

PASADENA POLICE

ROLL-CALL TRAINING

For December 2000

You respond to assist your beat partner on a 647f arrest. As you approach the officer and suspect, you can hear the conversation is heated. Suddenly, the suspect and officer begin to fight. You quickly approach and assist the officer in gaining control of the suspect and in applying handcuffs. After the suspect is handcuffed, he is set down on the curb while you and the other officer regain composure. As you are recounting in your mind what has happened, you see out of the corner of your eye the officer walk by the subject and give him a quick kick in the ribs. Not sure of what you just saw you watch and he does it again as he walks by a second time.

CRITICAL ISSUES:

1. What should you do at the scene?

Whenever, in your opinion, the use of force by any peace officer is excessive, it is your responsibility to take immediate action appropriate for the circumstances.

- a. Your actions must be reasonable and prudent, based upon the circumstances.
 - b. Your actions should include verbal and/or physical intervention necessary to mitigate the use of excessive force.
2. Should this incident be reported?

When officers are involved in or witness an incident in which they believe excessive force may have been used by any peace officer, they shall immediately report the incident to a supervisor and submit a report thoroughly documenting the events. It then becomes the supervisor's responsibility to ensure: (1) proper, thorough and accurate reporting procedures are followed; (2) an investigation is initiated; (3) if warranted, the investigation goes through the proper channels for a formal internal affairs investigation.

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Scenario- Searching techniques used for locating evidence

You respond to assist the Special Investigations Section in the service of a narcotic search warrant at an apartment complex. You are tasked with searching one of three bedrooms, as you begin to search through drawers and closets area you begin to dump out the contents of the drawers and scattering the items as you look for evidence.

CRITICAL ISSUES:

1. Are you aware that recently there has been an increase in law suits involving the law enforcement agencies and the way they conduct inventory and evidence searches during search warrants and exigent circumstances?
2. Have you thought about the method you will use in searching the bedroom?
3. You should identify a specified area where you will pile clothing and other items so that a systematic method has been used. You should use the same method during both search warrants and searches that are dictated by exigent circumstances.
4. Lastly, at the conclusion of the search you should confirm that your area has been either photographed or videotape so that the area is well depicted for court proceedings at a later date. The photographs or video can also be used to discredit a complainant who accuses you of destroying his personal property.

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Scenario- Proper documentation of use of force incidents

Suppose you conduct a traffic stop and during the stop you observe a piece of rock cocaine in plain site on the drivers car seat. You ask the suspect to step out of the car and you proceed to arrest the suspect and your partner retrieves the evidence. As you attempt to place handcuffs on the suspects he attempts to run from you. You are able to detain the suspect and successfully place him in custody with the help of your partner. During the short struggle the suspect did not sustain any injuries and you briefly describe the incident in your police report. However, you were unaware that the suspect had sustained a fractured right wrist from a non-related incident sometime before his arrest. Hours later after you have submitted your police report the suspect is complaining that you and your partner injured his wrist during your struggle. You and partner are well aware that the struggle was so short that there was no way the suspect wrist could have been injured.

CRITICAL ISSUES:

1. What could you have done to avoid this incident?
 - a. To begin, the suspect's injuries should have been identified and documented during the booking processes.
 - b. The suspect should have been interviewed prior to booking about the injury. Initial statements are very creditable since the suspect is locked into his initial statement.
2. It is always better to write as much information into your initial report as opposed to not writing enough.

The report should have included the suspect's statement as to how he injured his wrist and all the details of the incident to demonstrate that the suspect could not have injured his wrist during the arrest.

3. Always advise a supervisor about any use of force incidents so that your sergeant could offer suggestions and input.

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SCENARIO- HANDLING CITIZENS COMPLAINTS FROM THE OFFICER LEVEL

You and a partner respond to a neighborhood disturbance and after arriving you observe a male punch another subject in the middle of the street. You exit your car and immediately detain the suspect and your partner obtains the victim's statement. As you attempt to get the suspects side of the story he begins screaming and you decide to place him into your police unit. The suspect attempts to resist getting into your vehicle and during this time his family members arrive and see you forcing him into your car. The family becomes irate. You avoid talking to the suspect's family by driving away and conducting your supervisor approval at a location near by or at the police station. The next day several family members file a citizen's complaint about the force used to detain the suspect and in the complaint it states that no one advised them why the suspect was even arrested.

CRITICAL ISSUES:

1. Even though officers are not required to advise anyone other than the suspect of the reason for the arrest it is always good business to give some brief details to family members about an arrest. This may help the family cope with the situation a little better.
2. Over 50% of citizen's complaints could have been resolved at the initial scene if the complainants had been given information regarding an incident. Though it is not the responsibility of the arresting officer to do this, you should suggest to a supervisor that the family should be spoken to about the incident. Sergeants are known as an authority figure and appear more creditable to family or friends of the suspect as opposed to the arresting officer.
3. Always try to give family members or friends some information as to why the suspect was arrested and the processes involved. This may dissolve the situation and avoid a citizen's complaint from being filed.