Use of Force Working Group Recommendations

1. **Sanctity of life must be the driving principle** behind all officer actions and must apply not just to the person or the officers, but also to the surrounding community. Officers must be prohibited from firing into crowds or other actions that place bystanders at an unjustified risk of injury or death.

2. **Force must only be used as a last resort, and when force is used, officers may only use the least amount necessary under the circumstances.** Force may be used only when necessary and after other non-violent means have been exhausted. As the threat to imminent bodily harm diminishes, officers must immediately reduce the level of force.

3. **Officers have an affirmative and mandatory duty to de-escalate conflict in order to avoid the need for any force.** Officers must use various de-escalation techniques, including trauma-informed and disability-informed techniques, and provide verbal or visual warnings with reasonable time to allow the person to comply. Officers must not engage in intimidation tactics or behaviors that escalate an incident, such as taunting, threatening, or insulting individuals.

4. **Officers must make individualized assessments of the need to use force, especially against youth and people with disabilities.** Officers must be prohibited from using force against children, the elderly, people who are pregnant, people in medical distress, or people who appear to be frail, low body mass, or sickly, unless they present an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm to another person. Officers must provide reasonable accommodations to persons known or believed to have disabilities in order to avoid the use of force.

5. **Require officers to document all uses of force.** Officers must complete a Use of Force report each time an officer uses force against a person, regardless of injuries or justifications. Officers must document the non-violent alternatives exhausted to prevent the need for force in their reports.

6. **COPA must have primary authority to investigate all significant uses of force,** including the use or discharge of any weapon, whether or not it makes contact with a person, pointing a weapon at a person, the use of dogs, use of force against a person who in handcuffs or restrained, and any force that causes an injury requiring medical treatment or death. CPD officers must be required to immediately notify COPA after any such use of force, and COPA must have the responsibility to immediately respond to the scene.

7. **Chokeholds must be banned,** as well as other deadly restraints that restrict oxygen or blood flow or impair an individual’s ability to breathe.

8. **Restrict the use of Tasers to situations where the person presents an immediate threat of serious bodily harm to another person.** CPD must prohibit officers from
continuing to use Tasers as tools of convenience to achieve compliance or against persons who are simply running away but who do not pose any threat of immediate physical harm to another person.

9. **Restrict the use of firearms.** Pointing a firearm at another human being must be treated as the use of deadly force that it is. Officers must be prohibited from pointing a gun at a person unless there is an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm to another person and all alternatives that were exhausted, and they must be required to report every time they point a gun at a person in written Use of Force reports.

10. **Use of force against peaceful protestors must be prohibited.** OC spray, long range acoustic devices, and batons must not be used against passively resisting protestors or to disperse crowds at protests.

11. **Officers must intervene verbally and physically** to stop another officer from engaging in excessive or unnecessary force.

12. **Respect the dignity of people injured or killed by the police.** Officers must render aid to victims of police use of force and treat victims and their loved ones with dignity and respect. CPD must provide victims and their families trauma-informed psycho-social support services and other community support services as needed, within 24 hours of an incident. CPD must provide the people injured or killed and their families with all relevant documentation related to the incident, including police and medical examiner reports.