

Electronic Control Devices

508.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the issuance and use of the electronic control device (ECD).

508.2 POLICY

The TASER device is intended to control a resistive or potentially violent inmate, while minimizing the risk of serious injury. It is anticipated that the appropriate use of such a device should result in fewer serious injuries to custody staff and inmates.

Staff members who have completed agency-approved training may be issued an TASER device for use during the current assignment. Staff members who have been issued an ECD shall only use the device consistent with this policy and the Use of Force Policy.

Staff shall only use the TASER device and cartridges that have been issued by the Agency. The device and cartridge(s) may be carried as part of a uniformed correctional officer's equipment.

- (a) The ECD shall be maintained in a secure storage location (see the [Management of Weapons and Control Devices Policy](#)).
- (b) Each ECD shall be clearly and uniquely numbered.
- (c) All ECDs shall be accounted for during each shift.

508.3 VERBAL AND VISUAL WARNINGS

A verbal warning of the intended use of the TASER device should precede its application, unless it would otherwise endanger the safety of correctional officers or when it is not practicable due to the circumstances. The purpose of the warning is to:

- (a) Provide the inmate with a reasonable opportunity to voluntarily comply.
- (b) Provide other correctional officers and inmates with a warning that an ECD may be deployed.

The aiming laser should never be intentionally directed into the eyes of another as it may permanently impair his/her vision.

508.4 USE OF THE ECD

508.4.1 APPLICATION OF THE ECD

Authorized personnel may use the TASER device when circumstances perceived by the correctional officer at the time indicate that such application is reasonably necessary to control an inmate in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) The inmate is physically resisting.
- (b) The inmate has threatened to physically resist and reasonably appears to have the potential to harm correctional officers, him/herself or others.

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508.4.2 SPECIAL DEPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

The use of the TASER device should generally be avoided unless the totality of the circumstances indicates that other available options reasonably appear ineffective or would present a greater danger to the correctional officer, the subject or others, and the correctional officer reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the risk of using the device. This includes:

- (a) Inmates who are known to be pregnant.
- (b) Elderly inmates.
- (c) Inmates with obviously low body mass.
- (d) Inmates who are handcuffed or otherwise restrained.
- (e) Inmates who have been recently sprayed with a flammable chemical agent or who are otherwise in close proximity to any combustible vapor or flammable material, including alcohol-based oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray.
- (f) Inmates whose position or activity may result in collateral injury (e.g., falls from height, inmate on stairs).

Because the application of the TASER device in the drive-stun mode (i.e., direct contact without probes) relies primarily on pain compliance, the use of the drive-stun mode generally should be limited to supplementing the probe-mode to complete the circuit, or as a distraction technique to gain separation between the correctional officers and the subject, thereby giving correctional officers time and distance to consider force options or actions.

The TASER device shall not be used to torture, psychologically torment, elicit statements or to punish any inmate.

508.4.3 TARGETING CONSIDERATIONS

Reasonable efforts should be made to target lower center mass and avoid intentionally targeting the head, neck, chest and groin. If the dynamics of a situation or officer safety do not permit the correctional officer to limit the application of the TASER device probes to a precise target area, correctional officers should monitor the condition of the inmate if one or more probes strikes the head, neck, chest or groin until the inmate is released to the care of qualified medical personnel.

508.4.4 MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS OF THE ECD

Correctional officers should apply an TASER device for only one standard cycle and then evaluate the situation before applying any subsequent cycles. Multiple applications of the TASER device against a single individual are generally not recommended and should be avoided unless the correctional officer reasonably believes that the need to control the individual outweighs the potentially increased risk posed by multiple applications.

Correctional officers should generally not intentionally apply more than one TASER device at a time against a single subject.

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508.4.5 DOCUMENTATION

All TASER device discharges shall be documented in the records management system (RMS). Notification shall be made to a supervisor in compliance with the Use of Force Policy. Unintentional discharges will also be documented in RMS.

The onboard TASER device memory will be downloaded through the data port by a qualified employee and saved with the related incident report. Photographs of probe sites should be taken by a correctional officer. The on-duty supervisor shall ensure that any video recordings of the incident are preserved. If there is a serious or unexpected injury or death, AFIDs should be collected and the expended cartridge along with both probes and wire should be submitted into evidence.

508.5 MEDICAL TREATMENT

Absent extenuating circumstances or unavailability, only qualified medical personnel should remove ECD probes from an inmate's body. Used ECD probes shall be considered a sharps biohazard, similar to a used hypodermic needle, and handled properly. Universal precautions should be taken accordingly.

All inmates who have been struck by ECD probes or who have been subjected to the electric discharge of the device shall be medically cleared by qualified medical personnel prior to continued processing or housing.

Any inmate exhibiting signs of distress or who is exposed to multiple or prolonged applications (i.e., more than 15 seconds) shall be promptly examined by qualified medical personnel.

If any individual refuses medical attention, such a refusal should be witnessed by another correctional officer and/or medical personnel and shall be fully documented in related reports. If an audio recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included, if possible.

508.6 TRAINING

Personnel who are authorized to carry the TASER device shall be permitted to do so only after successfully completing the initial agency-approved training.