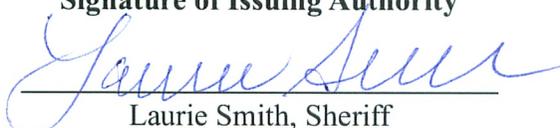


<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Office of the Sheriff Custody Bureau</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Policy and Procedure Manual</b></p>	<p><b>Policy Number:</b> 9.04  <b>No. of Pages:</b> 4  <b>Date of Origin:</b> 2021-02-22  <b>Date Revised:</b> 2021-02-22</p>
<p><b>Chapter:</b> Security and Control</p>	<p><b>Subject:</b> De-escalation</p>
<p><b>Supersedes:</b> New</p>	<p><b>Distribution:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>References:</b> California Penal Code §§835a, 836.5; Government Code § 7286; <i>Chavez v County of Santa Clara</i>, Case No. 1:15-cv-05277-RMI (Remedial Plan March 2019); <b>Policy 9.01 - Use of Force</b>; <b>Policy 9.02: Use of Force Investigation, Reporting, and Review</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Signature of Issuing Authority</b></p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Laurie Smith, Sheriff</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Current Policy Review</b></p> <p><b>Date of Review:</b> 2021-02-22  <b>Revisions Made:</b> N/A</p>

**I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to staff on the use of De-escalation Techniques and Tactics. This policy applies to all Office of the Sheriff Custody Bureau sworn staff.

**II. Policy**

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to promote the use of De-escalation Techniques and Tactics wherever possible to reduce the need to use force and increase staff safety. Consistent use of De-escalation Techniques and Tactics in potential use-of-force situations will create a positive impact on public trust, reduce danger to staff and the public, and improve community cooperation.

De-escalation should be used wherever possible.

**III. Definitions**

**De-escalation:** The process of using strategies and techniques intended to decrease the intensity of the situation. The goal of De-escalation is to gain the voluntary compliance of the person and thereby reduce or eliminate the need to use physical force.

**De-escalation Techniques and Tactics:** Actions used by staff that minimize the likelihood of the need to use force during an incident and increase the likelihood of gaining voluntary compliance from the person.

#### IV. De-escalation

Staff are expected to use De-escalation Techniques and Tactics whenever safe and practical. The following De-escalation Techniques and Tactics should be employed to increase the likelihood of voluntary compliance and cooperation.

- A. **Behavior Management Plan:** If the person has a Behavior Management Plan, consult the plan for guidance about specific De-escalation strategies unique to the person.
- B. **Communication:** Effective communication is the foundation of De-escalation. These communication techniques can calm an agitated person and promote rational decision making:
  1. Soften the interaction where possible: Regulate your vocal tone, pitch, and volume (e.g., speak slowly in a calm non-threatening voice, rather than shouting commands). Use a calm, neutral, and non-threatening voice to notify the person of the consequences of continued non-cooperation and the benefits of cooperation, and then offer the person a chance to cooperate. Use non-threatening body language and posture.
  2. Build rapport: Show respect for all people involved, use the person's name, and practice active listening skills. Be culturally aware of all people involved. Make eye contact and avoid inappropriate facial expressions.
  3. Help the person understand and process the situation: Designate one staff member to speak where possible to avoid confusing the person. Narrate your actions (e.g., I am going to put these handcuffs on like we talked about so we can get you some help). Speak in common language, rather than professional jargon or "street slang."
  4. Reduce or eliminate distractions impeding a successful resolution: Focus directly on the source of conflict. Ignore challenges or insults made by the person. Instruct uninvolved people to lockdown in their cells. Avoid any unnecessary display of weapons. Stage extraneous staff away from the situation if safely possible. If the person is upset at a specific staff member, remove that staff member from the situation.
- C. **Time:** Intensity tends to decrease with time. Creating time by slowing down the pace of the incident allows staff to gather information, improve the accuracy of their perceptions, and make better informed decisions about how to respond to the incident. The following strategies can create more time:
  1. Wait out the person: Do not rush into physical confrontation if the situation is stable enough to wait.

2. Gather additional information: If the situation allows, take the time to enhance your understanding of the underlying conflict. Identify any potential factors listed in Section E below that would help inform a productive response.
3. Gather additional resources: Request (outside of the person's hearing whenever possible) additional resources such as:
  - a. Specially trained staff members (e.g., CIT trained staff, mental health staff, bilingual staff members, etc.)
  - b. Emergency Response Team (e.g., Team Leader and/or ERT Sergeant)
  - c. Staff equipped with less-lethal weapons
  - d. Staff member(s) that may have an established rapport with the person

**D. Distance, Isolation, and Containment:** Creating distance is another way to increase time, improve staff safety, and reduce the likelihood that you will be perceived as a threat by the person. The following strategies can create more distance:

1. Attempt to move or distract the person away from the source of hostility, anger, embarrassment, or cause of adverse emotions. Creating distance or isolating the subject from the source of the problem may likely De-escalate or eliminate the person's antagonism.
2. Approach the threat or potential threat cautiously by being aware of surrounding circumstances and avoiding rushing into a situation unnecessarily.
3. Establish a position that allows staff to more safely engage and react to the person.
4. Move and reposition (e.g., moving to other parts of the living unit that are farther away).
5. Use existing barriers or place barriers between staff and the threat or potential threat (e.g., closing the person's cell door, standing on the opposite side of table).
6. Contain the threat to a specific area (e.g., cell or dayroom).
7. Conceal oneself by approaching or engaging the threat or potential threat from a position that limits the person's view of responding staff.

**E. Other Factors:** In certain circumstances, the person's lack of compliance may not be a deliberate attempt to resist staff. A person's reasoning ability, ability to appreciate the gravity of situation, and/or ability to comply with commands, may be affected by the following:

1. Medical conditions
2. Mental illness
3. Cognitive impairment

4. Physical limitations such as mobility, vision, hearing or speech impairment
5. Language barrier
6. Apparent drug or alcohol intoxication
7. Drug interaction
8. Behavioral crisis
9. Fear or anxiety

Staff awareness of these possibilities, when time and circumstances reasonably permit, should be balanced against the facts of the incident facing the staff member when deciding which options are the most appropriate to bring the situation to a safe resolution.

- F. **Reporting and Review:** Any use of force reports submitted will contain descriptions of De-escalation efforts before and during the force event, and, if De-escalation was not used, a description of why De-escalation was not used. The use of De-escalation Techniques and Tactics will be reviewed by the Use of Force Review Committee consistent with ***Policy 9.02: Use of Force Investigation, Reporting, and Review.***

## V. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed every year and, where necessary, the Sheriff's Office will undertake efforts to revise the policy.

~~~ End ~~~