



## Berkley Public Safety Video Update Part 5

Some things that we have seen around the nation regarding some major key points that should be addressed within police departments, public safety departments, any type of department that uses some form of use of force or those types of training. I know you have recently updated your policy and procedure regarding use of force, that just got approved by our city council. One question that I have is: when use of force is used during an incident, what are the types of reporting requirements in place within our department to review that incident if use of force is required or used?

In Berkley we do not need to use force very often. In my career any time force needs to be used, it is not pretty. You can't make it pretty and the reason we train in it is if you do it right the likelihood of injuries is less. If you are hesitant or anything, we teach de-escalation, we have a de-escalation policy, that's always our first goal is not to touch anybody, and quite honestly I found with my personality very rarely in my career most people will comply. Unfortunately, we are dealing with a lot of people that are intoxicated or have mental illness and sometimes it's really hard to connect. Our goal is to use the minimum amount of force we have to, but if force is used we do have a very stringent reporting. We have about seven pages, which the length of the report doesn't make it great, it's the content of the report detailing all the circumstances. It is reviewed by a first-line supervisor, Lieutenant, and myself, and also our training unit. Again to make sure our policy was followed and also learned from it. Any time we use force, which again has only been a handful of times since I've been here, anytime we use force, first of all is there something we could have done to avoid that and if there wasn't was that the best way to do it? We're really trying to learn from every single situation we have. The bulk of the incidents quite honestly involved mentally ill and there just are not a lot of resources for the mentally ill or quite honestly for us right now and that is a problem that we deal with.

Continuing with use of force, some of the techniques not sure if it's used here, but choke holds and strangleholds, do we have a ban on those? Do we have them as a part of our use of force program? Can you talk about more on if yes why, if no what led to that decision if there was one that an incident or anything like that to occur for that to happen?

When I went to the academy we learned choke holds and how to do them appropriately. They have been out in Michigan for years. I don't even remember when they went out, it has been that long. Our previous policy said that only authorized techniques are permitted. Chokeholds are not an authorized technique. That was never allowed.



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Our new policy specifically states they are not allowed for non-deadly force situations. In deadly force situations, where you have to save either your own life or somebody else's life, we will use whatever we can to stop the assault. I have not seen a chokehold for probably 30 years. They

are not taught in Michigan and they are not something used in Michigan. I can't speak for other states, as I understand in Minnesota that is an approved technique, it has not been here and they are not used here.

I think it is crucial to mention that moving forward, as we transition into whatever this change looks like, that is a good thing to know. I think from a resident as well as an officer from a standpoint in terms of interactions with officers. Continuing with those interactions, another big proponent or at least conversations that have come up whether it is sputtering through the national news or just even here locally, body cameras, do we have body cameras?

We do not right now. We did dedicate some money in a future budget. We just got new in-car cameras here in Berkley. All of our marked police vehicles, our utility vehicles such as our animal control truck, our pickup truck, and also our fire apparatus all have cameras. That is a new system of substantial investment of over a hundred thousand dollars plus we have cloud storage that's close to twenty thousand dollars a year also. Honestly we are still working out the buttons on that. It has been working fine but there were some infrastructure issues we had to work through. Body cameras the initial investment for the City of Berkley would probably be about another hundred thousand dollars. That includes buying the cameras, buying the accessories, some more infrastructure upgrades for our actual network here also, and then probably about another sixteen to seventeen thousand a year in cloud storage. I have yet to talk to a police officer, either in this department or my former department, that is against body cameras. When we first went in-car cameras, back in the early-mid 90s where I was, there was some resistance but I don't know anybody that is not for them because I find that a lot of times the video shows pretty much what happened. Again it does not show everything there are things that can happen out of view but I think it is a great tool to have. There is nobody against it. There is privacy, there is FOIA'S where quite honestly we may have to hire another person just to process those. More and more for discovery and FOIA'S we are getting requests for, and it is a very time consuming process because we have to redact all personal information. It is not an easy thing to do. We do have a budget, my former department we budgeted for them, it has been in the budget



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there for three or four years and they are still working on implementing it. In this area there are only a couple departments that have them. It is a process that in this area you are just seeing them being implemented. I'm totally for them no problem at all, matter of fact

I talked to a lieutenant today to say, put them in tomorrow we'll be ready, it's just a process to get the infrastructure in place and actually to purchase them.

Certainly, I imagine that there is also some infrastructural things in terms of protocol and process in terms of how body cams will be positioned, how they need to be used, how long they need to stay on, those kinds of things which I imagine is a process in itself on top of the process of just getting the body cameras.

Exactly and the good part is several departments have done it and in police work we don't call it stealing something from somebody else we call it donor reinventing the wheels. We share good policies with each other, between the departments. When I mention Oakland County too, I think I keep saying it, but Oakland Count; and this is the only county I've ever worked in so maybe I'm a little bit biased, but we are way ahead of a lot of this state and the country. There are a lot of professional departments in this area. We are really lucky for where we live and work. I really do think Oakland County, the departments in Oakland County, and including the sheriff's office, have got really good relationships with the federal and state agencies and it really is a professional area to work. I do think that we are ahead of a lot of the states in the country.