee from retribution for reporting acts of misconduct.

Ban Shooting at Moving Vehicles

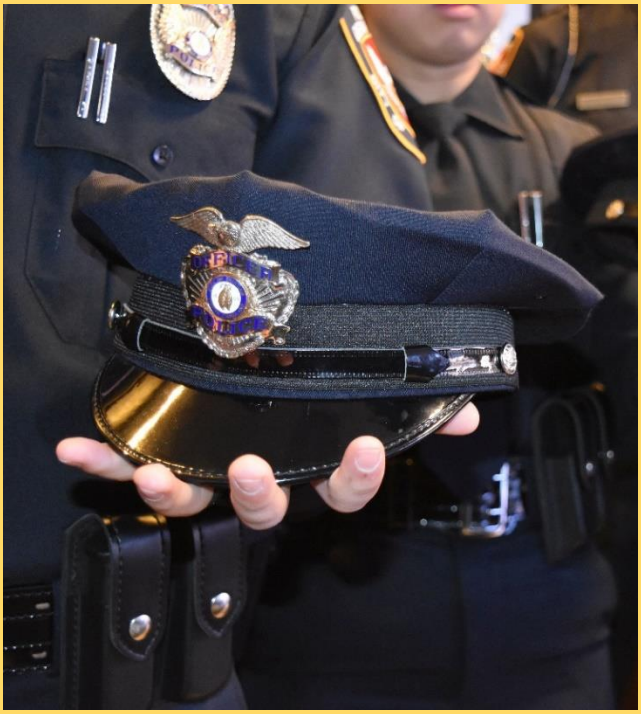
Durham Police Department policy specifically prohibits firing at moving vehicles unless there is an immediate probability of death or serious bodily injury to officers or other persons. Recent events demonstrate that a vehicle may be used as a deadly weapon, so at times, there may be a need to defend against these deadly threats. However, officers are prohibited from intentionally placing themselves in the path of a moving vehicle in order to justify this use of deadly force.

Requires Use of Force Continuum

The Durham Police Department Use of Force policy provides a specific and detailed list of the various use of force options. Use of force options are provided in order from those that are least likely to cause injury and gradually progress to those that provide an increased likelihood of injury.

Require Comprehensive Reporting

The Durham Police Department Use of Force policy requires that a supervisor investigate and document any use of force that results in an injury or complaint of an injury or the application of physical force. These investigations are reviewed by the officer's chain of command and the Professional Standards Division to identify and address any potential violations of policy.



You can view all of our policies, including our Use of Force policy (*General Order 4008 – Use of Force*), on our website at https://durhamnc.gov/149/Police-Department.