

PROPOSED TASER POLICY – INITIAL DRAFT
HENNEPIN COUNTY MEDICAL CENTER
PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT

Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide HCMC Protection Officers with guidelines for use of the M26 TASER through techniques which are designed to allow them to defend themselves against physically aggressive subjects or to compel uncooperative subjects to obey a legal order.

Policy

The provisions of this policy are intended to be used within the guidelines established in the HCMC Public Safety Department Use of Force Policy and will be applicable to all members of the HCMC Public Safety Staff while on duty and engaged in their official duties.

Definitions

M26 TASER – The M26 Advanced TASER manufactured by TASER International. The M26 is constructed of a high impact sonic welded polymer. It utilizes a 26-watt system and deploys 2 probes at the intended subject.

EMD – Electro-muscular Disruption (EMD) is a direct involuntary contraction of the muscles that disrupts neuro-motor control.

Data Port – The M26 has a data port located on the back of the unit. This data port will be used to recover specific usage information that is saved everytime the M26 is deployed. This data ensures accuracy in incident documentation.

AFID – AFID (Anti Felony Identification Device) Every time an M26 cartridge is deployed, 40 small confetti-like ID tags called AFIDs are ejected. Each AFID contains the serial number of the cartridge deployed allowing staff to identify which officer deployed the cartridge.

Cartridge – The M26 cartridge is a single use item that is identified by a serial number. The serial number of cartridges assigned to each officer will be recorded. The cartridge is tamper resistant and is sealed with the AFID system in place.

Approved Equipment and Training

1. An M26 and at least one replacement cartridge will be issued to and used only by officers who have successfully completed the Department's M26 Certification Training Program.
2. HCMC Officers will receive Re-Certification training in the use of the M26 on an annual basis.
3. Officers will carry only properly functioning and charged M26s.
4. Officers will only carry the M26 and replacement cartridge(s) that is issued to them by serial number, unless a supervisor issues a replacement M26 or cartridge to the officer with the serial number recorded.
5. Officers will carry the M26 in a holster that is approved by HCMC Public Safety management.
6. Officers will carry the M26 replacement cartridges only in a holder that is approved by HCMC Public Safety management.

Maintenance and Care of Equipment

1. Officers will check the M26 before the start of each shift to ensure the unit is properly charged. Officers will immediately advise a supervisor or M26 trainer if the battery is low.
2. Officers will check the M26 case and cartridge before the start of each shift for any damage. Officers will immediately advise a supervisor or M26 trainer if they discover damage.
3. Officers will ensure that the cartridge doors are free of debris, and that the cartridge has not expired.
4. Officers will not write on or adhere anything (i.e. stickers, tape, etc.) to the M26 or cartridge.
5. Officers must carry the M26 with the safety in the "safe" position.

Use of the M26

1. Each discharge of an M26, including accidental, must be documented utilizing a TASER Usage Report Form and a Use of Force Report.
2. The M26 is programmed to deliver a **5-second** EMD current. The officer can shorten or extend this time. Officers should not touch the probes during this period to avoid receiving the same EMD current. In addition, officers should avoid stepping on or tripping over the wires.
3. **Never** aim the M26 at the eyes or face. It is laser-sighted so that the top probe will follow both the front/rear and laser sight; the bottom probe will travel at an 8-degree downward angle below the front/rear or laser sighted area. The rule of thumb for the bottom probe is that it drops 1 foot for every 7 feet that it travels.
4. Keep hands away from the front of the unit at all times unless the safety slide is in the "safe" position and the M26 is deactivated.

5. Always replace M26 Cartridges before their expiration date. All expired cartridges will be turn in to a supervisor.
6. The M26 deploys two probes from a replaceable Cartridge a distance up to 21 feet. These probes are connected to the M26 by insulated wires. When the probes make contact with the subject, the M26 transmits EMD pulses along the wires and into the body through up to three inches of clothing.
7. M26s are designed to restrain violent individuals, where alternative restraint tactics have been or are reasonably likely to fail, and/or where it would be unsafe for officers to approach the subject.

Use of Force Issues

1. The use of the M26 constitutes a Use of Force.
2. The M26 is placed on the Use of Force Continuum at the same level of force as Oleoresin Capsicum Solution.
3. An officer may draw and discharge the M26 on a subject when the officer reasonably believes that the subject is threatening the officer or a third party with bodily harm; and the officer reasonably believes that the subject possesses the ability or apparent ability and opportunity to carry out that threat
4. Other considerations for deployment of the M26 are:
 - a. Imminent threat to officers and/or others.
 - b. Severity of the incident at issue.
 - c. The totality of the circumstances
5. The M26 will NOT be used:
 - a. In cases of passive resistance unless the totality of circumstances warrants that a lesser level of force would be ineffective; or attempting to use a lesser level of force may jeopardize the safety of the subject and/or others:
 - b. To threaten or attempt to gain information from a person.
 - c. Against a person already restrained unless physical aggression has to be overcome.
 - d. To wake a person up.
 - e. As a "Prod".
 - f. As a form of punishment
6. **Do not** fire the M26 near flammable liquids and/or fumes.
7. No officer will playfully, maliciously, or intentionally misuse the M26 in a display of power against an individual, except to counter an imminent threat. **Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.**

Reporting Procedures

1. Officers will immediately contact the supervisor and advise them that they have discharged the M26, even if the discharge was accidental.
2. Officers will write a report documenting the events leading up to the use of the M26.
3. Officers will fill out a Use of Force report, along with a TASER Usage Report Form.
4. In compliance with HCMC Quality Assurance programs and ongoing medical evaluation, officers will fill out any form given to them by an Emergency Room staff physician for documentation.
5. Officers will secure the spent cartridge, complete with the wires, and probes into a bag that is clearly labeled for evidence. The bagged cartridge will then be given a HCMC Public Safety supervisor.

Medical Attention

After the M26 has been discharged on a subject:

1. Officers will immediately contact the charge nurse and advise them that a monitored bed is needed for a person that has been affected by the M26.
2. Only Emergency Room Personnel will remove M26 probes that have punctured the skin of a subject.
3. Officers will comply with Hennepin County Medical Center's Emergency Department's standing orders for the treatment of a person affected by an M26.
4. Officers will ensure that the staff physician is advised that the subject was affected by the M26.
5. Officers will make sure that the subject is in restraints, or otherwise controlled, and not leave the area until advised by the staff doctor.