

# Hamden Police Department General Orders

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**Policy Number:** 025-001

**Effective Date:** January 01, 2015

**Section:** Weapons

**Rescinds:** July 01, 2010

**Title:** Impact Weapons.

**Approved By:** Police Commission

**Approval Date:** December 10, 2014

## PURPOSE

To establish Department guidelines on the training, carrying, and use of authorized impact weapons.

## POLICY

The policy of the Hamden Police Department (“Department”) is to use only that amount of force reasonably necessary to effect an arrest, control a situation, or defend themselves or others from harm. The Department recognizes that combative, non-compliant, armed and/or violent subjects cause handling and control problems that require specialized training and equipment. Thus, the Department has adopted the use of a non-lethal force philosophy to assist with the de-escalation of potentially violent confrontations, and have authorized the use of Department issued impact weapons. Any use of an impact weapon must comply with the Department’s Use of Force Policy, General Order 001-006. Any police officer who makes an unlawful, excessive, or unauthorized use of an impact weapon will be subject to disciplinary actions and may be subject to civil and criminal liability

## Definitions

Active resistance: The actions of a subject who makes physically evasive movements to interfere with an officer’s attempt to control that subject. These movements may include bracing, tensing, pulling away, or pushing.

Authorized weapons: The weapons that Department officers are permitted to carry, that meet Department specifications, and for which officers demonstrate proficiency and successfully complete training.

De-escalation: A decrease in the severity of force used in an incident in direct response to a decrease in the level of resistance encountered.

Force: Any physical strike or instrumental contact with a person, any intentional attempted physical strike or instrumental contact that does not take effect, or any

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significant physical contact that restricts the movement of a person. The term includes: the aiming a firearm, the discharge of a firearm, the use of chemical agent, use of impact weapons, use of an Electronic Control Weapon, the taking of a subject to the ground, and any physical contact that includes control techniques. The term does not include escorting or handcuffing a person with minimal or no resistance. Use of force is lawful if it is objectively reasonable under the circumstances, and if the minimum amount of force is used that is necessary to effect an arrest, or protect the officer or other person.

Harm: Injury inflicted upon a person, whether visible or not.

Imminent threat: An officer's reasonable perception of impending danger, death, or serious injury from any action or outcome that may occur during an encounter. A subject may pose an imminent or impending danger even if s/he is not pointing a weapon at an officer but, for example, has a weapon within reach, is running for cover carrying a weapon, or is running to a place where an officer has reason to believe that a weapon is available.

Impact weapons: Department-approved tools that provide methods for gaining control of a subject when lethal force is not justified, but when empty-hand control techniques are not sufficient to effect control. These weapons should only be used when an officer is met with active resistance. The various batons authorized and issued by the Department are impact weapons.

Lethal Force: Any physical force that can reasonably be expected to cause death or serious physical injury. Officers must understand that lethal physical force is an extreme measure and shall only be used in accordance with the law and as stated in this policy and other policies governing the use of force.

Member of the Police: The sworn personnel, including cadets, who directly perform duties including: conducting criminal investigations; maintaining law and order; protecting the life and property of the citizens; and any other similar duties vested upon the Hamden Police at present or in the future.

Non-lethal force: Any use of force not intended to, nor likely to, cause death or serious bodily harm.

Passive resistance: The actions of a subject who does not cooperate with an officer's commands, but who does not take action to prevent being taken into custody.

Serious bodily Injury: Injury that causes death or creates a substantial risk of death; permanent harm to health, disfigurement, or permanent loss of functions of any organ in the body; or injury that results in treatment at a medical facility.

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Note: minor treatment such as eye-washing, cleansing, and bandaging; evaluation with no injury discovered; etc., will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a supervisor, and absent extenuating circumstances, may not be designated as serious bodily harm.

### Procedures

#### **A. Equipment and Training**

1. Officers may carry and use only Department issued and approved impact weapons. Any impact weapon purchased by a member of the department must be of a type the Department has authorized and approved.
  - a. The authorized impact defensive tool of the Hamden Police Department is the Monadnock Expandable Baton. (MEB)
2. Authorized personnel shall train officers in the use and handling of the issued impact weapons.
3. Officers shall not carry or use impact weapons until properly trained and certified.
4. Officers shall carry an impact weapon when wearing their uniform in public. Impact weapons shall be carried in a holster or carrying device specifically issued for such purpose.

#### **B. Use of the Impact Weapons**

1. Officers may deploy impact weapons in response to active resistance. Officers may also use impact weapons to assist with restraining subjects or applying escort holds, consistent with Department training.
2. Officers must adhere to the progressive use of force theory to determine the degree of force that may be used. It is important to consider:
  - a. the severity of the crime involved;
  - b. the threat level encountered; and
  - c. the level of resistance by the subject.
3. Officers shall use only the minimum degree of objectively reasonable force necessary to gain control of the situation, in light of the circumstances present. Any use of impact weapons must comply with the Hamden

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Police Department's Use of Force policies. Officers are reminded that use of force is only authorized when it is objectively reasonable and for lawful purposes.

4. An officer is obligated to de-escalate his/her use of force as the subject's resistance decreases.
5. Officers should avoid raising an impact weapon above the level of the head of the subject.
6. Officers must avoid extreme levels of force which may cause serious bodily harm when striking a subject with an impact weapon, except when the circumstances justify using such force because of imminent danger of serious bodily harm and the member is acting in self-defense.

### **C. Body Areas Vulnerable to Impact Weapon Strikes with Less Likelihood Of Causing Serious Bodily Harm**

1. Impact weapons should be used in a manner consistent with training in order to cause the minimum possible harm, by contacting pressure points, nervous centers, and any other area where the bones are close to the skin, especially the limbs.
2. Vulnerable areas less likely to cause serious physical injury as identified in Diagram 1 as Green and Yellow target areas.

