I. PURPOSE

This directive:

A. outlines the policy governing discharges of Personal Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) devices and special weapons that dispense Capsaicin II Powder Agent (PepperBall) or other chemical agents.

B. satisfies CALEA Law Enforcement Standard Chapter 4.

II. POLICY

A. Sanctity of Human Life. All incidents will be resolved with the foremost regard for the preservation of human life and the safety of all persons involved. A member's decision to utilize Personal OC devices or other chemical agents will be made in accordance with the Department directive titled "Use of Force."  

B. De-Escalation. Members will use de-escalation techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force. This includes continually assessing the situation and modifying the use of force as circumstances change and in ways that are consistent with officer safety, including stopping the use of force when it is no longer necessary, in accordance with the Department directive titled "Force Options."

C. When Use is Authorized. Department members shall not use OC devices or other chemical agents against a person unless the person presents an immediate threat of bodily harm to another person. In compliance with force mitigation principles, members must limit their use of OC devices or other chemical agents as measures of last resort, which may be used only after: (1) employing and exhausting required de-escalation tactics; (2) exhausting available lesser measures or available lesser measures would not be effective; and (3) ensuring that the use of OC or other chemical agents is the least amount of force necessary under the circumstances. Members may not use OC or other chemical agents against a person simply because they refuse to comply with a member's order, resist arrest, or attempt to flee. They may be used only when the person resisting, obstructing, or attempting to flee presents an immediate threat of bodily harm to another person. Consistent with the Department directive titled "Force Options." Department members are authorized to use Personal OC devices or other chemical agents for the following persons:

1. **Personal OC devices and** special weapons that dispense Capsaicin II powder agents (PepperBall) or other chemical agents are authorized force options against a person who is a threat. However, members are prohibited from deploying OC Spray or other chemical agents against a person who is standing among a group of other people, such that the discharge of the agent poses a significant risk of impacting other persons who are not threats.

   a. 

2. The use of OC Spray or other chemical agents must never be used against passively resisting protesters or to disperse crowds that include individuals who do not pose any imminent threat of bodily harm to another person. The fact that people in a crowd or group of people are noncompliant does NOT permit a member to use OC or other chemical agents. The use of Special weapons that dispense the Capsaicin II powder agent or larger volumes of chemical agents are expressly prohibited against active and passive resistors that are part of a noncompliant groups, crowds, or an individual taking part in a group or crowd, unless:

   a. every person in the group or crowd poses an imminent threat of bodily harm to another person, and
b. only after obtaining authorization from the Superintendent or his or her designee.
Restrictions. For the safety of everyone involved, the following additional restrictions apply:

1. **Persons Vulnerable to Injury.** Personal OC devices or other chemical agents will not be used on a person who is at a greater risk of serious injury from their use, unless the person is defined as a threat and other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective. People who are potentially at greater risk of serious injury from Personal OC device or other chemical agent use include, but are not limited to, children, pregnant women, people in apparent medical distress or behavioral health crisis, and the elderly.

2. **Enclosed Areas.** Personal OC devices or other chemical agents will not be used in enclosed areas unless (a) the person presents an immediate threat of death or serious bodily harm to another person and other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective; or (b) the person is suspected of a violent crime, has barricaded themself within an enclosed area, and discharge would not present a substantial risk to other persons, other force options are not readily available or would otherwise be ineffective, AND the Superintendent or their designee gives their express authorization.

3. **Persons who are Handcuffed or Restrained.** Members are prohibited from using Personal OC Devices or other chemical agents against a person who is handcuffed or otherwise restrained, unless the person presents an imminent threat of bodily harm to another person and other, less intrusive means have failed to mediate the threat.

E. **Justify Separate Uses of Force.** An initial application of a Personal OC device or other chemical agent and each subsequent application must be individually justified and documented on the Tactical Response Report (TRR) as a separate use of force.

F. Department members will refer to the Department directive titled "Control Devices and Instruments" for specific procedures on device protocols including training, maintenance, manner of carry, and accountability.

III. **CONDITIONS ON THE USE OF PERSONAL OC DEVICES OR OTHER CHEMICAL AGENTS**

A. **Authorized Manner of Use.** A member who is discharging a Personal OC device or other chemical agent will:

1. give verbal and non-verbal commands and warnings, including hand signals, prior to, during, and after discharge, including informing other Department members on the scene of the discharge.

2. allow a subject a reasonable amount of time to comply with a warning prior to using or continuing to use a Personal OC device or other chemical agent, unless doing so would compromise the safety of a Department member or another person.

3. for the use of Personal OC devices, when possible, apply a single, two-second burst to the subject’s facial area to affect the eyes, nose, and lungs of the subject.

4. if the subject is incapacitated, immediately attempt to restrain the subject while he or she is incapacitated, when applicable.

B. **Request Supervisor and Notify COPA.** As soon as practical, a member who has used or anticipates using a Personal OC device or other chemical agent will request that a supervisor respond to the scene. After using a personal OC device or other chemical agent, the member shall notify COPA immediately after the threat of harm has been dissipated.