### **D. Body Areas to be Avoided by Impact Weapon Strikes**

1. The following are considered potentially fatal impact spots and should not be struck with an impact weapon unless lethal force is justified, consistent with Department policy and the law (See Diagram 4):
  - a. Above the shoulders (any area of the head)
  - b. Genital area
  - c. Spinal area
  - d. Solar plexus or celiac plexus (sternum, abdominal and cardiac trauma)

### **E. Verbal Commands**

1. A verbal warning and time to allow the subject to comply must be given, prior to the use of an impact weapon, unless such warning would present a danger to the member or others.

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2. Verbal commands before, during, and after the use of an impact weapon are important in order to de-escalate any situation and gain compliance and control of an actively resisting subject.

### **F. Training**

1. Only those officers specifically trained, assigned, and authorized by the Chief of Police shall carry or utilize impact weapons. Officers must be trained and certified every two years by a certified instructor or trainer.
2. If an officer fails to qualify in the use of an impact weapon, he/she will not be allowed to carry the weapon until he/she successfully completes certification.
3. Based on the training requirements of the POST Training Academy, officers will be required to demonstrate proficiency with impact weapons as well as knowledge of the laws and this department's policies concerning the use of force.

### **G. Reporting Responsibilities**

1. Any member using an impact weapon to apprehend, control, or restrain a subject shall:
  - a. Notify his shift supervisor, and
  - b. Complete a Use of Force Report Form as required by the Department's Reporting and Investigation Force Policy, General Order 001-009.

### **H. Responsibility Of Supervisors**

1. As outlined in the Reporting and Investigation Force General Order 001-009, a supervisor must respond to the scene of the incident and conduct an investigation when an impact weapon has been used on a subject.

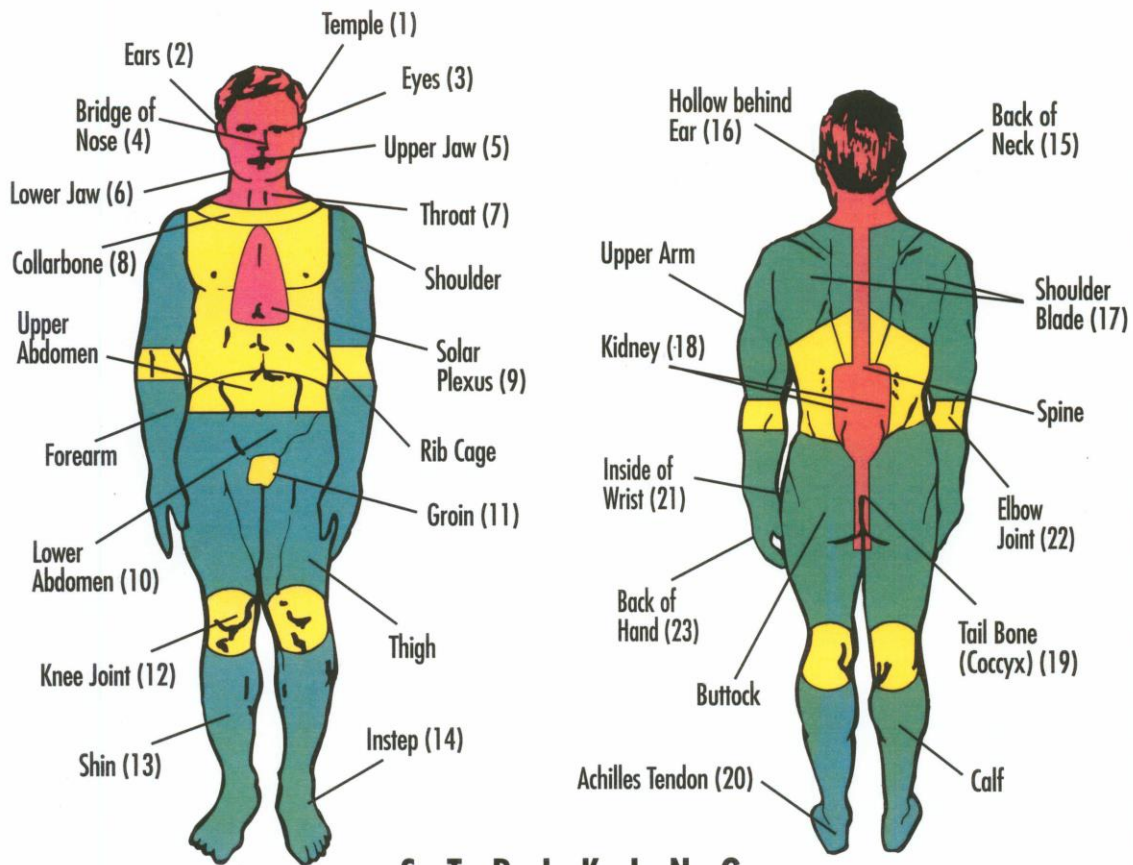
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Diagram 1



## BATON CHART

Escalation Of Trauma By Vital  
And Vulnerable Striking Areas



### S T R I K I N G

#### GREEN TARGET AREAS

**REASONING:** Minimal level of resultant trauma. Injury tends to be temporary rather than long-lasting, however exceptions can occur.

Except for the HEAD, NECK, and SPINE, the whole body is a Green Target Area for the application of baton blocking and restraint skills.

#### YELLOW TARGET AREAS

**REASONING:** Moderate to serious level of resultant trauma. Injury tends to be more long-lasting, but may also be temporary.

#### RED TARGET AREAS

**REASONING:** Highest level of resultant trauma. Injury tends to range from serious to long-lasting rather than temporary and may include unconsciousness, serious bodily injury, shock or death.