C. Whenever possible, the ranking member on the scene of an incident will notify the Chicago Fire Department prior to the anticipated use of a device that dispenses a chemical agent through use of special weapons deployed by the Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT).

IV. **POST-DISCHARGE RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. **Effect Mitigation.** To assist in mitigating the effects of the discharge, when it is safe and feasible to
do so, Department members will:

1. relocate the person(s) to an area of uncontaminated air and face the person(s) into the wind.
2. assist the person(s) and provide an opportunity for the person(s) to decontaminate and eliminate the effects of the agent by flushing the affected areas with cool water. This should take place as soon as the person can be controlled without possible injury to themself or others.
   a. Persons wearing contact lenses should remove them, if possible, before flushing the eyes with water.
b. Under normal circumstances all symptoms of exposure to OC should disappear within thirty to forty-five minutes.

c. Clothing that becomes contaminated with OC can be laundered in the usual manner without fear of contaminating other laundry.

d. Special equipment or a special washing process is not required to decontaminate an enclosed area. The opening of doors and windows will normally result in the removal of OC from the environment within forty-five minutes.

e. Persons should refrain from rubbing the affected area(s) or using creams, ointments, commercial eye washes, or bandages.

NOTE: Department members will advise the persons about the above-listed decontamination efforts and conditions.

3. avoid transporting an individual who is wet with OC. Transporting a person when dry will minimize the possibility of the member or vehicle becoming contaminated.

B. Discharging Member. Immediately upon gaining control and restraining the subject, discharging member will:

1. notify the Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC).

NOTE: If a member discharges a chemical agent outside the City of Chicago, the member will also notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction and the Chicago Police Department's Crime Prevention and Information Center (CPIC).

2. request the appropriate medical aid, including contacting emergency medical services (EMS) from the Chicago Fire Department, if the person appears to be in any physical distress or complains of injury or aggravation of a known pre-existing medical condition (e.g., asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, or a heart ailment).

3. complete a Tactical Response Report (TRR) (CPD-11.377) for the discharge consistent with the procedures outlined in the Department directive titled "Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report."

4. complete the appropriate case report and other required reports and submit the reports to their immediate supervisor for review and approval.

C. Office of Emergency Management and Communications. OEMC will immediately notify the:

1. involved member(s) immediate supervisor.

2. field supervisor and the watch operations lieutenant from the district of occurrence.

D. Reviewing Supervisor. When notified that a member under his or her command discharged a chemical agent, the assigned reviewing supervisor will:

1. respond immediately to the scene and assume command and oversight of the scene unless relieved by a higher-ranked supervisor.

NOTE: When the discharging member's immediate supervisor is unavailable, the watch operations lieutenant will assign a reviewing supervisor from the district of occurrence.

2. ensure the scene is protected and processed in accordance with the Department directive titled "Crime Scene Protection and Processing," including determining whether to request an evidence technician to process the scene.

3. request the Street Deputy to respond to all discharges that result in a potentially life-threatening injury or death.
4. if a death has occurred as a result of a discharge, ensure the appropriate Forensic Services Division and Bureau of Detectives personnel are requested.

5. review the discharging member’s TRR and complete the appropriate section of the TRR consistent with the procedures outlined in the Department directive titled "Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report."

E. Investigating Supervisor. The watch operations lieutenant, or assigned investigating supervisor the rank of lieutenant or above, from the district of occurrence will:

1. ensure that a supervisor at least one rank higher than the discharging member responds to the scene of the discharge when such a supervisor is available.

2. immediately notify the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) (or CPIC when COPA is not available) and ensure that a log number is obtained for a Personal OC device or other chemical agent discharge notification.

3. for incidents which do not require the presence of the Street Deputy, investigate the incident, review the discharging member’s TRR, and document the investigation of the incident on the TRR-I consistent with the procedures outlined in the Department directive titled "Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report."

4. receive the discharged Personal OC device from the sworn member, provide a replacement device to the member, and notify the individual designated by the district commander that a replacement device has been issued. When needed, additional Personal OC devices may be requested from the Taser Repair Center through normal requisition procedures.

NOTE: A copy of the TRR will be presented to the Taser Repair Center for replacement Personal OC devices.

F. Street Deputy. In all cases in which a subject has a potential life-threatening injury or a death has occurred in conjunction with a Personal OC device or other chemical agent discharge, the Street Deputy will:

1. proceed to the scene, assume command of the scene, and personally conduct a complete and thorough investigation of the incident.

2. ensure that all tasks delineated for subordinate personnel are performed.

3. review the discharging member’s TRR and complete the appropriate section of the TRR-I consistent with the procedures outlined in the Department directive titled "Incidents Requiring the Completion of a Tactical Response Report."

G. District Commander. The district commander of the district of occurrence will ensure that the replacement Personal OC devices are available to the watch operations lieutenant on each watch.

Charlie Beck
Interim Superintendent of Police

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